

A Tribute to Christian Mothers

Original

Proverbs 31:10-31[10] A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. [11] Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. [12] She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. [13] She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. [14] She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. [15] She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls. [16] She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. [17] She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. [18] She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night. [19] In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. [20] She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy. [21] When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet. [22] She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple. [23] Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. [24] She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes. [25] She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. [26] She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. [27] She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. [28] Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: [29] "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all." [30] Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. [31] Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

A little boy was told by his mother that it is God who makes people good. He replied, "Yeah, I know it's God, but moms help a lot." This passage from Proverbs tells us that *a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised*. That is what I would like to do today, offering a tribute to Christian mothers. Last Sunday I spoke about how we should "speak" with both our words and actions, letting them both be evidence of the faith we have. I think Christian mothers give us a good example of this.

A teacher was talking about fractions and asked a boy, "Suppose that you mother baked an **apple pie**, and there are seven of you in your family -- your parents and five children. What part of the pie would you get?" Without hesitation, The boy said, "One sixth." "But there are seven of you," the teacher said. "Don't you understand fractions?" "Yes, I do," the boy replied, "But I also know my mother. She would say she did not want any pie so the rest of us could have more!" God-fearing moms often give us a good example of sacrificial love.

You may have heard about the little boy who presented his mother with an itemized bill. He had carefully written down all the things he did around the house, and listed an amount after each thing.

Mowing the Grass	\$5
Making my bed all week	\$1
Going to the store	\$.50
Taking out the trash	\$1
Good grades on report card	\$5

And so on. The mother took the bill, looked at it, and didn't say a word. The next morning the boy found the bill on his plate with the money he requested, but he noticed that his mother had written something on the back of it. He read down her list:

For the nine months I carried you	No Charge
The nights I sat up with you	No Charge
Doctoring you when you were sick	No Charge
Praying for you	No Charge
Tears I've cried for You	No Charge
Toys, food, clothes	No Charge
All my love for you	No Charge

The little boy returned the money and the bill to his mother. When she looked at it, she saw He had written across his itemized list **PAID IN FULL**.

The love of a mother is wonderful, especially a Christian mother. They take care of all our needs, including the most important need of telling us of Jesus, teaching us to love and follow Him. Christian mothers give us a picture of God's love for us. How freely He gives us everything, all the while we try to make demands of Him. The sacrifice He was willing to make for us was not just a piece of pie, but His own dear Son. ***He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?*** (Romans 8:32) God's love provides for our needs constantly, all at no charge to us.

It used to be that no one would dare criticize motherhood, the flag, or apple pie. Today the flag is used for kitchen curtains and beach towels and even burned on a regular basis. Sara Lee makes the pies. And all too many people delegate motherhood to day care centers. This is done within the framework of productivity. Women who have secular careers are thought to be productive, while those who make a career of homemaking are made to feel inferior and unproductive. Many working moms delegate child rearing to some employees of a business. My purpose in bringing this up is not to lay a guilt trip on working mothers. Just make sure you have your priorities straight. Whether you work outside the home or not, your number one priority in providing for

your children should be to give them a Christian home that is filled with God's love. Your home should be one where the Bible is read, and believed, and its teachings put into practice. This needs to be done all moms. It is especially important if your child is exposed to day-care outside the home most of the day. You don't know what they will learn in that environment, and day-care cannot replace a mother's loving care and guidance and instruction. It is the duty of Christian parents to be sure their children are nurtured in homes in which Jesus is the Lord and Master. That is part of your calling as a disciple of Christ. We should recognize that those who devote themselves to this on a full-time basis are following a high calling. It is evident in the lives of their children.

So I pay tribute to Christians mothers today, whether they work outside the home or not. I pay tribute to those who have made it their priority to live out their Christian calling in their homes. That is the kind of mother I was blessed with. I know there were times that she and I didn't get along too well. There were times that I was sure I hated her, and she may have felt the same way about me! Isn't it funny, though, that I can't remember why? What I do remember is that she is the one who took care of me. She was the one who made sure I got out of bed and had breakfast before I went to school. She was the one who sat up late to make sure I got home safely. She knew the pain of childbearing did not stop with labor and delivery. She was the one who prayed with me and for me. She was the kind of person King Lemuel's mother described to him in our text:

- *she provides food for her family*
- *She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks.*
- *She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.*
- *She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.*
- *Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:*
- *a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.*

A good mother deserves honor, whether it is the mother who bore you or the mother who bore your children. They model for us the love that God has shown to us. *As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you; [says the LORD] (Isaiah 66:13)* That is what God has done: He has comforted us, loved us tenderly, given of Himself for our sakes. He saw us in our need, our

corruption, the depravity of our sins, and He reached out to us. ***For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*** His death satisfied God's demand that payment be made for sin. His rising assures you that death has been defeated. This has all been given to you at no charge, out of love.

Many of you first heard this good news from your mother, and she raised you to believe this, even as she did. **Happy Mother's Day.**