

The Bible has many references to the features of a mother. The pictures that the Bible paints of mothers are not always perfect, but it is a practical picture because we learn valuable lessons from their example. So for the next few minutes I want to consider the influence of a mother.

There is little that compares with the influence of a mother. The influences of politics, education, and peers, all are lacking when compared to the influence of a mother. Of all the roles assigned on earth few are as important as the role of a mother. Perhaps you have heard the poem written in the 1860's by William Ross Wallace, "*The mighty and power and stronger man from his throne has hurled, For the hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world.*" There is a lot of truth in that statement.

Paul gives some teachings on motherhood in Titus 2:3-5 but in those instructions he does not say that the successful woman is one who is a business owner or executive. He is not telling women to be a good employee at work, or how to be loved and adored by their peers. **Titus 2:3-5** *The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;* **Aged women** means older Christian women. Paul lists four things which should characterize older Christian women.

Reverent in demeanor means living the Christian life as a Christian woman ought to live life. She is to live in view of the fact that God is watching and one day she will give account for her life. The influence of older Christian women upon the church, upon the family and upon the community cannot be over emphasized and should not be underestimated.

Not slanderers means they should not spread malicious gossip. The word of God has a lot to say about the tongue and speaking. Paul teaches Christians to put away falsehood and to speak truth to their neighbors (Ephesians 4:25). It seems so easy to talk evil about others; however, the Christian must be guided by love (Matthew 7:12). Paul makes it very plain when he says, "speak evil of no man" (Titus 3:2).

Nor enslaved to much wine means not to be slaves to strong drink. The teaching of the Bible is to abstain from strong drink (I Timothy 3:8; 5:23; Proverbs 23:20-21, 29-35).

Teachers of that which is good means older women are to be teachers of those characteristics that become a godly woman. Young Christian women are to teach their children. Older Christian women are to teach the younger Christian women to love their husbands and children (next verse).

(4) That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

Young Christian women need to be trained **to love their husbands**. Love is more than just a good feeling about someone. Love is a commitment. When one marries, she makes a vow in the sight to God to be faithful and true in sickness as well as in health, in joy as well as in sorrow, in adversity as well as in prosperity. Love is unselfish. She must ask herself, "What can I do for my husband." Selfishness is one of the greatest problems in marriage. When a wife loves her husband, she wants to do him good and not to harm him. Young Christian women need to be taught these things and many more things which mature Christian women can teach them when they have a Christian home of their own and know the teachings of the word of God.

Young Christian mothers need to be taught **to love their children**, which is the focus of our thought this morning. One of the greatest responsibilities of motherhood is to bring one's children up in way that the Lord approves. Young Christian mothers need to realize how important this is. There are four basic things every child needs. First, he needs to be loved. Second, he needs to feel secure. Third, he needs to be wanted. Fourth, he needs to be taught about God and Jesus and their word. Not only do they need to be taught this, they also need good role models in their mothers and fathers. There is so much which young mothers need to know in rearing children. Faithful Christian women who have reared children have much to teach to the young Christian mothers.

(5) To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. To be discrete is to be sober-minded and means she is to be discreet and sensible. She is a woman of sound mind. She is not swayed by sudden impulses over which she exercises no mastery. The sensible person is always ready and willing to learn.

Chaste means pure. She must keep her commitment to be faithful and true to her husband in body, mind and spirit. She must scrupulously avoid any immorality in thought, word and action.

Workers at home means she takes care of her responsibilities at home. She has responsibilities to her husband and children. The Christian woman must keep her priorities straight. Her first duty is to God. A part of one's commitment to God means to be a good wife and a good mother. She must not let other good works interfere with her commitment to her home.

Kindness is a part of love. Love is kind (1 Corinthians 13:5). As a wife takes care of the many duties and responsibilities of home, she must do in kindness.

Being obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed is commanded in Ephesians 6:22-24. The husband's responsibility is to love his wife as Christ loved the church (Ephesians 6:25-33). When a Christian wife does not live up to God's commands, she brings reproach upon the her family and the Lord. When people see this, they talk evil of God.

We see these teachings illustrated in 2 Timothy 1:5. It was Timothy's mother and grandmother who influenced his life for God. *2 Timothy 1:5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.* His faith, his teachings came to him from his mother and grandmother. In verse 7 we learn that Paul saw Timothy as a man of potential: strong in doctrine, strong in faith, one who could stand as a man of God: fearlessness, and with the power of love, and a sound mind.

2 Timothy 3:14-15 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; (15) And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Timothy's learned from a child these core values from his mother and grandmother. They left Timothy a legacy to be remember.

What memories will your children and grandchildren carry of you? Will they remember your faith as a faith that is put into practice every day; in good times and bad; a faith that is relentless and will not falter during difficulties or hardship? Faith is certainly not inherited, but it is passed from one generation to another through the godly influence of parents and their teaching.

For a moment I want us to notice the love of one of God's loving mother's named Jochebed. Now you may not be familiar with this woman by name, but I'm pretty sure you're familiar with her story. Jochebed is introduced to us in Exodus 2:1-2 and was the mother of Moses, and a very faithful and loving mother she was. Her story is a touching story of a mother's love for her child which impacted the very history of God's people

Exodus 2:1-2 And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. (2) And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. Now the reason that she hid her son was because back in chapter 1:22 we learn that Pharaoh had commanded that every son of the Hebrews be cast into the Nile River. Jochebed obviously loved her new born son, and she also loved God. And so rather than obey the edict of man, she obeyed the will of God, and she hid her newborn son from the Egyptians. She didn't cast her son into the Nile, but rather she made him a papyrus basket and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in the basket, and set it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile.

The older daughter of Jochebed, Moses' sister, was watching and soon the daughter of Pharaoh went down to bathe in the Nile, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. And when she saw the basket among the reeds, she sent her maidservant to retrieve it. When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the little boy was crying. So she had compassion on him and said, *"This is one of the Hebrew children."* So, not all Egyptians were as cruel as Pharaoh. One of his very daughters, had compassion. It could be that maybe she was a mother too, but we don't know. "Then Moses' sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call one of the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" Sounds like Jochebed raised a pretty smart daughter. "I'll go get a Hebrew woman to nurse that child for you." She already had the makings of becoming a pretty shrewd woman.

And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the girl went and called the child's mother. Isn't it amazing how the providence of God can work, especially when you've got faithful people involved too?

Pharaoh's daughter said for Jochebed to take the child and nurse him for me, and I will pay your wages. Here we see the providence of God, and the love of a mother, working together. Jochebed not only got to nurse her very own son, but she got paid for doing it!

In this story we see a mother that trusted in God, but in addition we see a woman who was willing to endure hardship as a mother. She hid the baby for three months realizing the possible danger that awaited her should the baby be discovered. We see a mother who labored for the care of her child. She wove a basket. This took some time, maybe several weeks if not months because she had slave duties during the day. Then somehow she found some pitch and brought it home to line the basket to make it water resistant. Finally she was to be the nurse for the child and no doubt she taught baby Moses about God and his people. This mother demonstrated much of what you read about in Proverbs 31.

Jochebed, likely never got to see what God would do with her son Moses, in raising him up as a prophet of God, to lead his people out of slavery in Egypt. After all, it would be another 80 years until God would call Moses out of the wilderness at Mount Horeb. But Jochebed was faithful and put her trust in the Lord. Perhaps mothers today will never see the success of their children, but her influence will certainly be noticed.

Proverb 31 portrays the beauty of a good woman.

1. She is trustworthy - Proverbs 31:11
2. Strong in her convictions - Proverbs 31:17
3. Soft and merciful. Caring for the less fortunate and demonstrating compassion - Proverbs 31:19-20
4. She is optimistic - Proverbs 31:21
5. She is strong and dignified - Proverbs 31:22, 25
6. She is industrious - Proverbs 31:13-16, 24, 27

For all these things and more she had the unending praise of her family - Proverbs 31:28-31. ***Proverbs 31:28-31 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. (29) Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. (30) Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. (31) Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.*** This is why our country has set aside a day like today – to show our respects and appreciation to the mothers and grandmothers in our lives. If your mother has passed away, you can still pause and remember her influence in your life.

Do we take for granted how hard it is to be a good mother? Making a good home is not just about cooking and cleaning. This woman in Proverbs saw the privilege of caring for the family others. There is joy in serving those you love.

Motherhood is not some “second rate” choice of a woman. A woman was once asked what she did for a career. A bit embarrassed she said, “Oh, I’m just a home maker.” Being a homemaker is the most important job a woman can have, and it never something to be ashamed to admit. It’s a “first rate choice”!

Young people, when you get old enough to recognize your mother loved you enough to serve you, seeing it as a privilege to be there for you when you needed her, then you need to let her know how much you appreciated it what means to you because the payment for her work is praise from her family.

Parenting is a privilege that we should never take for granted. Mothers have the privilege of teaching a child to walk, talk, think, and believe in God and His word to direct our lives. What an awesome privilege, and a joyful opportunity it is. So mothers are more than a tender touch, or the comfort by a soft word spoken. Mothers, you are some of the most influential people in the world. It is the role God has placed for you in life.

INVITATION