

## THE IMPORTANCE OF A MOTHER

### I. An ageless principle: She has a natural concern for her children

When God wants to express His compassionate nature, He says to Israel:

**Isaiah 66:13** [The LORD says] **“As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you”**

In a special revelatory way, mothers reflect the nature of God toward us in the way they show compassion to their children.

In his wisdom, Solomon also used this ageless principle of maternal compassion when he attempted to discover the true mother of an infant child. When Solomon was about to cut the baby in half, we read:

**1 Kings 3:26** **Then the woman whose child *was* the living one spoke to the king, for she was deeply stirred over her son and said, “Oh, my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him.” But the other said, “He shall be neither mine nor yours; divide *him!*” (27) Then the king said, “Give the first woman the living child, and by no means kill him. She is his mother.”**

William Gladstone, in announcing the death of Princess Alice to the House of Commons a century ago, told the following story. The little daughter of the Princess was seriously ill with diphtheria. The Princess was warned not to kiss the little daughter since the child’s breath would endanger her with the certain risk of catching it herself. At one moment when the child was struggling to breathe, the mother, forgetting herself entirely, took the little girl in her arms to keep her from choking to death. Then as the child was gasping for air, the mother, without thinking kissed her daughter as she was accustomed to doing. She forgot about the warning and caught diphtheria and died some days later.

In the winter of 1863, a young mother was making her way across the hills of South Wales, carrying her tiny baby in her arms, when she was overtaken by a blinding blizzard. She never reached her destination alive, and when the blizzard subsided her body was found beneath the snow. But the searchers discovered that before her death she had taken off all her outer clothing and wrapped it about her baby. And when they unwrapped the child, to their surprise they found that he was still alive and well. The mother was more concerned about the life of her child than her own existence. That child was David Lloyd George, who later became minister of War for Great Britain during WWI and Prime minister between 1918-1922. He

## THE IMPORTANCE OF A MOTHER

never would have such a renowned history if it were not for the sacrificial love of a dear mother.

**Isaiah 49:15 “Can a woman forget her nursing child and have no compassion on the son of her womb?”**

It is striking that when a culture is moving toward spiritual and moral decay, that this lack of such affection becomes one of its traits.

**2 Tim 3:1 But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. (2) For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, (3) unloving** [KJV, “without natural affection], **irreconcilable ...** [see also Titus 2:3 where *phileo* is used]

The Greeks had four Greek words for “love”:

- Agape—“sacrificial love”
- Phileo—“friendship” or “affectionate love”
- Eros—“romantic love”
- Stergo—“familial love”; the kind of love that is to exist in a family, such as the natural love of a mother for her children or for a father to care for his home. It is like an instinctive kind of bond.

### II. An endless task: She gives time to raising her children

**1 Timothy 2:15 But women** [in contrast to men] **shall be preserved** [*sozo*, "saved"] **through the bearing of children** [*teknogonia*, the term is only found here, “the performing of maternal duties”] **if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.**

Notice here that of all the things that Paul singles out concerning the role of the woman in regard to her impact in the church, or in life for that matter, or upon the world, it is “through the bearing of children,” that stands forward as her greatest work. This is not merely about having children, but raising them. Mary Pride writes, “‘Childbearing’ is a term that sums up all our special biological and domestic functions.” It refers to the birthing, nursing, nurturing, comforting, codling, special attention and early education that a mom gives to her child. She shall be saved through this art of “childrearing,” if she continues in this responsibility with "faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint."

## THE IMPORTANCE OF A MOTHER

This does not mean that every woman must have children to fulfill God's will in her life. Some women are unable to have children and others may not choose to marry. But childbearing or childrearing as God's ordained function goes back to Eve and is one of the most fundamental aspects of the role of women. For Paul, who writes under the inspiration of the Spirit, it is the chief way that women influence the world. God has not called her to preach or to exercise authority in the way that He has called men. Her godly influence isn't applied from the position of authority, from the top down, but from the bottom up. William Hendriksen apply writes:

Not by way of preaching to adults, but by way of bearing children does a woman attain to real happiness, to salvation, with stress on its positive aspect. The path that leads to salvation is ever that of obedience to God's ordinances. It is his will that the woman should influence mankind, "from the bottom up (that is, by way of *the child*) and not "from the top down" (that is, not by way of the *man*). She must choose to do that for which by God's creation-ordinance she is naturally equipped, both physically and spiritually. She must reach her goal *by way of her childbearing*.

But it is not only here that the task of motherhood receives such importance. This task is emphasized in several other passages.

**1 Tim 5:9 A widow is to be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man, (10) having a reputation for good works; and if she has brought up children** [*teknotropheó, teknon* = "child"; *tropheo* = "to nourish], **if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work.**

A widow was to be put on the list if she had a reputation for good works. Good works starts and ends the list. What is tucked between the phrases is what constitutes "good works." ***First on the list*** is that she has ***brought up children***. As an older widow who was put on the list, she served as a pattern for younger women to follow.

**1 Tim 5:14 Therefore, I want younger widows to get married, bear children** [*teknogoneó*], **keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach.**

By abandoning this 3-fold practice (getting married, bearing children, and keeping house), she gives the enemy, Satan, an occasion for reproach. The Greek word for

## THE IMPORTANCE OF A MOTHER

"occasion" is a military term that actually means, "a base of operation." He has established a base to carry out his attack on the family.

**Titus 2:4** “That they [older women] may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, (5) *to be* sensible, pure, workers at home ...

At the outset, the purpose of good teaching is to encourage. The Greek word for "encourage" (*sophronizo*) means, "to bring a person to reason" or "to bring one back to duty." The great need across our land today is for older women to teach the younger women the domestic priorities of Christian duty.

### III. A priceless educator: She educates her children in eternal values

**Proverbs 1:8** Hear, my son, your father’s instruction [*musar*, “discipline”] and do not forsake your mother’s teaching [*torah*].

**2 Tim 1:5** For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well.

**2 Tim 3:14** You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, (15) and that from childhood [*brephos*, “infancy”] you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

“An ounce of mother is worth a pound of clergy.”

Two Religions:

#### I.

A woman sat by a hearthside place, Reading a book with a pleasant face  
Till a child came up with a childish frown, And pushed the book saying,  
“Put it down”

Then the mother, slapping his curly head, Said, “Troublesome child, off to bed.

A great deal of God’s book I must know, To train you up as a child should go.

And the child went off to bed to cry, And denounced religion—by and by

#### II.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF A MOTHER

Another woman bent over a book, With a smile of joy and an intent look  
Till a child came up and goggled her knee, And said of the book, "Put down,  
take me."

Then the mother sighted as she stroked his head, Saying softly, "I never shall  
get it read"

"But I'll try by loving to learn His will, And His love into my child instill."  
That child went to bed with a sigh and will love religion—by and by.

--Aquila Webb

### IV. Four things children owe their mother:

#### 1. Love

This is the general principle of all Christian conduct and is always applicable in all relationships.

#### 2. Obedience

**Ephesians 6:1 "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."  
(See Gen 28:7)**

#### 3. Honor

**Exodus 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother."**

To honor them is to place them in high esteem. The word comes from a Hebrew word (*kabad*), meaning, "weighty" or "heavy," and speaks of the obligation of giving preference to parents over other human relationships. Both, Mom and Dad are to take precedent over one's friends and peers. Such an attitude or conduct is required of those who enter into the covenant community of the Lord.

#### 4. Fear

**Leviticus 19:3 "Every one of you shall reverence his mother and his father..."**

To have a wholesome dread of displeasing them. Although "reverence" or "fear" is close to the commandment to "honor," this word emphasizes the recognition of parental authority. It indicates taking what your parents say seriously.