

May 13, 2018
Easter 7
Mother's Day
Series B
ILC, Wichita, KS
Luke 1:4
6-55; "A Christian Mother's Day"

Grace, mercy and peace be unto you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

The text which forms the basis for my message today is taken from all three Scripture readings... but especially I would like to focus on:

Ephesians 6: 1-3... first three verses of Epistle:

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), 3 "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."

Here ends the text.

My good friends in Christ.

Today in the Christian Church we find ourselves between two holy and festival days. We have just celebrated the Ascension of our Lord into heaven this past Thursday, May 10. Pastor Tom Harmon gave an eloquent sermon on the Ascension.

And next Sunday we celebrate Pentecost Sunday. That day when the Church celebrates the gift of God the Holy Spirit given to the Disciples and to the Christian Church.

But... in between these two great festival days... there is also another very important date that we are celebrating... and that is Mother's Day.

While there are many who think that Hallmark Cards invented Mother's Day... actually the Christian Church did. Only the date that the church originally set to observe Mother's Day was August 15th. August 15th is when we observe the tremendous sacrifice and love of Mary and of all mothers. But in the United States. In the United States we have moved that date to the 2nd Sunday in May.

Although this is not a liturgical date... the Scripture readings, the prayers, the hymns for today are all about giving thanks to God for the women of the church.

Focusing on the women of the church... if I were to ask you to name two women in the Bible that you admire... who might you name?

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I was asked that question when I was in the 9th grade at St. John's Lutheran Academy in Winfield, Kansas. My religion professor asked each one of us to select two women from the Bible who made a positive impression on us. He then wanted us to write about why they made a positive impression on us.

The first woman I selected was Sarah. You might remember that Sarah was the wife of Abraham. The reason that I said Sarah impressed me was that she was 98 years old when she gave birth to her first son, Isaac.

I went on to write that as many of the men in my family did not marry until quite a late age in life... the example of Sarah giving birth at the age of 98 years old, held out much hope for me.

The second woman that I selected that made a positive impression on me was Mary, the Mother of our Lord.

I wrote that the reason Mary made a positive impression on me was because she did God's will in living out her life. Remember when the angel came to Mary and told her that even though she was not married she would give birth to a son. In spite of the fact that Mary could have faced a lot of rejection... she told that angel... that she made a conscious decision to do God's will.

As we honor our Mother's and honor all Christian women today... I would invite you to join with me as we focus our thoughts around these two questions:

- (1) Why do we honor our Mother's, and
- (2) How do we honor our Mothers?

1. The first reason we honor our Mother's comes from the Epistle lesson for today. In the Epistle lesson for today we hear St. Paul quote the book of Exodus 20:12 as Paul says: "**Honor your father and mother**" (this is the first commandment with a promise)."

You and I honor our Mother's because God's calls us to honor our Mothers... and along with that ... it is the right thing to do.

Yet, our society is not focused on living the right way so much anymore. Our society has changed a great deal in our century. One of these changes is that it seems that mothers and women are not treated with the respect and honor that God has commanded.

One of the reasons that we honor our Mother's is that it simply is the right thing to do.

But there are many other reasons...

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b. another reason we honor our Mother's is because of the sacrifice they have made for us. Here we can think of Mary and the sacrifice she went through in her life... to be a Mother to Jesus... to support Jesus... to even walk with Him to His death on the Cross... all the while watching our Lord suffer and die for us.

And yet, through all the sacrifices that she made Mary's only request from God was that our God would give her strength to do His will.

Each one of us can probably think of many different ways and different times that our Mother's made sacrifices for us. The life of a Mother is a life spent doing their best for their child.

And yet, the reality of the situation is that many women in 2018 are not shown the respect and honor due them. Tragically, many women find themselves: raising a family, working both at home and outside the home, facing serious emotional and financial problems, and yet feel no sense of honor or respect.

We honor our Mother's not only because God calls us to honor our Mother's but we also honor them because of the great sacrifices they have made for us.

2. A second point for us to consider this day ... is how do we show our love for our Mother's.

a. One way that we can show our love for our Mother's is by taking a moment today and to say a prayer for our Mother's. We can take some time during this day and thank God for the Mother's who have blessed our lives.

b. Another way we can show our love for our Mother's is by telling them thank you. We can find some time during the day today to tell our Mother's thank you. We do appreciate all you have done for us in our lives. If our Mother's live out of state... we can take a moment today to call them on the telephone and thank them for all they have done for us. Or, if your Mother now lives with our Lord in heaven you can take a moment to thank God for the Mother that graced your life.

c. And finally, a way that we can show our love for our Mother's... by living the right kind of life. By continuing to walk in the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is perhaps the greatest tribute that we can show to our Mother.

My good friends in Christ. As our nation sets aside this day to honor our Mother's... you and I set aside time to thank our Lord for the Mother's who have graced our lives. We set this time aside to honor our Mother's because showing honor to our parents is all part of God's plan. It is the right thing to do to honor our parents... and along with honoring them we also let them know that we love them.

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May our Gracious God grant to all women this day a most blessed Mother's Day ... for each of you in your own right has been a blessing in our lives. Amen.

Amen.

Now may the peace of God which surpasses all understanding keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.