

Remnant Life Church
May 11, 2025
To Biblically Honor
(Mother's Day)
I Kings 3:16-28

A question often asked on Mother's Day is, what should we get Mom this year?
I think a much better question would be, how did we honor Mom this year?

- For many this is the day when families pay special tribute to their mothers in various ways. We take them out to dinner, or buy them special gifts
- But the sad thing is, often Mother's Day is a time when families try to atone for an entire year of neglect and lack of appreciation.
- Certainly not in all families, but in far too many

The story is told of a woman, the mother of 4 daughters, who made an appointment to see her lawyer. She was a widow, nearly 90 years of age, and knew her time was drawing to a close. She told her lawyer that she wanted to make an addendum to her will, which included her final instructions. She said, "I have decided that instead of a burial I wish to be cremated." "I can make that change," her lawyer told her. "Then," she continued, "I want my ashes to be scattered over the Bloomingdale's department store." The lawyer looked at her, somewhat puzzled. "I think I can make that happen," he said, "but why in the world over Bloomingdale's?" "Because that way," she replied, "I can be assured that my girls will come and visit me several times each month!"

Well, God's Word is clear that we are to honor both our mothers and our fathers

- In **Exodus 20** we read that Moses received the 10 Commandments directly from the hand of God
 - These commands are the foundational instructions for human behavior that became the basis for the laws of every people group throughout history
 - The commandments are divided into two groups, with one that is different than the other nine
 - The first 5 commandments have to do with our relationship with God
 - The final 4 have to do with our relationship with each other
 - The one in the middle, the 5th commandment, is unique and special
 - (**Ex 20:12**) *Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.*
- What sets this commandment apart?
 - First, it is the only one of the ten that comes with a promise
 - To obey that command means there is a specific blessing attached
 - And it has to do with life itself
 - Second, this command has become known as the bridge commandment
 - IOW, it joins the first set with the second because it speaks to how we must treat the two people who God assigned to have the greatest impact on our earthly lives

- But certainly, not all people had good, kind, and loving parents, but their impact is still undeniable
- In spite of that possibility, however, the way we are to honor them is not one based on reciprocity
 - IOW, we are not to honor them because of how good a parent they were to us
 - We are to honor them regardless of how good a parent they were
 - And what we can also see in that command is an earthly representation of God's love for us and a forerunner of the love that Jesus has, demonstrated by how He gave Himself for us as a sacrifice for our sins even though we were fully and completely unworthy.

This morning, I would like for us to look briefly at an OT account that is a familiar story to most people

- And even though it might seem to be an unusual passage to select, I believe it shows us a godly example of how we should honor our mothers
- But the 2 women who are involved could not be more different than our perceptions of a good mother

READ: I Kings 3:16-28

- We usually regard this passage as the shining example of Solomon's God-given wisdom
 - But there is another story there too – a Mother's Day story
- But not your traditional Mother's Day story
 - This looks nothing like the TV mom of the 50's who would vacuum the living room in a pleated skirt, matching blouse, heels, perfect hair and makeup, the outfit made complete by a brilliant white string of pearls hanging around her elegant neck
 - These two mothers could not be further from that
- Look at what we know about them
 - First, they are prostitutes (**v 16**)
 - While prostitution was certainly looked down on as an undesirable way of life, it was tolerated for a variety of reasons
 - Prostitutes were often slaves whose owners used them to make money for themselves
 - They may be women who had never married and had no other way to support themselves
 - They may have been desperate widows, which would further explain why Jesus had such compassion for them
 - Listen to what Jesus says about the religious leaders who were mistreating and taking advantage of widows
 - *"...They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. These men will be punished most severely."* **Mark 12:40**
 - Both of these women had conceived children with men they had no contact or relationship with

- And the fact that they were speaking for themselves before the King meant they were alone
 - Remember this was a culture where unmarried adult women had virtually no standing
 - As their case is brought before the king, we learn that one has lost her baby, one had her baby abducted, and both are claiming they are the victim
- One question often asked when considering this account is why would Solomon have taken the time to speak with them at all?
 - Earlier in this same chapter we read of God giving Solomon the wisdom he asked for
 - This means he had great compassion given to him by God, just as he had been given great wisdom
 - His actions are a blueprint for what the church today should be
 - Embracing the lost and those who are hurting regardless of their reason or circumstances!
 - I believe there are fewer times in history when people are hurting as much as they are today
 - The lost and hurting need to find Jesus and they will often see Him first in the kindness of a Christian
 - Is that not also so often the very heart of a mother?
 - How many times did your mother embrace you when you deserved something far less understanding and gentle?
- There is a common belief that is simply not true – it says that having a baby makes you a mother (or a father)
 - No more than having a piano in your house automatically makes you a musician or having a stove makes you a great cook
 - It is a process, a journey of victories and mistakes, just like the daily walk of a Christian
- But back to our story
 - This situation is as far from perfect as you can get
 - 2 women under the same roof living as prostitutes
 - One is heart-broken and the other is a schemer
 - But only one is the mother of the child
 - Solomon knew, in the wisdom that God had given him, that the real mother would do anything to protect her baby
 - And that is exactly what happened
 - The birth mother was willing to give up her baby rather than see him harmed
 - That is a love of sacrifice
 - And that is what God did for each of us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ – a sacrificial love
 - Many of us here this morning first saw that same type of fierce love modeled in our mothers

Solomon's solution to that problem provides us with a directive of how we should biblically honor our mothers today

- In Ex 20:12 – the word honor
 - Means to make weighty or heavy
 - To be of great substance
 - To honor your mother or father is to make them of great weight and substance
 - That means to dishonor is to give them no substance or weight in your life
 - Solomon gave these 2 women weight and substance even though they were unworthy
 - He honored them
- Admittedly, Mother's Day is not always easy
 - A difficult or non-existent relationship with his or her mother will always negatively impact a child and usually last well into their adult years, if not their entire life
 - And of course, you never fully recover from the loss of your mother
- But just as Solomon had wisdom and love for his people given by God, so too, we have those same gifts available to us
 - How do we use them?
 - First, it begins with surrendering your life over to God every day!
 - It is only through His presence fully in you that you can truly love, forgive, and honor
 - Second, we must look for opportunities to love others in every situation we encounter
 - To honor someone biblically is to do so unconditionally
 - Again, the Bible does not say honor your mother if she was a good mother, IOW worthy of that honor
 - You honor her out of the love of God and the perfect example we were given of how to love unconditionally in the life of Jesus Christ

We honor our mothers today, but we should do that every day for all that they have done and continue to do for us

- To honor your mother biblically is to love her without condition
- It is to understand and acknowledge the sacrifices all mothers make
- And it is to love them in the same way that God loves you