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Strength For Mothers Which Only God Can Provide

Luke 1:26-38

Introduction

1. Every year, the second Sunday in May is marked on our calendars as Mother's Day.
2. We often think of Mother's Day as a happy day, but that is not always the case.
 - a. For some of you, today is a difficult day because your mother is no longer here with you.
 - b. Some of you have not been blessed with children and you feel an emptiness because you have always wanted a child to whom you could give yourself and with whom you could share precious memories.
 - c. Some of you perhaps had a poor relationship with your mother — you always fought or argued with her — today you are carrying a burden of guilt.
 - d. Others of you struggled with rebellious children who rejected your teaching — today as you look back at those times you feel as if you have failed as a parent.
3. The good news today is that the Bible offers hope for each of us who have lived in imperfect families.
4. The task of a mother is never-ending.
5. Every mother in this room hopes and prays for the best in their children's lives.
6. But to whom do you as a mother look for strength and encouragement.
7. Ultimately, you look to Jesus Christ, but today, I want to direct your minds to a woman in God's Word who serves as an example for each of you, who are mothers here today, to draw encouragement from.
8. That woman is Mary, the mother of our Lord.
9. As we examine her life, I think all of us will find she faced more difficulties than

we might have imagined.

10. Still, she faithfully raised her son, supporting Him in spite of the opposition and today stands as a godly example of which each mother here can emulate.
11. I ask all of you who are fathers, husbands and sons to bear with me as I speak to the mothers among us today.
12. I ask you to encourage these women in their walk with God, not just today, but every day that you have them with you, for one day they will no longer be among us.

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I. Consider The Difficulties Mary Experienced As A Mother

A. MARY WAS BURDENED WITH A NEGATIVE REPUTATION

1. We know that the child which Mary bore was conceived of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18).

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 1:18, NASB95)

2. Almost no one else knew that.
3. Even Joseph, to whom she was betrothed, was going to send her away secretly to avoid disgracing her, until an angel of the Lord told him the whole story (Matthew 1:19-23).

“And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly.” (Matthew 1:19, NASB95)

“But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 1:20, NASB95)

4. The rest of the community did not accept it however — in a small town like

Nazareth, you know the rumors were were going around — “There’s Mary. She’s pregnant and she’s not married.”

5. When Jesus went back to His hometown for the second time, someone asked the question, “Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary . . .?” (Mark 6:3).
6. Typically, men of Jesus’ day were identified through their fathers:
 - a. John’s brother, James is referred to as “the son of Zebedee” (Mark 1:19).
 - b. Levi (Matthew) is called “the son of Alphaeus” (Mark 2:14).
 - c. Jesus calls Peter “Simon Barjona” (i.e., Simon, son of Jonah) (Matthew 6:17).
7. To call Jesus “the son of Mary” was to another of saying , he is an illegitimate child (Mark 6:3).
8. In John 8:41 when Jesus was being confronted by the religious leaders in Jerusalem they said to Him, “We were not born of fornication.”
9. There are some mothers which have this in their past:
 - a. Their children may throw it up to them: “You were pregnant before you were married, so who are you to lecture me on morality?”
 - b. “Your marriage didn’t last, so why are you trying to tell me I should be careful about whom I choose to marry?”
10. Such things are difficult to deal with, but they aren’t impossible.
11. If anything, they present us with the opportunity for teaching our children that as Christians we’re saved by God’s grace, and He has forgiven us of our past sins — and we are not going to repeat them.
12. If anything mothers who have struggled with this are teaching their children not to repeat their mistakes.

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B. SHE AND HER CHILDREN LIVED IN POVERTY

1. When Jesus was born, Joseph and Mary were poor.
2. We know this because the sacrifice which they offered at the temple for Mary's purification (i.e., "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons," Luke 2:24) following Jesus' birth was that permitted for those who were too poor to offer the "one year old lamb for a burnt offering" (Leviticus 12:8).
3. The later addition of four more boys (James, Joseph, Simon and Judas) and at least two girls to the family did not help their situation (cf. Matthew 13:55-56).
4. Many a mother has experienced the financial pressure of not being able to give their children everything other children receive.
5. More than one parent has taken on excessive debt to make sure their children have these things.
6. But this only creates added pressure within the home . . .
 - a. Either between parents who have differing views of what their children should have while growing up.
 - b. Or from children who point out what other parents are doing for their children.
7. Moms, I want to encourage you to resist this temptation.
8. Use it as an opportunity to teach some important lessons:
 - a. The most important things in life money can't buy (i.e., love, joy, peace, contentment, etc.).
 - b. The things upon which they may want us to spend significant amounts of money don't last.

Slide 4**C. SHE RAISED HER CHILDREN AS A SINGLE MOTHER**

1. We know that Joseph was with Mary at least until they took Jesus to Jerusalem with them for the Passover when he was 12 years old (Luke 2:41-51).
2. Beyond this, we never read of Joseph again.

3. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there were 10.9 million single parent families with children under 18 in country in 2022.
4. Of those families, 8.7 million or 80% were headed by a single mother.
5. If you are a single mother here today either as the result of divorce or because you have lost your husband and are left with children you must raise on your own, you are to be commended.
6. You work all week long and come home exhausted.
7. Still, you manage to get up on Sunday morning, feed your children, get them ready and bring them to Bible study and worship because, more than anything else, you want them to know and love the God you serve.
8. You are the unsung heroes of the church.

Slide 5**D. SHE KNEW THAT PEOPLE HATED HER CHILD**

1. When Jesus was born, Herod tried to kill Him, forcing Joseph and Mary to flee to Egypt in order to protect their son from Herod's evil intentions (Matthew 2:13).
2. Later, as He went about teaching and healing, the chief priest, scribes, Sadducees and Pharisees hated Him because of the influence He had with the people.
3. Luke tells us that "the scribes and the Pharisees" fiercely opposed Jesus" (Luke 11:53).
4. On another occasion, the Pharisees told Jesus to "Go away, leave here, for Herod wants to kill You" (Luke 13:31).
5. Today, mothers, Satan seeks to destroy your children through the harmful influences he works to bring into their lives.
4. I want to encourage you to take the necessary steps to protect your children from Satan's "flaming arrows" (Ephesians 6:16).

5. Guard their hearts and minds from the things which Satan utilizes through television and social media to harm your children.
6. Reassure them of the worth they have in your eyes simply because they are your children.
7. Remind them of the fact that God loves them so much that He sent His only Son to die for them.

Slide 6**E. SHE WATCHED HER SON FACE REJECTION AND ABUSE**

1. This is one of the hardest things we face as parents.
2. It is very doubtful that Mary ever forgot the words of Simeon as he held her baby in his arms at the Temple in Jerusalem and told her, “a sword will pierce even your own soul” (Luke 2:35).
3. This must have been exactly what she felt when she heard people saying of her son . . .
 - a. “He’s demon possessed.” (John 10:21)
 - b. “He’s guilty of blasphemy.” (Luke 5:21; John 10:33)
 - c. “He’s a drunkard” (Matthew 11:19; Luke 7:34).. . . none of which was true.
4. Imagine what she must have felt when she heard the chief priests and the crowd crying out to Pilate, “Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!” (John 19:15).
5. And then to watch as Pilate’s soldiers crucified her son (Matthew 27:55f.; Mark 15:40f.; Luke 23:49; John 19:25).
6. It is very hard when your child is the one being abused.

Slide 7**II. What Kept Mary Strong Through All Of This?****A. THE KNOWLEDGE THAT SHE WAS DOING GOD’S WILL**

1. After the angel explained to her what would take place concerning the birth of our Lord, she responded, "I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38).
2. When the shepherds found Mary and Joseph with their newborn son, they told the two what the angel had said out in the field while they were tending their sheep.

"Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10–11, NASB95)
3. Later, Luke tells us that "Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart" (Luke 2:19).
4. No doubt the same was true of the things which Simeon and Anna said to Joseph and Mary when they came to offer sacrifices at the Temple following Jesus' birth (Luke 2:25-38).
5. Then there were the words which Jesus Himself spoke to His parents at the Temple in Jerusalem when He was 12 years old.
6. When they found Him after looking for Him for three days, Mary asked Him, "Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, Your father and I have been anxiously looking for You." (Luke 2:48).
7. Jesus said to them, "Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house?" (Luke 2:49).
8. Following these things, Luke again tells us that Mary "treasured all these things in her heart" (Luke 2:51).
9. There is a certain reassurance that comes from knowing that you are working in harmony with God's will.
10. "Every mother has the breath taking privilege of sharing with God in the creation of a new life. She helps bring into existence a soul that will last for eternity." (James Keller)
11. Mothers, please realize that your child has an eternal soul.

12. Your greatest responsibility as a mother is to raise him or her to know Jesus Christ, and to obey Him as Lord and Savior so that he or she can live with Him eternally.
13. If you succeed there, you have truly been successful.

Slide 8**B. SHE HAD A SUPPORTIVE HUSBAND**

“And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took Mary as his wife,” (Matthew 1:24, NASB95)

1. John Wooden, head men’s basketball coach of UCLA for 29 years once said, “The best thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother.”
2. Men, we need to let our wives know that we love them and are supportive of them all through life.
3. Paul wrote to us as husbands and said:
 - a. “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her” (Ephesians 5:25).
 - b. “So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church” (Ephesians 5:28-29).
4. The way we nourish and cherish our wives is to meet their needs.
5. In his book, “*His Needs, Her Needs*,” author Willard Harley lists the needs which our wives have:
 - a. First, she needs *affection*, someone who will treat her with great tenderness.
 - b. Secondly, she needs *conversation*, the sharing of the heart.
 - c. Thirdly, she needs *honesty and openness*. Don’t keep secrets from her.
 - d. Fourthly, she needs *security*, both physical and financial.

- e. Fifthly, she needs *relational commitment*. She needs to know that she is the absolute priority (behind God of course) in your marital relationship.
6. Remember, not only are you investing in her, you are investing in the souls of your children as well.

Slide 9**C. SHE HAD A CLOSE, UNDERSTANDING FRIEND**

“Now at this time Mary arose and went in a hurry to the hill country, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.” (Luke 1:39–40, NASB95)

1. Upon learning that she was to be the mother of God’s child, Mary went to see her older relative Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-40).
2. They shared similar experiences because Elizabeth, who was past the years of childbearing was also expecting a child who would become the forerunner of Jesus.
3. Elizabeth served as an encourager to Mary during this difficult time in her life.
4. Because we see so many marriages breaking apart these days the need for extended family — grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc. — becomes more important every day.
5. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we are, in a very real sense, extended family — look around, there is very likely a young mother who needs your encouragement.
6. If you are an older woman in this church family, please consider going to a young mother with a word of encouragement and let her know that you are here for her should she need you.
7. Also, take a moment and call up a young mother and offer to watch the children for her and her husband so that they can have an evening out together.
8. We need to be the extended family for our young church families.

Conclusion

1. In His Word, God speaks to us about our eternal family:
 - a. One day we will be with our Father who is in Heaven, and with our Lord who gave His life in order to set us free from our sins.
 - b. One day we will be together as God's eternal family that place which His Son has prepared for us.
 - c. In that place of eternal joy we will live with Him forever.
2. Until that day comes, we need to do everything we can to make our families the best they can be to the glory of God.
3. This morning, if you are outside the family of God, we extend His invitation to you.
4. Christ's death, burial and resurrection make possible your salvation.
5. Will you come to Him?