TITLE: MOTHERHOOD

TEXT: 2 Tim. 1:2-6; Pr. 22:6; 1 Ki. 3:17-27; Jn. 3:16;

Pr. 1:8; Mt. 19:17-18; Ephe. 6:2-3

INTRODUCTION: Sense this is Mother’s Day I want to talk about motherhood this morning.

I once saw a sign on a marquee at a church that read:

***If evolution is true, how come mothers still have only two hands?***

Reminds me of the fifteen-year-old boy who came bounding into the house and found his mom in bed. He asked if she were sick or something. He was truly concerned. Mom replied that, as a matter of fact, she didn't feel too well. The son replied, "Well, don't worry a bit about dinner. I'll be happy to carry you down to the stove."

 Motherhood is the Grace of God in action.

 Mothers play a very important and very prominent and vital role in Scripture in both the Old and New Testament.

 Paul in speaking to Timothy, his son in the faith, a young man he has personally discipled, writes..

 **2Tim 1:2 (NIV) To Timothy, my dear son:**

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

**3 I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers.**

4 Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy.

**5 I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.**

**6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.**

In reflecting on his young friend Timothy, Paul comes to the conclusion that the faith that Timothy had in God was passed on to him through the life of his mother, Eunice who had this same faith passed on to her by her mother Lois….

 Two women that understood the importance of

**Prov 22:6 Train a child in the way he should go,**

**and when he is old he will not turn from it.**

Christian moms, never underestimate the power of your testimony to your children through simply living out your faith in front of them. Allowing them to see the reality of Christ in your life……

 That is how you train up your child in the way that they should go! Simply live a Christ like life in front of them, encouraging them to choose Christ for themselves.

 What makes a mother, a mother?

 Let me tell you that it has very little to do with biology!

 To be a mother in the Scriptural context has very little to do with just giving birth to a child. It has everything to do with how you raise that child once they have been brought into this world.

 I think that we see one of the most revealing qualities of motherhood in 1st Kings 3….

 Two mothers with a dispute over a child come before King Solomon to have him settle their dispute…..

**1Kin 3:17 One of them said, "My lord, this woman and I live in the same house. I had a baby while she was there with me.**

18 The third day after my child was born, this woman also had a baby. We were alone; there was no one in the house but the two of us.

**19 "During the night this woman's son died because she lay on him.**

**20 So she got up in the middle of the night and took my son from my side while I your servant was asleep. She put him by her breast and put her dead son by my breast.**

21 The next morning, I got up to nurse my son--and he was dead! But when I looked at him closely in the morning light, I saw that it wasn't the son I had borne."

**22 The other woman said, "No! The living one is my son; the dead one is yours."**

**But the first one insisted, "No! The dead one is yours; the living one is mine." And so they argued before the king.**

Here we find quite a dilemma! Two women, both have infant sons just a few days apart…

 One accidentally smothers her son during the night by rolling over on him while she is sleeping, so she gets up and swaps babies with the other mother..

 The other women wakes up horrified that her child is dead, but as she looks closely she realizes that the dead child is not hers but the others woman’s.

 They go before the king to have him settle the dispute.

 Solomon obviously doesn’t know at this point which one is telling the truth so he comes up with a rather unique solution….

The solution…

**23 The king said, "This one says, `My son is alive and your son is dead,' while that one says, `No! Your son is dead and mine is alive.'"**

**24 Then the king said, "Bring me a sword." So they brought a sword for the king.**

**25 He then gave an order: "Cut the living child in two and give half to one and half to the other."**

Sounds like a simple enough solution! You don’t know which one is telling the truth then give each one half of what they are disputing about!

 In this case each woman would get half a child!

 Was Solomon actually going to cut the child in half to settle this dispute?

 Of course not! But the women didn’t know that.

 You see Solomon understood motherhood. He had a good example of what a mother should be growing up from his mom Bathsheba and I believe he knew what would happen next.

**26 The woman whose son was alive was filled with compassion for her son and said to the king, "Please, my lord, give her the living baby! Don't kill him!"**

**But the other said, "Neither I nor you shall have him. Cut him in two!"**

**27 Then the king gave his ruling: "Give the living baby to the first woman. Do not kill him; she is his mother."**

How did Solomon know who the real mother was?

The one characteristic of motherhood that settled the test and revealed just who the real mother was….

 **26 The woman whose son was alive was filled with compassion for her son and said to the king, "Please, my lord, give her the living baby! Please Don't harm him!"**

 One characteristic of motherhood that outshines all the rest is that of the sacrificial love and Compassion that a mother has for her child.

 A mother’s willingness to put the welfare of her child first even at great cost to her personally.

 A man tells about a day when he gets up early to go apply for a job.

 About an hour later his thirty-six-year-old wife left for her fifth grade teaching job down the mountain in Riverside California accompanied by her two children, five-year-old Susan and two-year-old Gerald, who was to be dropped off at the baby-sitter's. Unfortunately, they never got that far. Eight and half-hours later the man found his wife and daughter dead in their wrecked car, upside down in a cold mountain stream.

 His two-year-old son was just barely alive in the forty-eight-degree water. But even in her death the character of a mother was revealed in a most dramatic and heart-rending way.

 When the father scrambled down the cliff to what he was sure were the cries of his dying wife, he found her already dead, her arms locked in death holding her little boy's head just above the water in the submerged car.

 For eight and a half hours this mother had held her beloved toddler afloat and had finally died, her body frozen in death in that position of self-giving love, holding her baby up to breathe. She died that her son might live.

 That's the essence of a mother's compassion and sacrificial love for her children.

 The depths and the degree of compassion and love that this mother had for her child we only see in one other place in Scripture and that is from God Himself as revealed to us in John 3:16….

**John 3:16 (NIV) "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.**

**17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.**

 The love and compassion that we see in motherhood is in itself a manifestation of the love and compassion of God.

 The love and compassion of a mother is in itself a characteristic, an attribute of God Himself.

 Guys, when your child is small and falls and skins their knee, who is it that they most often cry out for?

 9 times out of ten it is only mom who can kiss it and make it feel better!

 Motherhood is a very special thing and sometimes, many times, the love and compassion of a mother for her child will defy the logic of this world.

 I read of one such account several years ago….

 A woman by the name of Susan Shelley wrote in a magazine called Marriage Partnership….

 "I was thrilled when the doctor told me our baby-to-be was a boy. I decided to keep the news a secret because I wanted to see my husband Marshall's face when our son was delivered.

 "In the fifth month, our doctor recommended a Level II ultrasound. As I lay on the examining table, the doctor manipulated the ultrasound, measuring the cranium and the femur and viewing the internal organs. We all watched the embryonic motions.

 "'Is everything okay?' Marshall asked.

 "'Let me complete the examination and I'll give you a full report,' the doctor said. I hoped his evasive answer was merely his standard procedure.

 "Moments later, the doctor announced his observations in a matter-of-fact voice. 'We have some problems. The fetus has a malformed heart--the aorta is attached incorrectly. There are missing portions of the cerebellum. A club foot. A cleft palate and perhaps a cleft lip. Possibly spina bifida. This is probably a case of Down syndrome. In either case, it is a condition incompatible with life.'

 "Neither Marshall nor I could say anything. So the doctor continued.

 "'It's likely the fetus will spontaneously miscarry. If the child is born, it will not survive long outside the womb. You need to decide if you want to try and carry this pregnancy to term.'

 "We both knew what he was asking. My soul was shaken by the news, but I knew clearly what I was to do.

 "'God is the giver and taker of life,' I said. 'If the only opportunity I have to know this child is in my womb, I don't want to cut that time short.

 If the only world he is to know is the womb, I want that world to be as safe as I can make it.'"

 In the world that we live in today, the logic of this world would say…You have a child that is severely deformed and won’t have much of a chance for life once born, then the logical thing to do for the convenience of the mother is to abort, terminate life now before the child is born….

 The love and compassion of motherhood, especially a Christian mother is..

“God is the giver and taker of life,'.. 'If the only opportunity I have to know this child is in my womb, I don't want to cut that time short. If the only world he is to ever know is the womb, I want that world to be as safe as I can make it.'"

 That is the sacrificial love of a mother.. Making the hard choices in life for the benefit of her child. Sacrificing her comfort and connivance, and at times, even her safety for the sake of her child.

 I have been blessed in my life to have been surrounded by good mothers..

 My mom was a good mother (Did an amazing job considering what God gave her to work with!)

 My Grandmothers were good mothers and great examples of motherhood that manifested all the qualities of motherhood to me.

 I was blessed by marrying a woman who has been a tremendous mother to my children.

 One who time and time again has sacrificially given of herself for her children.

 Sometimes those children expanded as I had brought different kids home at times through my work as a police chaplain or through our involvement in the crisis nursery…

 I can honestly say that some of the kids that have come through our house who may never have experienced what a mother should be, have always got a chance to experience what motherhood is all about when they have stayed in our home. Pam made sure of that!

My daughter-in-laws are good examples of motherhood**.**

 All of the mothers that I have had in my life, all had different techniques for mothering but all possessed the same essential qualities of motherhood.

 Kindness, gentleness, compassion, and most of all a sacrificial love for the children in their charge…

 A love that always put the needs of the children God placed in their charge above their own needs.

 A love, that in itself, bore witness and testimony of the love that Christ has for all of us.

 Motherhood is a Vocation, and not just a Vocation but a profession in and of itself!

 Guys, if we tried to hire out all that a mother does, all the services that she provides, and we had to pay for them, there is no way that even the Bill Gates of this world could afford it!

 Look at all the different vocations of motherhood?

 Just look at what a mother often has to do within the home. At times she is a cook, a cleaning lady, a chauffeur, a teacher, a Doctor, a nurse, a Psychologists, an attorney, an arbitrator, a judge…AND THIS IS JUST A PARTIAL LIST….and she is on call 24/7… and maybe has a full-time job outside the home as well!

 Again, if we had to hire all this out it is estimated that it would cost us in the area of 500.00 an hour, 24 hours a day, 7days a week, 52 weeks a year! That would come to approximately $12,000 a day or $84,000 a week, or $364,000 a month or $4,380,000 per year! ( About $79,000,000. In raising a child to age 18)

 Yet for the most part mothers are underpaid, overworked, taken for granted and unappreciated.

 And yet most often, happy and satisfied with their lot in life!

 Giving an address on Mother’s day President Theodore Roosevelt had this to say about moms…

“When all is said, it is the mother, and the mother only, who is a better citizen than the soldier who fights for his country. The successful mother, the mother who does her part in rearing and training aright the boys and girls who are to be the men and women of the next generation, is of greater use to the community, and occupies, if she would only realize it, a more honorable as well as a more important position than any man in it.

The mother is the one supreme asset of the national life. She is more important, by far, than the successful statesman, or businessman, or artist, or scientist.”

 You see, Motherhood is a calling from God that is second to no other calling of God!

 So God has many admonitions for us in Scripture as sons and daughters with regards to our mothers..

**Prov 1:8 (NIV)**

**Listen, my son, to your father's instruction**

**and do not forsake your mother's teaching.**

**9 They will be a garland to grace your head**

**and a chain to adorn your neck**.

 A young man comes to Jesus one day asking what he needed to do to inherit eternal life.

 Jesus responds…

Matt 19: 17 " Jesus replied. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments."

**18 "Which ones?" the man inquired.**

**Jesus replied, "`Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony,**

**honor your father and mother.”**

Paul tells us how we can, not just enjoy eternal life, but how we can live life to the fullest here on planet Earth…

**Ephe 6:2 (NIV) "Honor your father and mother"--which is the first commandment with a promise--**

**3 "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."**

We have been admonished by God as Christians to **honor** our Fathers and our mothers!

**5091 timao {tim-ah'-o}**

**1) to estimate, esteem, fix the value**

**2) to honor, to have in honor, to revere, venerate**

How do we do that?

 To realize, recognize that our mothers are a precious gift from God and are worthy of our esteem, not just for one day a year that we have set aside for them, but to honor and esteem them everyday!

 I believe God has given us mothers to give us a glimpse of Himself!

Nowhere in all creation do we see a better reflection of the love and compassion of God then what is revealed to us in a mom!

 I want to close with a song of thanks to all the mothers here this morning.

 It is a song by Ray Boltz that speaks of a Christian who crosses the Great divide and enters into their reward.

 I think that Ray Boltz may very well of had a Christian Mom in mind as he wrote this song.

“Thank You” by Ray Boltz

 Moms,

 All The little things that you have done, the sacrifices you have made may have seemed to go unnoticed at times here on earth, but one day all those little things that you have done and the sacrifices you have made will be proclaimed in Heaven….I believe that the Lord has a special reward set aside for all Mothers who have been faithful to His calling upon their life….

 Thank you for giving to the Lord and to us by being faithful to the call of Motherhood God has placed upon your life—

 Close prayer….

Lyrics “Thank You” by Ray Boltz

I dreamed I went to heaven
And you were there with me;
We walked upon the streets of gold
Beside the crystal sea.
We heard the angels singing
Then someone called your name.
We turned and saw a young man running
And he was smiling as he came.

And he said, "Friend you may not know me now."
And then he said, "But wait,
You used to teach my Sunday School
When I was only eight.
And every week you would say a prayer
Before the class would start.
And one day when you said that prayer,
I asked Jesus in my heart."

Thank you for giving to the Lord.
I am a life that was changed.
Thank you for giving to the Lord.
I am so glad you gave.

Then another man stood before you
And said, "Remember the time
A missionary came to your church
And his pictures made you cry.
You didn't have much money,
But you gave it anyway.
Jesus took the gift you gave
And that's why I'm here today."

Thank you for giving to the Lord.
I am a life that was changed.
Thank you for giving to the Lord.
I am so glad you gave.

One by one they came
Far as the eye could see.
Each life somehow touched
By your generosity.
Little things that you had done,
Sacrifices made,
Unnoticed on the earth
In heaven, now proclaimed.

And I know up in heaven
You're not supposed to cry
But I am almost sure
There were tears in your eyes.
As Jesus took your hand
And you stood before the Lord.
He said, "My child, look around you.
Great is your reward."

Thank you for giving to the Lord.
I am a life that was changed.
Thank you for giving to the Lord.
I am so glad you gave.