

“Can’t Miss A Sunday-Part 2: Because Mom Said So” (Mother’s Day Message)

OT: 1 Samuel 1:10-11,20,24-28 NT: Luke 2:41-50

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Happy Mother’s Day!! If I am not the Baldrige you expected to hear from today, I apologize. Evidently this is my Mother’s Day present! In all reality it is Dave’s Father Day’s gift a little early so Happy Father’s Day Honey! I want to share with you part of a note that one of my kids gave me many years ago for Mother’s Day that kind of sums up Dave and I. **(image)** What God has put together, let not pastorate put us under.

I do not pretend to be a perfect mom (just ask my kids) I am kind of glad I did not raise them in days of social media because I probably would have felt mom-shamed. Even as a Ya-Ya to 5 grandkids I adore, I am not perfect.... here’s evidence of that on a post from few years back on Facebook of me and my first 2 grandbabies (**image**) ...(soothing and loving right?)

All kidding aside, I consider it a joy and an honor to speak to you today not as a clergy or a clergy spouse, a theologian, or a seminary degree but as a mom and a daughter. If for no other reason, I am thrilled that Dave asked me to speak today is because I could honor my mom who is here with me today. 97 yrs. young who brings joy to all her know her. Mom, I honor you today...your sacrifices, your patience, your teaching, your beauty, your humor, and your love for Jesus that led you to take me and my brothers to church. This plaque hangs in our house **(image)**. Mom, I want to go grow up to be like you. I love you so much.

I know that there are mixed emotions in a congregation this size on Mother’s Day. I know there are those today who are celebrating and honoring moms, I know there are grieving moms and grieving the loss of moms. I know we all have been children and may or may not had a healthy mom presence in our lives. My desire is that through our scripture study today that all may come away with some Good News and hope in our hearts whatever our situation is. I will be using my experience because it’s all I got but Jesus always makes up this difference. (prays)

I was given the title “Can’t Miss a Sunday” (the 2nd part of a series that began last year) and this week’s message is “Because Mom said So”. Cathy has referred to the mom-isms and “because I said so” is one we are familiar with. It’s a perfectly reasonable response for moms in a hurry but frustrating to the child being told because they want to know why. Reasonable to the mom or dad saying it because they think you should trust them to know what is good for you...Eat your veggies, go to bed...things that may not seem important now but will pay off in overall health. Anybody ever hear “It’s time for church, let’s go” followed with resistance and then “Because I said so”? How could that be important? Have you heard the old story about the mom who kept yelling to her family about getting out of bed to go to church? There was 1 who did not come and said “I don’t want to go and why do I have to get out of bed” Mom’s reply...because it’s Sunday and you’re the pastor!

Our scriptures today spoke of 2 women who take their children to church and something unusual happens.....they leave them there! Now here’s where I have to admit ...#momfail.

Been there, almost done that...2 parents busy at church, you got 'em? No. I thought you did. I told you not a perfect mom!

Let's look a little closer at these 2 women. The 1st woman is Hannah and we find her story in 1 Samuel. I would love to walk thru every verse in this chapter with you because it is so rich and crazy but you may read on your own this week. For now, I will give you a condensed version.... Hannah was the 1st wife of Elkanah, who was from the tribe of Levi or priestly tribe. Even though he was not serving as a priest at that time, every Israelite male would be expected to go to "church" or temple and make annual sacrifices and take his family. The one place of worship was in Shiloh about 17 miles from his home. Pilgrimages to temple happened for 3 times a year for different festivals. He would take his wife and family. Elkanah had another wife (culture thing, not God endorsed). Hannah was barren and Peninnah, his 2nd wife gave him many children. He loved Hannah the most and probably married wife #2 for the lineage. You have to remember in that culture, at that time, the people believed if you were unable to conceive, you were not favored by God. When the families would go to church, they were expected to bring meat sacrifices and the fatty portions better (just like my granddad said) and what was not burned for sacrifice would first go to the priests to eat and then to the families to distribute. Now comes the interesting part.

1 Samuel 1: 4-8 (scripture)

⁴Whenever the day came for Elkanah to sacrifice, he would give portions of the meat to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters. ⁵But to Hannah he gave a double portion because he loved her, and the LORD had closed her womb. ⁶Because the LORD had closed Hannah's womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her. ⁷This went on year after year. Whenever Hannah went up to the house of the LORD, her rival provoked her till she wept and would not eat. ⁸Her husband Elkanah would say to her, "Hannah, why are you weeping? Why don't you eat? Why are you downhearted? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?"

Oh, Elkanah, sure every woman wants more fatty meat when you are feeling unworthy and inadequate and then being belittled by the other wife!!! (sounds like something out of Real Housewives of Israel) and then to make matters worse, he says to Hannah "Don't I mean more to you than 10 sons?" Wow, even though he loves her, talk about clueless!

We go on to read after year after year of this, Hannah leaves the table in tears and goes out of the room crying where Eli the priest was near. Here we pick up today's scripture **(scripture)**

1 Samuel 1:9-10 ¹⁰In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the LORD, weeping bitterly. ¹¹And she made a vow, saying, "LORD Almighty, if you will only look on your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head

Only because of time am I paraphrasing the next verses but it is crazy! Because Eli hears her muttering and crying and he thinks she is drunk. She tells him she was praying and even though he didn't hear what she prayed for he tells her to go home knowing God did hear her. The Bible then says she goes back home in peace. (just knowing she was heard by God) I know we all have bargained with God time to time in our prayers but Hannah was committing her child for life to be a Nazirite turned over to God. God "remembers her" answers her prayer and she has

a son named Samuel which means “because I asked the Lord for him”. For the next few years, Elkenah goes to “temple” but Hannah wants to wean the boy before she goes back but when she does take her precious boy to church. Scripture says she took her boy and a bull sacrifice. Once the bull had been sacrificed she takes the boy to Eli, the priest. Let’s pick up with vs. 26 **(scripture)**

1 Samuel 1: 26-28 ²⁶ and she said to him, “Pardon me, my lord. As surely as you live, I am the woman who stood here beside you praying to the LORD. ²⁷ I prayed for this child, and the LORD has granted me what I asked of him. ²⁸ So now I give him to the LORD. For his whole life he will be given over to the LORD.” And he worshiped the LORD there.

She left him at the church!!! On purpose. If you go on to read the next chapters you will find Hannah’s prayer of thanksgiving to God in His Goodness and we see Samuel grow as his mom visits him once year when she comes to church but she physically leaves him in God’s hands. Wow!!! Not sure I could do that one. Nell Mohney, a respected author, clergy wife, speaker tells her story of the death of her son age 18. She said as she sat in the front row of the church her husband served at the funeral of her son, she was angry. Why God after what we have given to you would you do this? As she looked at the altar where her child had been baptized 18 years prior, she realized that the same God she entrusted her son’s life with at that time was the same God she needed to trust now and One who was holding her son’s hand now. Hannah’s main desire was to honor God and have her son follow His ways.

Let’s go to our mom in NT who left her child at church, Mary. If you read Luke, chapter 2, you actually have 2 instances of Mary going to temple with her child, Jesus. The first is a sermon in itself when she takes her baby for the purification process. Today we read in our Luke 2 passage beginning with vs. 41. It’s a story we are familiar with but let me paraphrase. Every year Jesus parents went to Jerusalem for Passover and this story happens when Jesus is 12. They were there for a few days with many other families. There was feasting, teaching, and sacrifices (think VBS) When they left in a large caravan, she finally noticed Jesus wasn’t with them. (kids hung with kids, etc.) They traveled 3 days to get back and found Jesus teaching the teachers and everyone was astounded by him but his parents were ticked. In fact, Mary says, “why did you treat us this way...your father and I were anxious.

I love Mary’s response... “I know this feeling....so grateful your child is safe you want to hug them to death and so mad that they put you through this that you can’t see straight. Jesus, (the 12-year-old boy) response is found in vs 49-50. **(scripture)**

⁴⁹ “Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?”^[a]
⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

His Father’s house? Mom knew her son would be the Messiah but didn’t think about how soon that reality would start to affect her...They couldn’t understand You might say that instead of going to church because Mama said so “Jesus took them to church” Let’s review some of the similarities and differences of these moms. **(image)**

Similarities: Both moms found favor with God

Both moms showed their faithfulness not just by church going but by lives

Both left without their boys

**Differences: Hannah waited a long time for birth of her son. Mary had an early surprise birth
Hannah left her son at church by choice. Mary's son made the decision to stay.
Hannah son never came home with her and she was at peace with that.
Mary had to retrieve her son to go home and full of questions.**

May I be bold enough to add another woman here...myself. I was a kid that I went to church because Mom said so but the time came I could make my own choice. I had some years there where I thought I didn't need God and I wasn't sure church was where I would find him anyway. It was through a young adult group who dived into scripture that I started to find my way. I took Jesus's hand. In my case, my mom knew what would be good for me but I had to discover it myself. I needed "Jesus to take me to church" When I became mom, I wanted more than anything for my kids to know my Lord. So, I took them to church....and I began to realize not everything in the church was what I wanted my kids to see but as Hannah I would have to trust God that He would guide them...it couldn't be their Mama's faith as much as I wished it to be. I would have to trust "Jesus would take them to church" in the way that only He could teach them about a relationship with Him. I am very blessed that our children and spouses all are believers and honestly walk their path of faith differently from each other but all hold on to His hand. We could only take them so far but they have to make their own decisions. I became a Ya-Ya 4 yrs. ago and look how our quiver grew. (**image**). I adore these kids but God loves them more and my greatest prayer is that Bailey, Bo, Banks, Micah and Eli grow to know Our God. I can only be faithful and love them and leave them in God's Hands.

On my last birthday I received a special gift from my mom. I unwrapped a small box and I saw this beautiful silver watch (**image**) I thought it was nice and I heard my mom say "do you know whose watch that was?" All of sudden I got a glimpse of my Memaw's hand and wrist with that watch on. The same hand that used to pass me lifesavers down the pew in church. I didn't even know it existed. Dave was excited to tell me how this old watch that Mom had become restored as He took it to a master jeweler to see if it could be brought back to life. He had to leave it with him. The jeweler said it just needed some tuning up a little bit and that he put my his marks on the inside of the watch of the things he restored so that others would know when opening it up. I also discovered something. The watch doesn't work unless I turn it each time I wear it.

Friends, I told you when I started I had good news for you. Whether you were like me and had a mama who made you go to church or someone who never had that experience, whether you are here just to honor your mom today, or whether you are here as an older mom hurting because your children don't know Our God, or maybe feeling guilty that you weren't in a place where you could take your kids to church. Jesus wants to take your hand and take you to church today. Real church where He can wipe away any regrets, mistakes. He wants you to trust Him with your loved ones. He wants you to be faithful. He can restore the broken places. He will put His mark on you and you will look like new. But don't forget you have to turn to Him for Him to work. We can take His hand as He will become our Lifesaver. Go to church with Him. Great is our God!

I know I better stop now...you know why....my watch tells me it's time and cause this Mama said so.....Take His Hand.