



The Influence of a Mother

May 9, 2004

By Rev. David Koch

Introduction:

You know you're a mother when.....

- You count the sprinkles on each kid's cupcake to make sure they are equal
- You hide in the bathroom to be alone
- You consider finger paints to be a controlled substance
- You hope ketchup is a vegetable, since your child won't eat anything without it
- You use your own saliva to clean your child's face

Things our mothers taught us:

Logic - if you fall off that swing and break your neck, you can't go to the store with me

Principles of anatomy - if you don't stop crossing your eyes, they're going to freeze that way

Humor - when the lawn mower cuts your feet off, don't come running to me

Anticipation - just wait until your father gets home

Since today is Mother's Day, I wanted to share some thoughts along the lines of moms. God's word affirms the importance of moms. I want to share with you 4 mothers from Scripture this morning who are examples to us, and to thank you for the wonderful important place you fulfill in your role as a mom and in God's plan for the family.

Peter Marshall, a preacher from days gone by, once told this story.

Once upon a time, a certain town grew up at the foot of a mountain range. It was sheltered there in it's shadow, so that the cruel wind that threw sleet at the windows and howled through the cracks of homes on the other side, when it came to the foot of the mountain, was a wind spent.

High up in the hills, a strange and quiet fellow took it upon himself to be the Keeper of the springs. Whenever he would see a spring, he cleaned its brown pool of silt and fallen leaves, of mud and mould, and took away all foreign matter, so that the water that bubbled up from the springs was clean and cold and pure.

It leaped sparkling over rocks and dropped joyously in crystal cascades until swollen by other streams, it became a river of life to the busy town.

Millwheels were turned by its rush. Gardens were refreshed by its waters. Fountains threw it like diamonds into the air. On its surface swans swam lazily, and children laughed and played on its banks in the springtime.

But the city council was a group of penny conscious businessmen. They scanned the budget and found within it a salary for the Keeper of the Springs. The CPA said, "Why are we paying this invisible man? He is never seen. We don't need him. Why if we build a reservoir, we can do away with the position entirely.

So they did. The water filled the concrete basin, but it didn't seem the same. Where before it was sparkling and clear as it moved past the city, now it sat, brown and languid. Soon, it began to show the signs of a green slime. There were constant troubles with the pumps after that, and the swans found a cleaner place above town.

Finally, an epidemic broke out, and the sickness reached its cold hand into every home in the city. The City Council met again, realizing the error of its ways, and called for the Keeper of the Springs to make it right again. It wasn't long until it was right. The springs were cleaned and the water joyfully leaped down the mountain. The Millwheels turned as of old. The swans returned. And children played again by the banks of the stream.

By now you are wondering, where he is going. I believe that women and mothers are keepers of the springs.

For many of you, it was your mother who read the Scriptures to you. For many of you it was your mother who taught you how to pray. For many of you it was your mother who enrolled you in Sunday School as a baby - they called it the cradle roll back then.

Proverbs 31:28 - Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her.

I want to talk to you this morning about the influence that a godly woman can have on our life. If you are not a Mother, you are not excused from the responsibility to seek to influence other people for Christ. I am not giving anyone a "get out of the sermon free" card today. Every one of us can find some things to apply to our lives as we look at the Scriptures today.

Mothering is not easy. Anyone who is entrusted with the care of children needs 189 moveable parts, 3 pairs of hands and the ever popular eyes in the back of their head. Norman Bates of *All About Families* ministry says, "She's got to be as insightful as a psychologist, tough as a Marine Corps DI, gentle as a nurse. She's got to be a labor and management negotiator, a teacher, an electrician, a plumber and a carpenter. It requires a massive amount of patience, endless energy, and iron will, and the ever present reality that if she gets sick, she's got to get well before the end of the day."

What a difference a godly woman can make.

Abraham Lincoln was once quoted as saying, "No man is poor, who has had a godly mother." There is no position ordained by God with more influence than that of a Mother - not the president, the governor, the educator, the minister or the doctor.

I. The influence of a mother is powerful

Timothy had become a Christian and a strong believer, thanks to the influence of his Mother and his grandmother, Lois and Eunice. The seeds they sowed with little Timothy had produced fruit pleasing to God. Timothy was powerfully influenced by his mom.

His father was a Greek man. Paul looked at Timothy as a son. I believe he helped to mentor and disciple him. Because of Timothy's devotion to follow Christ, Paul invited Timothy to travel with him. Timothy served and did the work of an evangelist. When Paul was imprisoned, he sent for Timothy to come bring him his books and cloak.

The seeds of faith were planted early in Timothy's life by his mother and grandmother. I was reading the other day about seeds - when they germinate and begin to grow they do so under the soil where no one can see them. For a while no one even knows that anything is happening but at some point the seed that is sown grows and sprouts and you see the evidence of it. Don't ever think that you don't have a ministry, mom. You can pass the torch of faith to your son's and daughters. In fact that inheritance we talked about last week is eternal and should be passed on to your children. Do not underestimate the influence you have in the life of your children. If you think they are beyond your influence, then add the dimension of prayer for them and there is no way they can escape that influence.

II. The influence of a mother is perpetual

Paul wrote in his letter to Timothy in **2 Tim. 3:15-17.**

“...and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

How did little Timothy learn them? He learned at his Mother's and Grandmother's lap. It was not a hit and miss thing. The influence toward spiritual things was perpetual – on going.

Grandma, read the Bible stories to your children. Mom, read the Bible stories to your children. It is an opportunity to drill into their hearts the truth of God's love and greatness. If they don't learn anything else, teach them that God loves them the best and the most.

It is that consistency of virtue that “trains up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Plant those seeds of salvation beloved. Men and women alike must dedicate themselves to making disciples of those loved ones that are under their care and in their realm of influence.

For some of you there may be a prodigal in a far country. Let me give you assurance that God's Word will bring them back. One day they will realize just who loves them best, if you made a diligent effort to plant the seeds of salvation.

I came across a quote this week that rings with truth. **“You can do everything else right as a parent, but if you don't begin with loving God, you are going to fail.”** Beloved, parenthood is a partnership with God. We are given God's most precious creation, a baby, warm and helpless, and for 20 years or so we work with God to bring His work to completion. It is in exact parallel to our following God's plan for our lives, that we see success in giving back to our Creator a man or woman fit for His service.

Can I ask you a question? What is most important for your child to know? Is it knowing academics or the Savior? I think they can know both, but certainly it is most important for them to know the Savior. Some times we think nothing of making sure Johnny or Susie get to all the school activities on time and on budget, but when it comes to spiritual activities at

church, well.....he or she just has too much going on right now.

You have to decide what you want your child to value. If they are left to choose without direction, they will choose Disney, Madison Ave, and those things will likely entice them away from their faith. Choose to put God first in your life and then your child's life and all the rest will fall into place. When Joshua was addressing the people of Israel he stood up and said, “Choose this day who you will serve.” You have choices to make that will have eternal perpetual consequences. If you don't start the trip to adulthood with Christ, it gets more and more difficult to go back and get Him on board as they get older. It's not impossible, but more challenging and difficult.

III. The influence of a mother is painful

There are times the influence of a mom brings you pain. It's painful watching your child struggle with an issue. There are times that you bear hurts because of the position you are in as a mother.

I think Jesus' mother Mary understood this well. On the day she took Jesus to be dedicated at the temple, she was told, “a sword will pierce your heart also.” How Mary must have suffered painfully watching Jesus make the decisions He did, knowing those decisions would lead to His arrest and death, yet supporting and influencing Him to do the will of His Heavenly Father.

How many times did your mom cry over you? Men, there are times, as a dad, you have seen your wife cry over your children. Those tears are not tears of defeat. Those tears are a sure sign of victory.

How powerful are a Mother's tears? One tear from a Mother can move even the strongest man to do what he would not do for any other reason under the sun. One tear from a wife can move a man past his pride and cause him to become a real minister to his family. Real life hurts. Real grace heals it.

When it seems like there are difficult decisions that have to be made, you can turn to Mom. When no one else believes in you, Mom does. When a woman gives you her heart, treasure it, for it is beyond what you could ever pay for it.

Mothers are good hand-holders. They hold hands while feeding their newborns, they hold hands when the child is a toddler, and they hold hands when the

child is learning to cross the street. They hold hands when their son or daughter walks the aisle to get married. I think all that hand-holding stuff is done to assure safety and love and it helps everyone get safely home.

There comes a final time for a mother to hold hands. Some day each mother who sits here will draw their last breath. Their heart will beat the last beat and they will leave this life and continue to live eternally in either heaven or hell.

Do you know how to get home? Maybe your mom has gone on before you. You can't hold her hand

now, but through life she held your hand in one hand and the word of God in the other. You probably miss holding her hand, but you remember what it was like. Her influence still goes on. All she wants for you now is to make it safely home to heaven. We cannot get home to heaven without claiming Jesus' salvation through faith in His sacrifice for our sins, and His resurrection as our eternal hope of glory. Your mother may love you, but God loves you best.

“I remember my mother's prayers and they have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life.” ~Abraham Lincoln