

## Remembering The Worthy Mother

Joella Pickup

What would you think of a person who did lots of "church work," even spending her money toward that work, but ignored her elderly mother in her distress, refusing to take her into her home, and not making other good arrangements for her care? Would you think that person is very motivated by God's injunction to "honor thy father and mother?" Her own mother! Seems to me that all that religious showiness which does not include her mother would make the Lord want to spew that person right out of His mouth! Jesus addressed that very thing in Mark 7 when He called the scribes and Pharisees "hypocrites" because, though they claimed the righteousness of the law, they had vowed their livelihood to be dedicated to God and so they claimed they could not care for their needy parents. Of course, they still lived well themselves! "We cannot break our vow to God!" they declared piously. Such selfishness effectively nullified the grace of their outward "godliness."

In 1 Timothy 5:4, Paul explains to Timothy about the great responsibility that the family has in providing for its own welfare. By taking care of one's parents and relatives, a Christian shows piety toward God. Verse 8 says that by not providing for one's family, people deny their professed faith in God and are worse than infidels. James 2:18-20 says, "... and I by my works will show thee my faith ... But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith apart from works is barren?" It is very clear, therefore, that failure to follow this precept is a sin of such magnitude that people could lose their soul.

We owe a great debt to our parents. Most often this does not mean mere money. It means our time, our attention, our help,

and our "hands-on loving care. This is nothing but right when you recall that your parents took care of you when you were not able to care for yourself. Now, my dears, even if you are at a young age, you have a responsibility to search out any needs your family has that you are able to meet. Suppose your dad or mom were stricken with a serious illness. You must step right in and do housework and meals and get younger siblings off to school, just as faithfully as your parents do, even when you may not want to! Just pray that the good ladies of the congregation will help, too! There are plenty of times when parents also are

bored or too tired, but they have to tend to the family anyway. Be loving and attentive to your parents whether you judge them to be worthy of your respect or not. Helping your parents, especially as they get older and become less able to care for themselves, is based on the inescapable fact that they are your parents and your responsibility (James 4:17).

The main industry for a married woman is her husband and her children. When a woman is married, all her former

activities have to be juggled into new positions of priority. Her former "singles" activities may have to take their places so far down the list that they become extinct! Things that a woman may personally like to do may have to bow to a child's illness or to a financial problem or to the wishes of her husband. Yet Christian women must remember the scripture in Galatians 6:9-10 which says, "And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. While we therefore have opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." (Continued . . .)

*We must do good to others as we would do for Christ. Jesus said that anyone who helps the least important person in their fellowship, giving them clothing, or helping when they are ill, even giving them a cup of cold water for Jesus' sake, should inherit the kingdom of God, because it is the same as having done those things for Jesus Himself. The opportunity and your ability are all it takes.*

## Remembering The Worthy Mother—(Continued)

Dorcas, Lydia, and Phoebe are three very worthy women of the New Testament. I know you can think of several such women in our congregation. Not too long ago I read a wonderful article by the preacher, Connie Adams, about his mother-in-law and her life in the Lord. I, too, remember how much my own mother and my mother-in-law helped others. But it's hard sometimes to do the right thing gladly. In 1 Timothy 6:17-19, the "rich" are warned not to be high-minded nor to trust in their riches, but to be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate to those in need. We often feel that the "rich" in that scripture means someone other than ourselves. Oh, No! In the early 1980s, my husband and I were asked by a family in the Philippines to allow their son to live with us so he could go to Florida College. With four of my five children still at home, I was not happy at first to grant that request. My husband wisely reminded me that to the Philippine Christians we were very rich because we had two cars and inside bathrooms! How could we explain to God someday that we could not take the boy in? I did a lot of praying about my attitude on that one. He ended up living with us three years and taught us a lot about humility. He was a good boy, a talented boy, who had just never seen indoor plumbing. I had to teach him at nineteen years old how to run his bath water, and how to flush the toilet, and how to use our electrical appliances. He said to us many times, "You very rich!" We must do good to others as we would do for Christ. Jesus said in Matthew 25:34-40 that anyone who helps the least important person in their fellowship, giving them clothing, or helping when they are ill, even giving them

a cup of cold water for Jesus' sake, should inherit the kingdom of God, because it is the same as having done those things for Jesus Himself. The opportunity and your ability are all it takes.

Peggy Watson, a worthy woman, if ever there lived one, used to teach Home Management at Florida College. She had to stop teaching to take care of her son in his thirties who was blind and very handicapped due to a type of muscular dystrophy. Students on their free time went to her home to sit and talk with Jim, helping Peggy any way they could. Before that time Jim was able to go to class at USF in his wheelchair, but he had a problem taking notes on the professor's lectures. A young man Jim's age and a fellow Christian took notes for him when Jim was too ill to go to class. It meant so much to Jim to know that someone cared enough to reach out and "touch him in his affliction."

In this congregation are many many women with multiple stories to tell about being wives and mothers through hardships and various struggles. There are also very many women who have been helped by a Christian friend or even a stranger, who saw the need, and filled it.

On this Mother's Day, a national day of honor for mothers, let us remember the honorable tasks being carried out every day by the mothers in this congregation, and those everywhere who have given so much of themselves for their families. Let us honor God for creating in His wisdom the family and its roles, and let us respect and remember the mothers who mean so much to us. They have given us life and the reason for living. May God bless you all.

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## Mother's Day—Mother's Love Remembered

The occasion of Mother's Day is extraordinary for all of us. It's time to love, kiss and hug the most precious creation of God—our Mom! All through our lives we love to put our heads in the lap of our mothers, unmindful of our status, position and standing. For her, we always remain the small kid but this is the day to visit our Mom, spend time with her, hold her hands and reassure her of our love and care. Some of the most beautiful messages from some of the greatest men and women of all times pay a glowing tribute to mothers on this Mother's Day:

- Your arms were always open when I needed a hug. Your heart understood when I needed a friend. Your gentle eyes were stern when I needed a lesson. Your strength and love has guided me and gave me wings to fly. —Sarah Malin
- If I had a flower for each time I thought of My Mother, I could walk in my garden forever. —Unknown

- Mother is the name for god on the lips and hearts of all children. —Brandon Lee
- Mother love is the fuel that enables a normal human being to do the impossible. —Marion C. Garretty
- All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe to my angel Mother. —Abraham Lincoln
- There is no velvet so soft as a mother's lap, no rose as lovely as her smile, no path so flowery as that imprinted with her footsteps. —Archibald Thompson
- The Miracle of Life nurtured by a woman who gave us love and sacrifice . . . Mother! —Joel Barquez
- This heart, my own dear mother, bends, with love's true instinct, back to thee! —Thomas Moore
- You share a love that knows no end. You're more than my mother, you are my friend. —Susan Jordan

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