

## **Fighting for our Family *Defending Motherhood***

**Introduction:** Today is Mother's Day—we honor our moms

**NOTE:** For some this is hard, painful (unable to bear children, lost your mom, children or estranged)

- Want to be sensitive
- But, motherhood is under attack
- Crucial that we uphold its value in our culture

(ILL) Large Catechism (Martin Luther on 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment—“Honor your father and your mother.”)

*“God has given this walk of life, fatherhood and motherhood, a special position of honor, higher than that of any walk of life under it and he distinguishes father and mother above all other persons on earth, and places them next to Himself.”*

*“It is a much higher thing to honor than to love. Honor includes not only love, but also deference, humility, and modesty directed toward a majesty concealed within them.”*

### Majesty Concealed in Motherhood!

My mom taught me so many godly virtues. They have stayed with me. Where would I be without her?

1. Taught me to pray... “you better pray that stain comes out.”
2. Sense of imagination... “or else what?”
3. Taught anticipation... “Just you wait until your dad gets home.”
4. Taught me to count at least to three!
5. Taught me repentance... “Don't you ever do that again!”
6. Self-control... “Don't touch anything!” (Remember with imagination and or else!)

### Majesty Concealed

## I. Cultural Attack on Motherhood

### A. 1963—"The Feminine Mystique" Betty Freidan

1. Women trapped in unwanted domestic life
2. Most women do not want to be stay-at-home moms
3. 3 years later---NOW (National Organization for Women)

### B. Radical feminism assaults esteem of those who make motherhood a priority

1. Two assertions
  - a. Raising children is for day cares
  - b. A valuable "worldly woman" is professional
2. Nothing wrong with women working outside of the home
3. Must also communicate the value of motherhood
  - a. What greater thing is there than to raise children?
  - b. May seem mundane (driving to games, doctor's appointments, band, etc.)

### C. We must never buy into the cultural view of motherhood

(ILL) Defending Motherhood

D. Motherhood is a hindrance! (Women's right to choose)

Attack on Motherhood (Nicholeen Peck—Blogger)

*I'm fairly certain public school had a negative effect on me and my identity. When I was a small girl, I loved nothing more than playing house, taking care of my baby dolls, and babysitting. But, by the time I was in the fifth grade, even though I still requested new dolls for gift-giving holidays, I stopped telling my friends I wanted to be a mom. In fact, I was pretty sure it wasn't cool to want to be a mom.*

*At school, teachers talked about all the great things women could do that men did, but being a mother and having a child was never one of them. I guess that's because men can't have babies and become mothers. The teachers' message was that all boys and girls were supposed to be the same, and girls could only be happy if they lived like boys. Looking back, I see now that the special things my female biology enabled me to do were being completely disregarded.*

*On and off the playground some of my friends said things like, "I might have one child, but only if it doesn't get in the way of my career." Even though I always had some discomfort inside about these selfishly motivated comments, I gave in to peer pressure and started saying similar things.*

*I disconnected emotionally, logically and physically from my mother. When I did this, I naturally disconnected from my father and siblings too. Everything I was working toward was all about me. What I know now is that to maintain a disconnection and rationalize my judgment of my mother, I had to disconnect from everyone. I sadly ignored the fact that my mother was the heart of our home, and everything there seemed to acknowledge her value and the importance of her role.*

*One sunny Mother's Day, when I was about 15, my negative views of motherhood suddenly changed during a visit to my grandmother's home. One by one I saw my relatives take turns expressing thanks for the profound influence my grandmother had on their lives and the power she possessed in her community and among her family and friends. When it was my turn to share something about my grandma, my heart had found a truth my mind had been rejecting for years, mothers are more powerful than anyone else in our societies because they change multiple people's worlds every day. I ended up declaring that I wanted to be just like my grandmother and have a family like she had. The real meaning of motherhood bit me hard that day!*

*Mothers and grandmothers are powerful. They form our characters, set the example for happy living, heal our hearts, point the way to happiness and truth, and nurture our identities. All greatness stems back to the hand that formed and taught the great person.*

*Mothers may not all become the great writers, painters, composers, or thinkers of the day, but they write, paint, and compose on the hearts of the future writers, painters, composers, and thinkers.*

*Today, many believe motherhood is akin to a servant position, while "true power" emanates from women in corporate leadership positions. There are more corporate women in corporate leadership positions in the world than ever before. In some countries, like Jamaica, St. Lucia, and Columbia, women are more likely to be the head of a company. It seems women have clearly received the message that they can do whatever kind of employment they desire.*

*In a recent article in Harper's Bazaar, which caters to fashion-conscious women, columnist Jennifer Wright said that motherhood is "not the most important job there is...It is more like a very demanding volunteer position that you can never, ever, get out of...producing a younger person is not necessarily the main contribution people make to the world."*

*Not only are these statements misleading for women and grossly biased against functioning families (who rely heavily on a mother to unify and strengthen the whole family), but they also simply aren't true. There is no greater contribution to the world than creating a good, secure, hard-working person who is willing to sacrifice for the greater good. Mothers do this every day by raising their children. Mothers either create greatness or they don't.*

*Greatness comes from knowing who you are. Parents teach that; it's called identity. Loving parents give each of their children an identity in a family setting. They also lead their children to the truth about God, as well as the child's role in His plan for the world. This in turn creates an identity with God.*

*Motherhood has always been attacked by the godless and the sensually minded of the world. Motherhood is as near to divinity as a person can get. A mother literally joins with God in bringing a soul to the world. A good mother trains her children to love goodness and to have a desire to devote their lives to making the world great, while at the same time helping others find their greatness. Children trained well by their mothers possess public and private virtue that sets them apart from an increasingly virtue less and selfish world.*

*It stands to reason that motherhood must be attacked by those who want to continue manipulating and having power over societies. To help them achieve this unrighteousness dominion, they must keep mothers "in their place." If popular opinion and negative sentiments about motherhood can be perpetuated, then mothers lose some of their positive and moral influence in societies.*

## **II. The Biblical Value of Motherhood**

### **A. The Bible holds motherhood in high esteem**

#### **1. Rachel**

***Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!" Genesis 30:1 NKJV***

#### **2. Singleness is also a high-calling**

***But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord — how he may please the Lord. 1 Corinthians 7:32 NKJV***

(Tabitha —ministry with good works and charitable deeds—Acts 9:36)

#### **3. Motherhood is an important ministry**

***When I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also. 2 Timothy 1:5 NKJV***

(ILL) Moms can tell the story of Jesus in a way a preacher never can.

### **B. The Bible sees motherhood as part of God's plan**

#### **1. Creation—incomplete without mom**

#### **2. Work of mothers fits squarely in the purpose of God**

**NOTE:** Ministry isn't over if children are raised

***Similarly, teach the older women to live in a way that honors God. They must not slander others or be heavy drinkers. Instead, they should teach others what is good. 4 These older women must train the younger women to love their husbands and their children, 5 to live wisely and be pure, to work in their homes, to do good, and to be submissive to their husbands. Then they will not bring shame on the word of God. Titus 2:3-5***

3. So Word of God is not dishonored

C. Children are not an interruption to the life-work of parents—they are the life-work

D. God even uses the imagery of motherhood to describes His character.

*As one whom his mother comforts, So I will comfort you; And you shall be comforted in Jerusalem." Isaiah 66:13 NKJV*

### III. The Divine Expectation of Motherhood

A. Jochabed models the divine expectation of motherhood

*Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. 9 And he said to his people, "Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; 10 come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and so go up out of the land." 11 Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Raamses. 12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel. 13 So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. 14 And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage — in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve was with rigor. 15 Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one was Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah; 16 and he said, "When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstools, if it is a son, then you shall kill him; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live." 17 But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive. 18 So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this thing, and saved the male children alive?" 19 And the midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are lively and give birth before the midwives come to them." 20 Therefore God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and grew very mighty. 21 And so it was, because the midwives feared God, that He provided households for them. 22 So Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, "Every son who is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive." 2 And a man of the house of Levi went and took as wife a daughter of Levi. 2 So the woman conceived and bore a son. And when she saw that he was a beautiful child, she hid him three months. Exodus 1:8-2:2 NKJV*

1. Few mentions in Scripture
2. Hebrew slavery for 400 years
3. Growth—Pharaoh's edict
4. Failure of midwife
5. Imagine the fear of being called to be a mother in this time

NOTE: Today culture threatens to steal our children—TV, gender issues, sexualized culture, competition

6. It is a dangerous world

#### B. Jochabed had courageous faith

***By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command. Hebrews 11:23 NKJV***

1. Hid him for 3 months (crying baby)
2. Faith in action—not passive (not “let go and let God”)
3. Called her to rise

(Foster, adopt, unsaved husbands, single moms)

4. Courage in the face of threatening circumstances
5. They want to please God and so they trust He will care for them

#### C. Jochabed had a sensible faith

***But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river's bank. 4 And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him. Exodus 2:3-4 NKJV***

1. Couldn't be hidden anymore
2. Wicker basket—Nile River
3. Ark—tar, pitch (Noah/Moses) in unsafe women—crocodiles)
4. But sensible (among reeds, went where congregated)—set Miriam nearby
5. When discovered she offered a nurse
6. Sometimes motherhood requires sensible flexibility—makes things happen even if its hard

(ILL) Ballgames and church

#### D. Jochabed's courage and sensible faith were rewarded

***Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. And her maidens walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it. 6 And when she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. So she had compassion on him, and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." 7 Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you?" 8 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the maiden went and called the child's mother. 9 Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. 10 And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. So she called his name Moses, saying, "Because I drew him out of the water." Exodus 2:5-10 NKJV***

1. Raised her child plus got paid
2. Mother did all she could—but could not do it all on her own
3. Nile—instrument of death for Pharaoh—became salvation for Moses (cross)
4. Later, educated in Pharaoh's house
5. Later, tended sheep in the wilderness
6. Later, delivered Israel

NOTE: God never mentioned but clearly at work

- Things mothers can do
- Ultimately must leave it in God's hand
- Letting go (to fail, to hurt you, to leave)

#### **Conclusion:**

*Someone once turned to a full-time mom and said, "and what is it that you do, my dear?" She responded, "I am socializing two homosapiens into the dominant values of Judeo-Christian tradition, in order that they might be instruments for the transformation of the social order into the kind of eschatological utopia that God willed from the beginning of creation." She then added, "And what do you do?"—Jonathan Conner*

*The most important person on earth is a mother. She cannot claim the honor of having built Notre Dame Cathedral. She need not. She has built something more magnificent than any cathedral—a dwelling for an immortal soul, the tiny perfection of her baby's body. The angels have not been blessed with such grace. They cannot share in God's creative miracle to bring new saints to heaven. Only a human mother can. Mothers are closer to God the Creator than any other creature; God joins forces with mothers in performing this act of creation...what on God's good earth is more glorious than this: to be a mother?*