

Leaving a Legacy

The Impact of a Mother's Life

May 14, 2017

This week we'll look at five ways a mother leaves a legacy for her children: How she

(1) TREATS people, (2) TRUSTS God, (3) TRAINS kids, (4) TENDS & (5) TENACIOUS

DAY 1: How a mother treats people.

1. One of the greatest things a mother does for her children is model how to relate to people. And there are LOTS of different "kinds" of people.

2. Mothers teach their kids to honor people. They do this by teaching kids manners, how to apologize by asking forgiveness, how to be respectful, thankful, etc.

3. As difficult as that is, the next step is how to treat people that are not nice, that are mean, bully, etc. This is where the Christian has power to respond with grace and strength unlike someone without Christ.

Luke 6:32 "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them."

Luke 6:35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

4. The real test of love is not our intentions, believing "I'm a loving person," but in loving difficult people.

5. What traits of difficult people does Jesus mention in v. 35?

6. What does love look like in v. 35?

7. Jesus is not talking about loving "feelings" toward difficult people. He is certainly talking about kind actions, and with His power we may be able to display kindness in our attitude, even if the feeling is missing!

8. Someday our kids will be adults and live in an adult world. They will discover that relationships are much tougher than they ever imagined. Some day they will ask you, "Mom, how did you love dad when I was 15?" Or, "How did you love *me* when I was 15?"

9. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 2: Trusts God.

1. When things are going well, our kids only learn the physical blessings of God. But when things are going “bad” they learn the importance of really **knowing God and trusting Him.**

2. Proverbs 31 gives a lengthy description of a godly woman.

Proverbs 31:25 She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come.

[26] She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.

Proverbs 31:30 Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.

3. These three verses give incredible insight into a godly woman.

4. She is not blown away by trouble. There is a strength about her, inside her that acts like an anchor. Her “laugh” is reflective of a real hope in God, not that circumstances will turn out as she wishes, but that a redemptive God will use whatever circumstances knock on her door to tell the story of God, in her and through her!

4. She also demonstrates to her children **the value of God’s word by obeying its commands.**

Psalms 119:10 I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.

*Psalms 119:165 Great peace have they who love your law, and **nothing can make them stumble.***

5. Finally, she is a woman that demonstrates that her chief joy in life, **her greatest treasure, is being loved by God.**

Zech. 3:17 The Lord your God is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory. He will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew in his love, he will exalt over you with loud singing.

6. Which of these three traits of your relationship with God is strongest? Weakest?

a. Trusting God in trials; anchored,

b. Obeying God’s commands,

c. Enjoying God as your chief joy.

7. What strikes you most from today’s devotional?

DAY 3: Trains in wisdom; disciplining foolishness

1. Every parent discovers that there is more to their young child than “innocence.” There is something else lodged deep in the heart of every child. Scripture calls it “folly.”

Proverbs 22:15 Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.

2. “Folly” is the description of a way of life that includes all of the following:

- a. The refusal to live for God, or see any duty to obey God.
- b. The proud belief that God is not needed,
- c. The proud belief that I know better what I need than God.
- d. I don’t need anyone to tell me what to do.
- e. My greatest pursuit is my own fulfillment, according to my terms, on my timetable.
- f. I will pursue all of the above, even if it means causing others grief or pain.

3. Look back at Proverbs 22:15 and look how Solomon describe the place and position of “folly.” What does he say?

4. Solomon makes three stunning observations about folly:

- a. It lies in the heart. (In other words, folly is not just a “knowledge” problem. It is a “will” problem, a stubborn determination to have life my way.
- b. Folly is “bound up” in the heart. It is “entwined,” enmeshed, woven through and through. It is embedded deep in the heart of everyone.

c. Pain is the only thing that is powerful enough to jolt human nature out of its folly. For parents, you can be sure that the following list is insufficient to deal with the folly problem:

- (1) Guilt trips,
- (2) Appealing to be better,
- (3) Psychological trickery,
- (4) Rewards,
- (5) Punishment that is not painful to the child.

Proverbs 13:24 He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.

Proverbs 29:15 The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother.

Deut. 6:5-9 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. [6] These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. [7] Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. [8] Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. [9] Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

DAY 4: Tends and Treasures others

1. Of course, every mom is to treasure and love her kids. She tends them like a shepherd.

2. Paul used this mom analogy to partially describe his ministry of church planting in the city of Thessalonica!

*1 Thessalonians 2:7 ...but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children.
8 We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us.*

9 Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.

3. But in addition to loving your kids, your kids need to see you living for something bigger than your own needs, and even your own family's needs. They must "see" you living for the interests of others, and valuing the interests of others!

Philippians 2:3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. [4] Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

4. You have got to give kids something bigger than themselves for which to live. We inadvertently teach our kids that life does indeed revolve around them.

Proverbs 31:20 She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.

5. Our "world" narrows in on a mom to be the "comprehensive" mom! "Look at all she does for her kids!"

6. But years later, she can't understand why her eighteen-year old is so self-centered. If kids see you sacrifice for them, they don't see it as sacrifice for you because they are in *your best interests*. They don't see the selflessness, unless you are helping someone outside your self-interest.

7. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 5: Tenacious.

1. The life of a mom is filled with joys, but it is also fraught with heartache about your kids. (Genesis 3 promises this).

Genesis 3:16 To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

2. The English translation of this verse from the Hebrew is not nuanced enough.

a. "Childbearing"

-We typically "hear" childbearing as labor and delivery, but the Hebrew meaning is far more than that. It means bearing your child all through life. The second clause of God's words to Eve (and all mothers) simply illustrates the first clause: "with pain you will give birth to children."

-Or, said another way, the physical pain you will experience in labor and delivery is a metaphor for the personal pain you will bear as a mother.

3. Motherhood stretches you in about every way there is to be stretched.

a. Physically: When your kids are little, sleeplessness, constant attention, and care take a toll.

b. Mentally: examples include dealing with teenagers who don't want to listen to your wisdom/advice.

c. Emotionally: sometimes you will hear cruel words, small-hearted attitudes, be taken for granted, "run over," or even rejected.

d. Spiritually: You will be on your knees before God as you realize you cannot change the hearts of your own kids.

4. All of this involves a "labor of love," or just plain sacrifice. A mother must know that difficulties will arise that will test her endurance and tenacity.

5. Let's finish this week with a "mom chuckle!"

Zachary, 4, came screaming out of the bathroom to tell his mom he'd dropped his toothbrush in the toilet. So she fished it out and threw it in the garbage. Zachary stood there thinking for a moment, then ran to his mother's bathroom and came out with *her* toothbrush. He held it up and said with a charming little smile, "We better throw this one out too then, 'cause it fell in the toilet a few days ago."