

Women Who Glorify God*

God's plan and provision for family leave me breathless. I am very thankful for the opportunity from Ligonier for addressing this topic at this conference, and I'm humbled to speak about women's place in the set apart family.

But first to women who are not wives and mothers. Let me say that I appreciate your presence here. To me it is an indication that you understand that what God does say about being wives and mothers has overarching implications for all of us, and that you also understand the importance of the calling of wife and mother and you want to be supportive of their call to those roles.

My assignment is to speak to that particular calling but let me say up front that the overriding issue is not our role but our goal. Our goal is God's glory regardless of our circumstance or our season of life. But this is what makes the Christian life so profound yet so simple.

One of the joys of growing older that this mingling of the dailiness of life and the bigness of life is so much clearer and comfortable to me now than it was 30 years ago when I was mothering three little children. An old lady sees the picture of the moment and, at the same time, the expanse of the landscape. It was that way for me recently when our family gathered together for a glorious event.

Our granddaughter, Mary Kate, was making her profession of faith as a full communing member of her church. We have determined this is a momentous event in the lives of our grandchildren. In fact, it is the event that should determine every other decision the child will make from how she'll spend the Sabbath to how she'll spend her money to what clothes she'll wear to her choice of a husband. We think it should be a big event so we made it so for Mary Kate.

As we all sat there, I experienced a multitude of emotions and thoughts. My mother was with us. There was this one moment that I looked down the pew and realized that three generations were watching the fourth do what each of us had done. There was a rush of gratitude for that legacy of grace that we could give to Mary Kate.

There was also a longing desire to tell her everything we had learned about being a redeemed woman. I longed to hand her a recipe. "Mary Kate, do it this way and life will always be delicious." But I know better. I know that a prescriptive approach will not work. I know that life is not always delicious because these same women have also stood at a grave as we buried Mary Kate's little sister.

But I am convinced that everything Mary Kate needs to know in life and in death was encapsulated in seed form in those few moments when she took her covenant vows and she bound herself to Jesus and His people. That event can be an object lesson that we can use to teach Mary Kate the grand themes of Scripture. And it is those big themes that she needs to know and to bring to bear on every decision, every circumstance, relationship, and role that she will face.

I fear that so much of the confusion of womanhood comes because we isolate the role of wife and mother from the rest of Scripture and then we reduce that discussion to roles and

behaviors. Whenever we do this, we tend to end up with goofy distortions. A piecemeal, behavioral approach fails to recognize the unity of God's Word and results in a fragmented perspective of faith and life.

The big themes I want Mary Kate and her generation to know are the themes that I'd like to talk to you about today. I'll be making application of these themes to the particular role of mother and wife; but again, let me say that there are implications for Mary Kate even if that is not God's path for her.

Big theme number one: God's Creation Design of Woman.

The opening words of Scripture --- "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" teach us that God is the reference point for all of life. He spoke and creation happened. His Word is the authority for all of life. At the end of each creation day, God said it was good. Creation was good because the Creator is good.

Then on the sixth day God said, "Let us make man in Our image and in Our likeness." Being made in His image gives us identity and purpose. Mary Kate stood before her family and her church as an image bearer of the Sovereign Creator with the capacity to glorify Him.

But you see, that was also true for our grandson when he made public profession of faith. But Mary Kate stood there as a young woman. Scripture tells us that "God created man in His own image; in His own image He created them. Male and female He created them." We know that in Christ there is neither male nor female. In other words, there are no distinctions or preferential treatment in our union with Christ; but, this does not negate God's creation design and order.

In Genesis 2, we read, "The Lord God said it is not good for the man to be alone." Why was it not good for the man to be alone? Because he was created in the image of a triune God. The unity and diversity of the Trinity demanded an image bearer that reflected this equal but different characteristic. Equality did not preclude gender distinctiveness. Rather equality allowed their distinctiveness to be so perfectly complimentary that it blended into a mysterious oneness that gloriously reflects the oneness of the Trinity.

And yet we live in a culture whose hostility against this design and order has raged for several decades. The feminist philosophy says that equality means sameness and insists on independence from husbands and families. Now the daughters of these women are confused.

In her book, [What Are Mothers Didn't Tell Us](#), Danielle Crittenden writes: "For in all the ripping down of barriers that has taken place over a generation, we may have inadvertently also smashed the foundations necessary for our happiness. Pretending that we are the same as men with similar needs and desires has only led many of us to find out, brutally, how different we really are. In demanding radical independence from men, from our families, we may have also abandoned certain bargains and institutions that didn't always work perfectly but until very recently were civilization's best ways of taming the feckless (weak, ineffective, careless, irresponsible) human heart." Miss Crittenden's research and analysis are helpful, but her solutions are flawed, because she too begins with woman and not with God. She too is searching for woman's happiness, and it's an endless journey.

I pray that Mary Kate and her generation will write books entitled What Our Mothers Told Us and that they will say that our mothers told us that our reference point is God, that we are His image bearers that are purpose is His glory and our authority is His Word. They told us about our creation design; a design that is never outdated because it transcends time and place. A design that is bigger than any role in life but it impacts every role in life. It is the design that is stamped upon us at creation, and it's intrinsic to who we are.

Let's look to the Word for this design. "God said that it is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for Him." The Hebrew word used for helper is the word *ezer*, and its used throughout the OT primarily to refer to God as our helper. When we consider how God is our helper, we begin to see the richness in the strength of this word.

Moses spoke of God as his helper who saved him from the sword of Pharaoh. In Psalms, we read that God is the helper to: the victim, the fatherless, the needy, and the afflicted. God is the referred as the helper who is our support, strength and shield. I think you get the picture.

The helper is not a fragile word, and we are not called to a mission of fluff. It is a ministry of defense and comfort and compassion. It is this design that brought a completeness to the Garden that received God's pronouncement, "It is very good", and caused Adam to exclaim, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh."

But sin marred that design, and now woman thinks of her womanhood in terms of her own self-fulfillment. She seeks her own completeness. She is her own reference point, and she is her own authority. The way of the world is a never ending quest for her own happiness.

And that brings us to big theme number two: The Gospel Empowers and Compels Us to Exercise Our Design.

As I listened to Mary Kate confirm her faith that Jesus is her Savior, I am thrilled with the knowledge that God is the initiator in her relationship with Him. He chose her before the foundation of the world and set His affection upon her. He claimed her as His very own and pledged Himself to her in covenant faithfulness.

I was struck with the fact that no matter how long I live, I can never exhaust the wonder of my redemption. I will always have something fresh and sweet to tell Mary Kate about our Redeemer. It is because of our redemption that we can live out our helper design. It is our redemption that breaks the reign of sin in our lives and empowers us to fulfill our creation mission rather than to reinvent womanhood on our own terms. And it is our knowledge of our Redeemer's love that compels us to do so.

I want Mary Kate to understand justification so well that she never becomes entangled with works righteousness, that she never thinks, "If I'm just a little bit better, God will love me a little bit more", that she'll know that He loves her fully and completely. I long for her to know the expanse of His love, for her to know that He is with her and that He is mighty to save, that He takes delight in her and rejoices over her.

Because you see, we are products of our theology. What we believe about God shows up every minute of every day. The redeemed woman who has a biblical apologetic of womanhood has a focus and a clarity of purpose that enables her to be a true helper. She

gazes upon God's glory, His holiness, and His majesty, as He has revealed Himself to us in His word and she offers herself as a living sacrifice. She is so captivated by the reality that she is clothed with the righteousness of Christ that she joyfully extends love and acceptance to others.

She values the calling of wife and mother but she knows that this is not what defines her so she does not make an idol of the family. She fiercely guards her family but she holds them loosely before God because she trusts His sovereignty and His love. Her theology produces a maturity that enables her to move with grace through different seasons and circumstances of life. She is so grateful for God's mercy in her life that she becomes a stream of mercy and forgiveness to others. The redeemed helper is not trapped by the materialism of the world because she has a pilgrim mentality. Her sights are on her heavenly home.

But you see, the helper design is alien and offensive to a fallen world. It doesn't fit. And so the world tells woman that there is a better way, and it has been so since Satan slithered into the Garden and convinced Eve to try the way of independence and autonomy. The Gospel empowers and compels us to live out our design and the Gospel also provides the context in which the helper design makes sense.

And that's big theme number three: The Covenant Community Is the Context in which We Are to Live Out the Implications of Our Design.

Mary Kate's church invited my husband to officiate when she became a member of the church, and it was wonderful to watch the two of them standing there. But we all knew very well that this wasn't about our nuclear family. Mary Kate had embraced Jesus as her Savior, and she was identifying herself with the people of God. She was promising to live covenantally before God and with His people. The words that Ruth said to Naomi are often used in wedding ceremonies and that is certainly appropriate, but they were equally appropriate for Mary Kate as she stood before her covenant community and presented herself for full communicant privileges and responsibilities in the church of Jesus Christ.

In a very real sense, though she probably didn't understand all the implications, she was saying to her church, "Where you go I will go. Where you stay I will stay. You people will be my people, and your God will be my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me be it ever so severely if anything but death separates you and me."

It occurred to me that quite likely the next time Mary Kate stands before her church and makes covenant vows will be when she marries. The vow she took in identifying herself with God and with His covenant people means she has promised many things. But one of the things she has promised is that she will marry within the realm of the covenant and that marriage will be lived out in the context of the covenant community.

I find it very interesting that immediately after the Fall into sin and the revelation of the covenant of grace has been communicated, God gives us a startling picture of the opposite of the covenant way of life. In Genesis 4 you remember the story that Cain kills his brother Abel. God comes to him and said, "Where is your brother?" And his response was, "I don't know. Am I my brother's keeper?" He was clueless that the answer is "Yes". Living covenantally means that we are our brothers and sisters keepers. We are fellow citizens of God's household; we are family, and we are to care for each other.

Individualism is the way of worldings. Then we read that, "Cain went out from the Lord's presence and gave birth to a son. And Cain built a city and named it for his son." The autonomy of individuals is also the way of worldings. In this system, the helper design is an anomaly. The helper design is useless and senseless in an autonomous vacuum. It is not until we see the covenant scheme of Scripture that we begin to understand the wonder and the beauty of the helper design. Two of the characteristics of covenant life are community and compassion and this is exactly what the helper design equips us for. And so we are equipped for this mission.

Basketball story --- What mattered most? The score or the relationship?? Her feminine instincts won the day.

Women really do have this unique sense of being able to bring family into home and church. The helper design sparkles in the context of covenant life. But you see it's going to take courageous women like McKenzie; women who are willing to stand against the pressure and the screams of culture. It's going to take selfless women who are willing to say the relationship is more important than the score.

The redeemed woman who is married knows her marriage is to be a Gospel picture to her children and her covenant community and to the world. In order for it to be so, she knows that her husband must be the first beneficiary of her capacity for community and compassion. She knows that he must see the brightest reflection of her redemption.

She also knows that her marriage is not just about her. She knows that an individualistic approach to marriage and motherhood levels those high and holy callings to the trivial and temporary, but the covenantal perspective elevates them to the authentic and the eternal. She knows that her children are not just her own. They are gifts to the community. This means that she does not keep church at a distance, but she understands the interdependence of her family and the family of families.

She knows that her children need to grow up as a part of this larger family. As covenant children, she knows that they are privileged to live and move among the company of the redeemed and she teaches them to assume their covenant privileges to this community. She knows that if they are planted in the house of the Lord they will flourish, that they will bear fruit in old age that they will stay fresh and green.

The Westminster Confession of Faith states that *marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife, for the increase of mankind with a legitimate issue and of the church within holy seed*. I am saddened by the isolationist approach of many young families. I know that their motive is noble that they want to protect their families. But in fact, it leaves their families vulnerable and alone and causes their children to be individualistic and selfish.

There's a beautiful picture of covenant life given in Numbers 2. After the completion of the tabernacle, and we read in Exodus how the glory of the Lord came upon the tabernacle. Here was the visible manifestation of God's covenant promise to be their God and to dwell among them. But where was the tabernacle?

In Numbers 2 we read, "The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 'The Israelites were commanded to go and camp around the tent of meeting some distance from it. Each man under his

standard with the banners of his family.' ” Each family was connected to the family of families as they lived around the distinguishing characteristic of community life: the presence of God in their midst.

If any mother had complained to her husband that she didn't like the neighbors in the tent next door and that their children were being a bad influence on her children. And their family had packed up their tent and wandered through the desert alone, they would have been weak and vulnerable. Worse...they would have distanced themselves from the glory. Living *corum deo* means living in community.

The redeemed helper whose covenant sensibilities have been honed also understands the importance of the virtue of domesticity and the ministry of hospitality. She knows that this is more than baking her own bread and having a beautifully decorated home. Domesticity means a devotion to home life not just her own home, but the church home.

I think that the most definitive statement of domesticity was made by Jesus when He said, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. In my Father's house are many rooms. I'm going to prepare a place for you.” In our heavenly home, we will not live in isolation from one another.

Domesticity means that we prepare safe places where troubled hearts can find rest and comfort. Safe places that reflect our heavenly home. And our helper design equips us for this ministry. The redeemed helper is not inward focused. You will find her taking her children to visit the elderly and you will also find her taking them across social and cultural barriers to extend the boundaries of the covenant to the oppressed, the needy and the afflicted. As she does so, she trains yet another generation to live covenantally.

The redeemed helper who is not married understands that she is to be a mother in Israel and that she is to join with other women to be corporate helpers in God's church.

Big theme number four: Headship and Submission Release Us to Fulfill Our Creation Design.

When Gene asked Mary Kate the questions to become a full communicant member of the church, he explained to her again that just as God has said that her mom and dad are the authority in her home, God has placed the elders as the authority of her church. He asked her if she submitted to that authority. Involuntarily placing herself in submission under those authorities, Mary Kate positioned herself to receive the blessings, benefits, and protection of the church. If God's plan for her is marriage, this prepares Mary Kate to understand about submission to her husband.

Submission has nothing to do with status. Men and women are equal. Submission has to do with function. It is a reflection of the ontological equality and yet the functional difference in the Trinity. It is the way God has ordered life in the kingdom, and it is good because He is good. Headship and submission are God's ordained means for achieving oneness in the marriage. Submission is not a legalistic list of behaviors. It is not mindless passivity. It is more about attitude than actions.

I have to wonder if one reason there is such resistance to submission is that we do not look at this issue in the context of the covenant or in light of our helper design. We isolate it from the rest of Scripture and from the reality of the redeemed community. Because you see it is very sad but sometimes Christian women find themselves in a situation where they cannot trust

the authority of their husbands, where they're even told to submit to sin. But you see in the realm of the covenant, a woman in this situation is not left alone to determine what is right. A woman in this situation should turn to the elders in her church and ask them to intervene. She should ask for their counsel and direction, and she should receive it.

I cannot give logical arguments for submission. It absolutely defies logic that Jesus would release the glories of heaven so that He could us the glories of heaven. In Philippians we are told, "your attitude should be the same of Christ Jesus who being in the very nature God did not consider equality with God something to be grasped but made Himself nothing. Taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness, and being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death even death on a cross."

Submission is not about logic. It's about love. Jesus loved us so much that He voluntarily submitted to death on a cross. His command is that wives are to submit to their husbands. This is a gift that we voluntarily give to the man we have pledged to love in obedience to the Savior we love. The redeemed helper knows that submission does not restrict her. It actually frees her to fulfill her helper design. The redeemed helper wants her husband to be a leader who cherishes her, but she does not want him to coddle her because she knows that coddling will make her immature and weak.

After missionary Hugh Litton was killed in an automobile accident, his wife Betty remained in Korea until her retirement. I heard her speak at a women's conference last year, and she told about their early years on the mission field with six little children, and Hugh was gone a lot. She said that she was not always sweet about it. And then she surprised us all when she said, "I'm glad that Hugh did not give in to my whining and complaining, but he did what was right, and I think that I am more secure because of it. Indeed there is a beautiful security and maturity about Betty Litton that I fear many women will never experience because they have not learned the beauty of God's order.

Now I'd like to look at these four themes very briefly as they were lived out in the lives of two women in Scripture. You may want to turn to Luke 1, and there we see the beautiful picture of when Mary was given the assignment to be the mother of the Messiah. In Luke 1:38, her response is, "I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said." Here we see a clarity of purpose and a stability and maturity even in her youthfulness.

But what was the basis for Mary's response. What preceded her declaration of faith and obedience? In verse 28, we see that when the angel came to her, he said, "Rejoice, highly favored one. The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women."

Highly favored one --- before revealing her mission, she was assured of her position. She was a recipient of sovereign grace. To Mary's question, "How can this be since I do not know a man?", the angel answered and said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.' " *God's grace in her and His protection over her* --- this the Gospel, and this is the basis for Mary's response of unflinching response of obedience. This is what we must know in order to fulfill our helper design.

And I love what happened next. In verse 39, Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea where she entered Zacharias' home and she greeted Elizabeth. She had the wisdom to go to an older woman but you see that's the way of the covenant. One generation

is to commend God's ways to the next generation. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and she spoke Spirit-led words of affirmation, encouragement, and instruction to this young women. Here is a Titus 2 ministry of the highest order. Elizabeth's home was a safe place for young Mary. But don't miss Mary's humility and teachable spirit. Daughters of the covenant must be willing to go and listen and learn from older women.

What was the result? Mary had only been in Elizabeth's home a few moments when she exploded in a song of praise, The Magnificat, that has been a blessing to the church of Jesus down through the ages. Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God, my Savior." I am convinced that when older women have an Elizabeth ministry into the lives of younger women we will see those young women's lives explode in praise that will be a blessing to the church for generations to come.

But the time came when Mary had to leave Elizabeth's home and to fulfill her mission not only to be the mother of Jesus but to be the wife of Joseph. We come to Luke 2. "After the birth of Jesus, Mary and Joseph took him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord." Simeon was there at the temple and he took the baby in his arms, and he praised God for he had seen God's salvation. In verse 34, "Simeon blessed them"; and then there's a shift. Simeon looks right at Mary, and he said, "Behold this child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel and for a sign which will be spoken against and a sword will pierce your own soul too." A sword in the soul is more painful than a sword in the flesh.

What causes a sword in the soul? I can think of at least three things: our own sin, the sin of another against us, and our providential circumstances --- illness, or the death of a child. But again, I love what happened next. Verse 36: "There was Anna, a prophetess, a widow of about 84 years, who did not depart from the temple but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord and spoke about the Child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem."

God had another woman waiting in the wings to help Mary to think redemptively, to speak truth into Mary's life. Younger women need older women who will help them to use the swords in their souls redemptively rather than destructively. They need older women who will help them to glorify God in every situation and relationship.

Now let's look at another woman in Scripture. Her story begins in Genesis 24. Abraham sent his servant to find a wife for Isaac. The servant arrived at a town in Nahor, and he prays. Genesis 24:14, "May it be that when I say to a girl, 'Please let down your jar, that I may have a drink?' And she says, 'Drink, and I'll water your camels too.' Let her be the one that You have chosen for your servant Isaac."

Now I have to wonder why he would pray that prayer. But then I wonder was he looking for a woman who embodied the helper design? Was he looking for a Proverbs 31 woman who opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy and even to the camels? Because you see that kind of woman would be more likely to be a woman whose husband's heart could trust in her.

Rebecca did exactly what the servant had prayed. So the servant goes back to her home and tells her father and brother about his mission, and they agree that Rebecca will become Isaac's wife. Then they want to delay her departure. So the servant insists on leaving and

then in verse 57 they said let's call the girl and ask her about it so she called her and asked if she would go with this man. And she said I will go. Isn't that so like Mary's response? Such focus and such clarity of purpose.

And then the tender love story unfolds in verse 63. "Isaac went out into the field one evening and saw camels approaching. Rebecca also looked up and saw Isaac. She got down from her camel and asked her servant, 'Who is that man in the field coming to meet us?' 'He is my master,' the servant answered. So she took her veil and covered herself. Then the servant told Isaac all he had done. Isaac then took her into the tent of his mother Sarah so she became his wife and he loved her. And Isaac was comforted after his mother's death."

Rebecca exercised her helper design and their tent became a safe place where her husband's heart was comforted, and he soared. When we come to the next chapter, we see that she was barren, but her young husband had become a man who prayed for his wife. I think that is what happened in tents that are safe places. He prayed for her. She became pregnant.

In verse 22, we see the babies jostled within her and so she inquires of the Lord. Verse 23, "The Lord said to her, 'Two nations are in your women and two peoples will be separated one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger.'" This is remarkable. This young woman not only knew the covenant promise, but also God told her some of how that was going to come about. He let her in on the fact that the younger son would be the one through whom the covenant line would go.

But now fast forward to Genesis 27. "When Isaac was old and his eyes were so weak that he could no longer see, he called for his older son and said, 'My son.' 'Here I am,' he answered. 'I am now an old man and don't know the day of my death. Get your weapons, your quiver and bow and go out to the country and hunt some wild game for me. Prepare for me the kind of tasty game that I like to eat so that I can give you my blessing before I die.' Now Rebecca was listening."

She knew he was wrong. She knew that her younger son was the one who was supposed to receive the blessing so she took matters into her own hands and you know the sorry story. Her conspiracy worked, but in the process, their tent was no longer a safe place for Isaac. His wife had become a manipulative, scheming, immature woman. Rebecca had lost her way.

What had happened from this picture of the young woman who says "I will go" to this old woman who says, "I will take control". I see at least three clues and, in fairness to Rebecca, let me say that I'm afraid that I see them because I identify all too much with what she was thinking.

In 25:27 "So the boys grew (after these twins were born). Esau was a skillful hunter a man of the field, but Jacob was a mild man dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau because of his game, but Rebecca loved Jacob." The children came between this marriage. The children were a wedge in the oneness of the marriage and the marriage was no longer a Gospel picture. A child centered family system eventually implodes. no one wins.

The second clue that I see --- 26:1 "There was once a famine in the land. Isaac went to Abimelech, the king of the Philistines." Verse 7, "The men of that place asked about his wife

and she said, 'She's my sister.' "He was afraid that if he said that she is my wife that they would... "Because he thought that unless the men of this place kill me for Rebecca because she is beautiful to behold." Surely that was a sword in Rebecca's soul. The one she had pledged herself to. The one that was supposed to protect her left her in such a vulnerable situation. And one wonders if she really ever forgave Isaac or did a root of bitterness grow that caused her heart to become hard. Did she allow that sword in her soul to have a destructive rather than a redemptive effect in her life?

And then the third clue that I see. They are still in the land of the Philistines and we read in 26:12, "Then Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold and the Lord blessed them and the men began to prosper and continued prospering. And he became very prosperous because he had numbers of great herds and servants so the Philistines envied him."

Now I know it's speculation but I have to wonder if Rebecca had still been the kind of helper who drew water for strangers and their camels, if she had been cultivating community through the ministry of hospitality, if she had used their wealth to have a ministry of compassion to the poor and the afflicted would the people in their village had envied or would they had revered her husband. Had Rebecca's heart become cold and insensitive? Had she ceased to fulfill her mission? And remember this is a woman who knew the covenant promise but, in her old age, she seemed to forget the character of the God who promised. She lost her focus.

As we look at these two women, Mary and Rebecca, I see two very different stories. Mary fulfilled her mission and was respectful all the way to the cross. Rebecca lost her way. God still accomplished His redemptive purpose but her influence was diminished and contaminated. Mary was guided and encouraged by older, godly women. But there's a loneliness to Rebecca's story that I find chilling.

I don't mean to overstate the case, and I know again that it is speculation; but, there is no mention of an old lady in Rebecca's story; no older women to speak to her of redemption. This doesn't excuse Rebecca but I think it does underscore the importance of what Paul wrote to the young preacher Titus when he told him to equip the older women with sound doctrine so that they could train the older women to love their husbands and children. This is a fundamental quality of culture of covenant life that transcends time, geography and life's circumstance. It is one of the resources that God has given to the set apart family. I find this absolutely electrifying, and yet in recent years many of my generation have relinquished this high calling of nurturing younger women.

My generation has abandoned this calling for many reasons. Some simply do not know this biblical mandate. The church has not sounded this call for many years. Some think they have nothing to offer. They don't realize the importance and value of their life's experiences. Some are intimidated by the intelligence and the giftedness of younger women. Some have decided that this is the season to indulge themselves. Some want to share their life's experiences but they feel isolated from the younger women and they don't know how to bridge that gap.

I plead with the church of Jesus to call and equip women for this ministry. God is gifting His church with incredible young women, and they are a sacred trust. We must be good stewards of this gift. The implications of whether or not we leave this legacy will reverberate for several generations. Please don't leave Mary Kate to find her own way. Speak truth into her life.

Speak to her of redemption. Show and tell her the wonders of biblical womanhood.

If you walk out of the back entrance of the state capitol in Columbia, South Carolina, and go straight down the path to the very edge of the capitol grounds, you will come to a stunning monument of a 19th century woman with her children on either side of her. This monument was erected to the South Carolina women of the Confederacy by the men of their state 50 years after the War Between the States.

Let me read a portion of the inscription that is on that monument. "In this monument, generations unborn shall hear the voice of a grateful people testifying to the sublime devotion of the women of South Carolina in their country's need. Their tender care was solace to the stricken. When reverses followed victories, when want displaced plenty, when mourning for the flower of southern manhood darkened countless homes, when governments tottered and chaos threatened, the women were steadfast and unafraid. They were unchanged in their devotion, unshaken in their patriotism, unwearied in ministrations, uncomplaining in sacrifices, splendid in fortitude, they strove while they wept. In the rebuilding after the desolation, their virtues stood as the supreme citadel with strong towers of faith and hope around which civilization rallied and triumphed.

My prayer is that women of the covenant will be such towers of faith and hope so devoted to Christ's crown and covenant that 50 years from now our grandchildren and our great grandchildren will erect monuments not of bronze but set apart families that are steadfast and splendid for the glory of our Creator and Redeemer and the advancement of Christendom.

*Susan Hunt. "The Christian Wife and Mother." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbsayHDwInE&t=1572s>