



A TRUE MOTHER'S DAY GIFT

~ Ephesians 6:1-4; Proverbs 4:20-27

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Many thoughts and memories flood our mind on a day such as today. We remember our childhood. We might remember some specific Mother's Day gifts that we might have made ourselves and gave to our mother and how delighted she was to receive them or other special times. As a mother and or grand-mother, you remember these special times as well. Perhaps even last year Mother's Day was special. No, it was not the expensive gift or the lavish meal or the nice flowers, it simply was the love your children showed you. And it was this expression of love that has stayed with you and made you forget all the work along the way.

In recent years house work has been included in statistics. (A 2021 report from [salary.com](https://www.salary.com) estimated that the value of a stay-at-home mom's work if it were paid, would clock anywhere from \$100,000 to around \$162,581 annually.) But the worth of a mother cannot be put in dollars and cents, can it?

The Bible is clear on what a mother's responsibilities are. But it is also clear on what the children's responsibilities are towards their mother - not only at an early age, but throughout life.

As I reflected upon the subject of Mother's Day, I realized that it is very much connected to our Christian faith.

Mother's Day calls on us to remember our mothers with thankfulness before God. Paul quotes from the Ten Commandments. In Ephesians 6:2 he says . . . ***"Honour your father and mother - which is the first commandment with a promise. And then he notes the promise ***"That it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth."******

The one person that has influenced us most is our mother. Well, yes, dad had his influence on us too which is very important, but today is Mother's day. It was mom who was with us the most. She carried us in her womb and brought us into this world. Fed us. Looked after us 24 hours a day. Nursed us back to health. Dried our tears comforting us. Counseled us. The first one to go to was mom, wasn't it?

If something was going wrong in our life, perhaps in school, or with our friends, you name it, Mom was there. Always ready to help, to forgive, to comfort, to love and care. Yes, to give of herself - even when it meant sacrifice, even when her needs went unmet.

Note the similarities that exist between a mother and our Lord. How do we pay her back for some of these great deeds, for all she even does now? How do you put a figure on this? We can't. But there are other ways, in terms of prayer and encouragement. Yes mothers are precious in God's sight and they need to be, that goes for us as well.

The good news in the body of Christ (the church) that even though there are some of you here this morning who are not mothers in the physical sense which might be difficult. For you there is good news, you can be a spiritual mother to many around you who don't have their mother close by. We praise God for you this morning. As we honour our mothers today, we thank God and honour you in a special way as well.

This morning we ask ourselves the question . . . What is a true Mother's Day gift?

I- FIRST OF ALL, THERE IS THE GIFT OF HONOUR AND RESPECT

They are not the same, but they are very closely related. They share the common thread of valuing someone. Paul says ***"Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honour your father and mother."*** Some would say that applies to those who still live at home; whereas others say, that to certain extent it applies to children regardless their age. Now, I do not think any parent wants his / her grown up son or daughter to constantly ask what they can do and cannot do. However, that which Paul says is found in the Ten Commandments, is to honour our father and mother applies to all ages, namely to respect them, to consider their opinions with respect and weight. That is what the word ***to honour*** actually means in the original.

To honour our mother is indeed a gift our mother rightly deserves. To honour our parents will affect our own life in a positive way as well. God Himself says so: ***"You will be blessed with a long life,"*** a good life, yes a fulfilled life. You see, if we choose to dishonour, disregard our parents, we disobey God and give way to resentment, perhaps anger or even bitterness. This however, has a high price, in terms of emotions and in terms of our physical health and could well shorten our life and make life both - difficult for our mothers / fathers and ourselves.

It could be that your parents have caused you pain. And this does happen. They are just as human as anyone else. Be forgiving and talk to them. Both will benefit. That talk might be the greatest gift yet.



II- A SECOND TRUE GIFT IS OUR UNCONDITIONAL LOVE FOR HER

Mothers are used to give and do so regardless the cost. Now they continue to do that when children are grown up and on their own. I believe they have that attitude right to the end. Yet they themselves need love just as much as any of us do. Countless words have been written about mothers. Too often they are expressed in loving memory when the child is grown and the mother's earthly pilgrimage has ended. The flowers on the coffin at the memorial service and on the grave of our mothers are appropriate, but why not give them to her now so that she might enjoy them. Tell her of your love and prayers for her.

I came across this little poem which will help us fix it in our mind:
"Of all the prizes that we own

There's one we'll love forever

The gift we know as mother's love

No power on earth can sever."

That is what keeps a young mother going too, especially when the demands seem endless, sometimes at work and at home. What reward does she get? A hug. A kiss? Young children would say something like "Mommy, I love you. Mommy you are the best. This is not only appropriate to say when we are little, but when we are grown up. Mom, you are the best. Mom, I love you.

After all, she taught us how to love. She taught us what sacrifice is.

Dr. Ben Carson, the renowned neurosurgeon says this about his mother who only had a grade 3 education and worked as a domestic. "I not only saw and felt the difference my mother made in my life, I am still living out that difference as a man." In thankfulness he had his mother move in with his family in her latter years.

III- ANOTHER TRUE GIFT IS TO ASSURE OUR MOTHER OF A SPECIAL FUTURE

Many mothers and fathers yet perhaps more so mothers than fathers because women usually live longer, look back and at times even live in the past. It is important that they have a sense of a future in their lives. As children we have the responsibility to assure them of God's future for them, but in terms of life here on earth, we do well in assuring them of their usefulness. This applies to grandparents



as well. Even if all they can do in their latter years is to pray for us. We can continue to ask for their wisdom and advice. I never knew my grandparents. I wish people in church in my childhood would have played a greater role in taking the role of the grandparents I never knew. Mothers and grandmothers can take that role for children who don't have their grandmothers or even mothers close by. They can be grandma and grandpa, mom and dad to them. Oh what an encouragement this is for everyone. Praise God we have them in our church.

Another area that will help in making this special future a cherished gift is by letting our parents be part of our future, especially in our children. Letting them interact. It is in us and their grandchildren that they are able to project themselves into the future and children and grandchildren as they interact can connect themselves to the past - to their heritage. Yes, we need to let our parents know how they have blessed and bless us and our children so that they will find fulfillment in the lives of their children and grandchildren, in a sense their deeds live on for time and eternity. It is important that they see this. For this of course they need to interact with children and grandchildren regularly.

A little poem puts it this way:

Oh, don't forget Mother when old age comes on,
There is so much she'd like to confide
Her heart longs to see you, to know that you care,
So lovingly stand by her side.

IV- LASTLY, THERE IS THE GIFT OF FAITHFULNESS IN THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

Now this might not be the case with everyone here this morning. If your mom was not a Christian when you grew up and isn't one perhaps even now, this is not something you need to feel guilty about. This is not something you had or even now have control over. You of course are praying for her. I am sure you long to see her saved. But if your mother brought you up in the Christian faith, taught you how to live the Jesus way, taught you how to pray, then your faithfulness, your commitment to Christ is one of the greatest and most cherished gifts for your mother, much greater than money can buy.

Here is what one daughter-in-law writes about her husband's mother. "O yes, there are physical reminders. They are however pale in significance when I consider the spiritual and emotional contribution she has made in the lives of the children. My husband's gentle and quiet strength are evidence of her influence. The strong character of his manhood was shaped by her gently discipline. In him I see her perseverance through the good time and the bad. The same steadfast love anchors and supports our home. My husband's faith reflects the deep quality of his mother's, and I see in our children the beginnings of a like faith. I am thankful God gave me this "show and tell" experience, for time has come full circle and now I am a mother-in-law. Will my life produce the same, sweet fragrance?

This is indeed a wonderful description of a true Mother's Day gift - one that keeps on giving.

The best way of remembering and honouring our Lord Jesus Christ is to follow His example, isn't it? Jesus thought of His mother even as He was dying on the cross, bearing the weight of the sins of the whole world on His shoulders, yet He saw to it that His mother was taken care of after He was gone in the physical sense. As God, Jesus is dealing with eternal matters but as man He is showing all of us today how important it is to take care and love our mothers. It has been correctly said: "You cannot be willfully wrong with your mother and be right with God."

Remember the phrase coined by William Ross Wallace in a poem "The Hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world."

CONCLUSION /CHALLENGE

So then a true Mother's Day gift is to honour our mother, to love her unconditionally, to assure her of and give her a special future and faithfully follow in the Christian faith and commitment. They are the most wonderful Mother's Day gifts.

What gift are you going to give? Do not delay, do it today. I do not know what you need to do, but you do. Then please do it without any delay.

Make that commitment as we quietly pray. Be sure to follow through on it.