



Mother's Day – May 13, 2018

So it is Mother's Day. When I, oh you just butting up your mom. Don't go there. So growing up in a Baptist church, especially day pre-internet, Mother's Day was probably the second biggest day next to Easter. All the guys wore a different colored carnation, or a rose, depending on whether your mom was alive or whether she wasn't alive. You gave out flowers in the church to like the youngest mom, the oldest mom who generally always won that for about ten years. And then you had the mom with the most children who generally always won that year after year. But you passed out all these things, all these flowers, I mean it was a huge day. And then the preacher would wax eloquent about what a wonderful, rich blessing it was to be a mother and how wonderful it was. Now as men, because we're not real smart, we took that the wrong way. To the point where we thought being a mother is so rich, it's really a pretty cush job. So inevitably some guy would come home, walk into the house, look over at his wife, and she's just disheveled. She's exhausted. The kids are going nuts. The house is a mess. And inevitably at some point this question would come out of the husband's mouth; "What have you been doing all day?" At which point there would be a revitalization of his wife. A whole new energy would appear. Her face would change. He's known that look before, but this time it's on steroids. She's standing up and now he's backing away because he knows whatever he said was bad. And so he does two things. He's backing away and in his mind, which he now knows not to say, in his mind he's thinking, "What'd I say?" So men have kind of had a, I thought that was funnier than you thought it was. Men have kind of come up sometimes with the idea that motherhood is sort of this really rich, cush, easy job. By the way, if you moms are married to a man who thinks that, I have the solution. I don't care where you go. Just leave on Friday at 4 and come back Sunday at 2. And he will change his entire opinion of what you do.

But when you come to the Bible, we're going to look at the mother that kind of stands out, right. We're going to look at Mary, the mother of Jesus. Now ostensibly you would think that really was a cush job. I mean you'd say, "Clean the table." He'd clean the table. He never rolled His eyes; even as a teenager. He never sighed. He never got mad. He never got upset. It must have been a shock to her when she had her other kids, right. "You know Jesus always cleaned the table off." "Well I'm not Jesus." I mean you can just hear that conversation going. So you've got Jesus for a son, you're just assuming, you know, this is really a pretty easy, cush deal. But when you walk through the few times she appears in the New Testament, it's always devastating. First time, Gabriel comes to her, we don't know how old she is, but the assumption is somewhere in her teen years. That's about when a young Jewish girl would get married. And she's in love with this guy

that loves Jehovah. She loves Jehovah. They're going to the same synagogue. They're just in love with each other. They've done it right. They've treasured each other. There's a huge strong standard of morality in their relationship. And so Gabriel comes to her and says, "You're highly favored. You're going to have a child. This child will rule on David's throne forever." So she pins this little kind of poem thing to God. So she's pumped, but then she has to deal with reality. She has to tell Joseph that she's pregnant and that she's slept with no man. So sure enough, the Bible says that he desired to put her away privately. He loved her, didn't want to damage her, didn't want her stoned, wanted her to be OK. But he determined to put her away because he knew she was lying. She'd violated his trust and she was lying to him. If you're Mary at that moment and you tell the man you're in love with, and you've done it right with, you've never touched another man and yet you're pregnant and you see that face drop and you see him walk out of that house, you've got to be absolutely crushed. But God always honors her and He comes to Joseph in a dream and says, "Listen she's telling you the truth." So he takes her as his wife; they deliver the child.

The next time you see Him, he's 12. And what happens here and what happens to every parent, they're at the temple, they're celebrating, Jesus is talking to the Scribes and Pharisees, and they leave and they get halfway down the road and Mary goes, "Joseph where's Jesus?" And Joseph says, "What do you mean, 'Where's Jesus?' you should have." And off we go with the.... I don't know how many times we left my daughter at the old church. We'd go to Zarapes and I'd go, "Where's Lauren?" She'd go, "Where is Lauren?" I'd come back and she'd be sitting on the steps like this. I know they're coming soon. So Jesus is kind of there and they come back and He's answering questions with the Scribes and Pharisees. He's kind of, in their mind, a theological prodigy. They have no idea, obviously, who He really is. But He's a theological prodigy to them. And so when Mary and Joseph kind of pull Him aside, they go, "Why'd You do that to us?" Because that's what parents do. It's always the child's fault. "Why did You do that to us?" And He stings her and His father. "You realize I have to be about My Father's business." You're not my parents. Mary's stung. Somewhere after this, in the time Jesus hits 30, Joseph dies and she becomes a single mom. He never appears in the record after Jesus is 12. And so apparently he dies. And now she's a single mom with several children. So 30, Jesus comes to her and says, "I've got to leave." He should have stayed because He's the head of the family. He has the skill, the carpenter's skills, He should have stayed and taken care of His mom. But He's got to go, and He leaves.

Next time we find her, there's a wedding. They've run out of wine. She comes to Jesus and says, "Can You do something?" And He rebukes her again. He says, "Woman, my time has not come. Why do you bother Me with this?" He does turn the water into, if you're Baptist, juice. If you're anybody else, wine. So then the next time, is in Mark where Mary and her children come to where Jesus is teaching in a house because they literally, this is what the gospel of Mark says, they came to seize Him because they believed He was out of His mind. She thinks when she hears all these stories of lepers being healed and people being raised from the dead and blind seeing, she thinks that her son's insane and she comes to get Him and take Him home. And that's that passage where Jesus, they said, "Your family, your mother and brothers and sisters are outside." He said, "Who are my brothers and sisters? Anybody who does the will of God." She doesn't get in.

Then you see her at the cross. He's being killed. He's being crucified. She comes and she's standing close enough that she can hear Him speak. He says seven things from the cross. She's standing there with John, the only apostle that is there. All the others are hiding. She, she's standing there looking at her son whom she loves and He's being crucified and mocked and laughed at; just abused. So she's, as best she can, just pouring out her love on Him. At which point He really stings her. He looks at her and says, "Woman look at your son. Son look at your mother." He disowns His mother at the moment when she's desperate to show Him how much she loves Him. Now when you look at her life, it really would have been easy, seriously, having someone who doesn't sin in the house because He's going to do everything you tell him to do. He's going to do everything before you tell Him to do. Easy to raise. But hard to live with once He's raised. Her heart is broken on several levels. And particularly on the cross. Resurrection occurs, she's not there. Now there are a couple Mary's there, but neither one of them is His mother. So we don't know what happened with Jesus and Mary from the crucifixion until, until we find this verse in the book of Acts. He's ascended. Now listen to this.

¹³When they'd entered, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James. ¹⁴All these were with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and His brothers.

Right before Pentecost, now you've got to understand something, OK. If you're Mary and God told you at the birth of your child that He would be the king over the throne of Israel, when He dies, what are you thinking as a mom? Your husband's gone so you have no one to process this with. He's the only one that knows the truth. What are you thinking about with this? Your assumption is, right, you failed somewhere. That somewhere you failed as a mother. You didn't read enough scripture. You didn't pray enough. You didn't do the right thing because He should have been the king, but instead He's in the dirt. So your assumption is as a mom, I guarantee you, somewhere your assumption, when you go home, I failed. I failed so badly that my own son disowned me as He was dying.

And then you have this verse. So we have 40 days of Jesus going back and forth after His resurrection, before His ascension. We don't know because we don't have any idea, the Bible doesn't tell us. But I'm willing to bet that part of those 40 days, it says He appeared to various disciples, I'd be willing to bet everything I've got He appeared to His mother to let her know she didn't fail, that what she thought was failure was not, and that the reason He had to disown her was the greatest thing He did for her because she has to make a huge change in her life toward Him that He is not her son and must become her Savior. His disowning on the cross was the greatest thing He ever did for His mother. So at some point she figures all this out and right before Pentecost, she's up there with all the other disciples and with her other children whom did not believe in Jesus which is why Jesus gave her to John on the cross. Because they don't believe in Him at all. And now all of a sudden the whole family who at one point came to take Him home because they thought He was nuts is now sold out to Him as Savior and King. And it became a powerful day for her. Not only did she realize, and watched Him ascend, and now she's going to see Peter preach a sermon and 3,000 of her countrymen are going to come to Christ. Her son, now her Savior. And she's going to look out and she's going to see one of her sons, James, become the

pastor of the church in Jerusalem and write the book we have in our New Testament of James. She's going to watch another son, Jude, write the book we have in the New Testament of Jude, right before Revelation. She's going to see her children, her other children, adopt everything she's now come to know about Jesus, not as her son, but as her Savior. And she will go to the grave in spite of all the difficulty in rearing the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, she will go to the grave knowing she didn't fail and that God was right. She was highly favored.

Now ladies, being a mom's hard. There's nothing easy about it. But at the end of the day, you see your children stand up for your Jesus, it'll be worth it. You say, "Well my kids aren't standing up for Jesus today. I did fail." Let me tell you something. If you stand up for Jesus in your life and your kids don't, it's not because you failed, they're not doing what you taught them to do. The only time you fail is when they do what you taught them to do. Ladies I'm going to tell you something. I've been pastoring since 1977, so I've been pastoring for 41 years. I've seen a ton of moms who thought they were a failure and all of a sudden one day their son would come home, daughter would come home and say, "I was wrong. Thank you for telling me about who Jesus is." You wait, you trust, you pray that what you gave them will surface. You say, "Well I just don't see it." A couple weeks ago my wife and I hosted all the pastors and their wives that have come through Central and one of the wives, her husband's a pastor up in north of Dallas. It was interesting, we were talking, she was telling me her testimony. She said she didn't really grow up in a Christian home, but a neighbor brought her to church. She said, "I met Christ at age 7. But because my parents weren't really believers, I came home and I never really was discipled and it really didn't show up in my life." But I'm telling you, you listen to me, when a child meets Jesus and He puts His Spirit in him, that is permanent. I don't care what the parents do or don't do. And she shared with me I had no real walk with Christ until I came to college. Went to Central. Got in the College Ministry." And she said, "I just began to realize who He was in my life." Now moms, you raise your children to find Christ and they find Him and all of a sudden you wake up and they are not where they need to be. Let me tell you something, when God puts His Holy Spirit in a person, that Holy Spirit stays and the Bible says, Philippians, that God will always finish what He started in anyone's life. If you brought Jesus to your children, I don't care where they are today, you have not failed. And you are, as the scripture says, highly favored.

Let's pray.

Father, I do ask you for the moms here who are struggling or who are blessed or seeing their kids walk well or not walking well, Father, just meet every mom today where they are. Honor them, particularly today, Father, for being willing to bring a child to term. Bless them for willing to make the sacrifices, even with the joys that there are in raising a child. And Father let them know today that You never waste what we do in Your name and that includes a mom sharing Christ with her children. Let them know You will honor everything they've done. I ask You that in Jesus Christ name.