

Biblical Mothering

When moms come to the
crossroads in their lives...



BY AUDREY BROGGI

Biblical Mothering

BY AUDREY BROGGI

A ministry of:



communitybiblechurch.us

Copyright © 2023 AudreyBroggi.com

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, shared in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior permission of the copyright holder.

Scripture quotations taken from the (NASB®) New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. All rights reserved. www.lockman.org

A NOTE FROM

Audrey

It is my prayer that through this study, we will grow in our understanding of what it means to have a heart that beats for God as we influence the women and children around us - first in our own homes.

I hope we will better understand what it means to walk with God moment by moment trusting Him for every detail of our lives. God's heart is to help us and give us hope.

Being a pastor's wife and being in the ministry alongside my husband for over 30 years now, I know that not all women are content with God's design for them. No matter where you are, God will meet you, and He will come alongside to refresh your heart as He reveals areas of your life He wants to change. Open your heart to Him.

It is also my prayer that we'll be affirmed and encouraged and even admonished to live our lives well. It is my desire, not so much to teach you things that you do not know, but to stir your heart to live out a vibrant life of faith as you walk with God.



Follow me on social media:

Website: AudreyBroggi.com

Podcast: Rare But Real

Instagram: Audrey Broggi & Mothering from the Heart

Facebook: Mothering from the Heart



*When moms come to the
crossroads in their lives...*



THE ANCIENT PATHS

THUS SAYS THE LORD.

"Stand by the ways and see
and ask for the

ancient paths

Where the good way is,
and walk in it;
And you will find

rest for your souls.

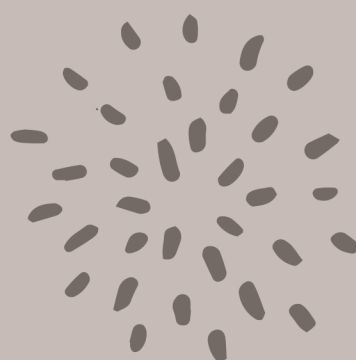
But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'

"And I set watchmen over you, saying,
'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!'
But they said, 'We will not listen.'

JEREMIAH 6:16-17

Fill Up

“Get God's principles into your life so you can go home and carry out what He has taught you.



DEUTERONOMY 6:5-6

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on

your heart.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Session
1

God's Heart in a Culture of
Confusion

Session
2

God's Heart Beyond Our
Problems

Session
3

God's Heart for Children

Session
4

God's Heart for Discipline

Session
5

God's Heart for the Home



SESSION 1

God's Heart in a Culture of Confusion



No matter where you are, God
wants to meet with you and
personally come alongside
you. He does that through His
Word.



SESSION 1

God's Heart in a Culture of Confusion



THESE WORDS, WHICH I AM COMMANDING YOU TODAY, SHALL BE ON YOUR HEART. YOU SHALL TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY TO YOUR SONS AND SHALL TALK OF THEM WHEN YOU SIT IN YOUR HOUSE AND WHEN YOU WALK BY THE WAY AND WHEN YOU LIE DOWN AND WHEN YOU RISE UP.



DEUTERONOMY 6:6-7

Point #1

The ultimate goal of our lives it to bring to God.

Point #2

God's design is not . (Genesis 1:26-31)

In His own image...

A replica.

A picture of Himself.

To show the world what God is like

MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE

- We are able to **love**.
- We are able to **reason**.
- We are able to **choose**.
- We are made with a **purpose**. (Genesis 1:27-28, 2:20-24)
 - We are **responsible** to God to live out our purpose. (Genesis 2:15)
 - We have **authority** from God.
 - We are **capable** because of God.
 - We are **accountable** to God.

Implications for women the Fall.

Point #3

The fall God's design. (Genesis 3)

- Lie One: Question God's **character**.
- Lie Two: Believe God is **withholding** something from you.

MAN'S ROLE

To lead and direct the spiritual welfare
of the church and the home.

When men abdicate the spiritual role of
leading, deception occurs.

God made man and woman to
complement one another,
but He made the woman to help the man.

THE LIE CONTINUES

Satan lied to deceive Eve and he is still
lying and deceiving women today.

When we listen to the evil one, we
become dissatisfied and discontent.

Point #4

Confusing Mothering

WHAT WE SEE TODAY

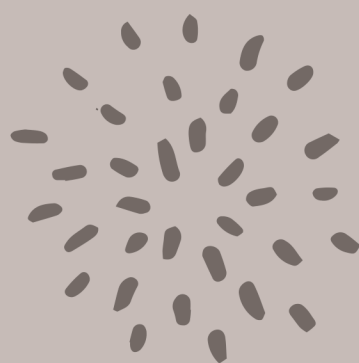
HOW WE GOT HERE					
1930s	1940s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s

It happened little by little.

Point #5

RETURN TO GOD'S DESIGN	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See the big picture. (Psalm 90:12) 	
<p>Eternity Past ← Birth 40 80 → Eternity Future</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sure of your calling. • Renew your mind. (Romans 12:1-2) • Believe God. (2 Chronicles 16:9; Hebrews 11:6) • Cooperate with God's design. 	<div> <p><i>Life is so short.</i></p> <p>James 4:13-17</p> </div>
<p><i>Mothering is the essence of every woman.</i></p>	

“Being
overwhelmed
is sometimes
a great place
to be.



2 CHRONICLES 16:9

For the eyes of the
Lord move to and fro
throughout the earth
that He may

*strongly
support*

those whose heart is
completely His.

Notes:

Notes:

TAKING IT FURTHER

Reflections for the Heart

From the message today, we learned that God had a plan, a blueprint, a design when He created man and woman. It is clear from Genesis 3 that Satan attacked God's design.

Questions to Ponder

Read Genesis 3:1-6

- Why do you think Satan approached the woman instead of the man?
- How did he appeal to her?

Satan drew the woman in first because he knew God had established the man to lead. He decided to appeal to the woman to make her the "leader"--the one "in charge."

Do you see how Satan went directly against God's order ignoring the man and pulling the woman into deception?

Of course, Adam stood by and let this happen. Man, in that instance, became silent, weak, and passive. Woman became domineering and assertive controlling the man.

- How does verse 6 reveal **her** control?
- How does verse 6 reveal **his** weakness?

If you continue reading the passage, you see that when questioned, the man blames the woman for his problems, even though he chose to follow her into sin.

The end result was the Satan orchestrated confusion of the roles of both men and women. As you turn the pages of Scripture, you clearly see the continuation of confusion about God's design. Abusive men. Passive men. Domineering women. Girlie men. Masculine women. Seductive women. Gender distortion. Destroyed families.

However, God is not confused about His original design and He doesn't want us to be confused either.

- What kind of women were your role models?
- Did they respect the men in their lives? What was the talk about men?

Do you laugh when the culture puts down men? I'm not talking here about a healthy sense of humor--I'm talking about an attitude that men are inferior and stupid and that women are so much smarter.

- What were you taught about womanhood?
- What did you see modeled in your family?
- If you went to college, what were you taught about gender and gender roles?
- Who and what cultural trends have you followed?
- What ideas have you adopted about motherhood and being a wife?

- How has homemaking and domesticity been portrayed to you?
- Who or what shapes your perspective?
- Are you willing to continue coming to this study and learn more about God's design?



SESSION 2

God's Heart Beyond Our Problems



"A mother like ours is more
than a memory. She is a living
presence."

Temple Bailey's "Parable of Motherhood"



SESSION 2

God's Heart Beyond Our Problems

CHARACTERISTICS THAT DOMINATE MEDIA

- Sexual relationships come before marriage
- Children are wiser than their parents
- Successful business men are evil
- Clergy are uninformed and ineffective
- Social workers are noble
- Homosexuality is genetic
- Military personnel are psychotic sadists
- Fathers are stupid
- Criminals are the result of poverty or racism
- Profanity is a part of honest reality
- Women who reject motherhood are heroic

Courtesy of Benjamin Stein

Point #1

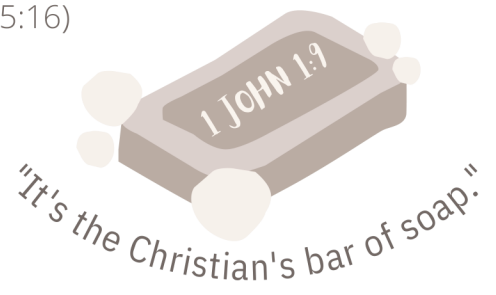
The First Problem: Our Own
1 Peter 2:25)

(Isaiah 53:7; Romans 3:23, 5:12;

Sinning doesn't **make** you a sinner. The reason you sin is because you **are** a sinner. It is in your very nature.

TYPES OF PARENTS		
Authoritative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules driven • Total parental control 	Centered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balanced parenting • Scripture driven parenting 	Permissive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No rules • Avoid conflict • No correction • No parental control
TYPES OF CHRISTIANS		
Legalistic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living by rules to gain approval and acceptance before God and others 	Centered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obeying God because you are accepted by Him and you want to please Him 	Libertarian <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living however you want because you are under grace and sin is paid

- Be sure you are a **Christian**. (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9)
- Learn to **walk in the Spirit**. (Ephesians 5:18; Galatians 5:16)
- Confess any **known sin**. (1 John 1:9)
- Learn **God's Word**. (Colossians 3; Ephesians 5)



There is a direct correlation between walking in the Spirit and learning God's Word.

Psalm 1

1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the
counsel of the wicked,
Nor stand in the path of sinners,
Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!

2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord,
And in His law he meditates day and night.

3 He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water,
Which yields its fruit in its season
And its leaf does not wither;
And in whatever he does, he prospers.

4 The wicked are not so,
But they are like chaff which the wind drives away.

5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

6 For the Lord knows the way of the righteous,
But the way of the wicked will perish.





God's Biblical absolutes
stand the test of time.



Point #2

The Second Problem: We Listen to the Wrong

- We listen to so-called "**experts**".
 - Unless your expert is a **growing obedient Christian**, you should watch out.
 - We have to balance **seeking counsel** and **trusting God**. (1 Kings 3:16-28)

1 KINGS 3:16-28

- Solomon was a **godly man** at this point in his life.
 - Are we seeking the right counsel? Are they obedient Christians? Where is their wisdom coming from?
- Both mothers were **harlots**, but one was willing to give up her baby to protect him from death.
 - One was **deeply stirred** over her son.
 - One **rejected** God's design for women and motherhood.

- If God is able to deeply stir the heart of a harlot to make the right choices for her baby, then He is able to **stir your heart** to make the right choices as you raise your children.
- Women's **magazines, influencers, and social media** (digital and print)

HISTORY OF WOMEN'S MAGAZINES

- Began in post-war 1950s as isolated women began to look to magazines for advice
- Articles instructed women what to eat, how to dress, and how happiness was to be measured
- These kinds of magazines take their worst toll in the standard they set for a woman's beauty and self-image

From: Growing Up with Dick and Jane

- This was the "infant" that grew into today's influencers and social media platforms.
- **Television, movies and music**

*When we feed on what's out there, we so often
become discontent.*

MEDIA AS A STUMBLING BLOCK FOR YOUR CHILDREN

The Third Problem: The Youth

PROVERBS 6:20-23

My son, observe the commandment of your father
And do not forsake the teaching of your mother;
Bind them continually on your heart;
Tie them around your neck.
When you walk about, they will guide you;
When you sleep, they will watch over you;
And when you awake, they will talk to you.
For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light;
And reproofs for discipline are the way of life

This passage assumes that parents are doing their job.

- We can't control our children's hearts, but we can **teach** them, **train** them in righteousness, and **trust God** with the rest.
- If they have been taught God's **Word**, they can never get away from it.
- The reason so often that children rebel is because they have a sin nature that has been **left unchecked**.

*Train up a child in the way he should go, and that is
the way of righteousness.*

The Fourth Problem: The Lack of Godly

- Is there an older woman in your life that you really **admire** because she walks with God?
- Is there a woman who has brought up godly children and you want to **glean** from her experience?
- Is there a woman who has made a lot of mistakes, but yet because she knows the Lord, she **offers encouragement** so you can learn from her mistakes?
- Even women without godly role models can learn these things because you have God, the Holy Spirit, and He can **develop** these attributes in you.
- Don't place **unreasonable** demands on older women.
- Pray and **become** this older woman for future generations.
- Older Women: Know the Word of God and share your life experiences through the lens of scripture.
- Younger Women: Accept counsel and accept rebuke.

Become the mentor God wants you to be.

“

God has called you
to protect the

hearts
and minds
of your children.



“

Rebellion

is the result of allowing
our children to

conform

to the world.

Notes:

Notes:

TAKING IT FURTHER

Reflections for the Heart

Questions to Ponder

- When you were growing up, what were you taught about becoming a Christian?
- Did you grow up thinking that if you were nice and went to church that you'd make it to heaven?
- Were you taught God's Word?
- Was there anything in today's message that really hit you?

Think about the time you spend reading women's magazines (either print or online) or blogs or pursuing social media and compare it to the time you spend reading the Bible and talking to the Lord.

Media Time Per Day:



Bible Study and Prayer Time Per Day:



Think about the people or sources you turn to when you have a problem or an issue in your life with your husband, your children, your friends.

- What kind of advice do you receive?

Think about the last movie you watched.

- Did it cause you to praise God and reflect on His glory?
- Did it encourage you to live your life for Him?

Sometimes a movie can be disturbing but in such a way as to cause our hearts to pursue the Lord. A movie about the Holocaust, for example, wouldn't be entertaining but it could move you to love justice and mercy. Sometimes a movie can be just funny and laughter is good medicine, as Proverbs teaches.

Think about your movie choices.

- Do they honor God, teach truth, disturb you in a way that causes you to run after the Lord, lighten your load?

Think about the television programs you watch.

- Do they propel you toward godliness?

Take a moment and think about the personal things you look forward to doing. Just you.

- What are some things you look forward to doing?
- Does your list include going to church, studying your Bible, reading books that explain God's Word in a practical way, listening to sermons, and things like that?



SESSION 3

God's Heart for Children

SESSION 3

God's Heart for Children

TITUS 2:3-5

Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.

Point #1

Women have need to be biblical love. (Titus 2:3-5)

Point #2

Women possess a instinctive love.

- **God-given** love
- Naturally **protective** love

- Will not properly **train** a child for adulthood
- **Responsive** love
- **Reactionary** love
 - Can lack discernment
 - Can prioritize a feelings response
 - Can lead to an unhealthy over protection
 - Can lead to defense of bad behavior
- **Unbalanced** approach to biblical child training

*A woman must learn to act on what God says
is morally right instead of what feels right.*

A WORD OF WISDOM

If you have a problem coming under authority in your own life, disrespecting and criticizing your husband or any other authority God has placed in your life, your children will most likely follow your model.

Point #3

Women children as:

- **Belongings** and as an appendage
- **Burdens**

PSALM 127:3

Behold, children are a gift of the Lord,
The fruit of the womb is a reward.

God has given women a gift to raise for His glory.

- **Blessing** - The Biblical View (1 Timothy 2:15; 5:14; Psalm 127:3; Romans 12:1-2; Colossians 3:1-10)

Point #4

God's for children:

- He **chose** them. (Ephesians 4:4-6)
- He **created** them. (Psalm 139)
- He wants to **redeem** them. (Romans 5:8)
- He has a **purpose** for them. (Jeremiah 1:4-10; 29:11)

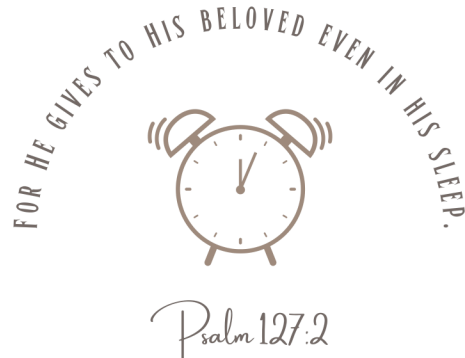
God gives us children to leave a lasting legacy.

- Teach them God's **truth** from an early age. (Psalm 78:1-8; 127:1-5; 128:1-6)

Practical Everyday Stuff

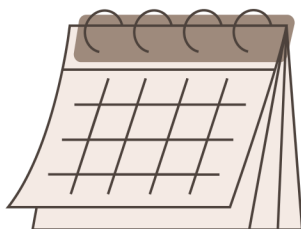
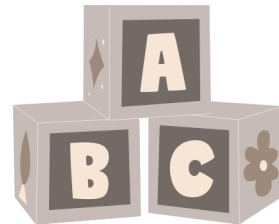
Newborns and Babies

- Remember the R word: **Relax**.
- Remember Who **chose** you to be a mother.
- Remember that God is in **control**.
- Pray.



Toddlers and Preschoolers

- Remember the R word: **Relax**.
- Play **pat a cake**. Build **blocks**. Make **cookies**. Play **tag**.
- Give lots of **hugs**. Read **books**. Do **chores**.
- Let them **help** you.
- Answer their **questions**.
- Welcome them into your **world**.
- Pray.



Adolescents

- Remember the R word: **Relax**.
- Talk to them about things that **interest** them.
- Ask them **questions** and for their **opinions**.
- Laugh at the **endless jokes** and riddles they will discover for the first time.
- Tell them **stories** about when you were their age.
- Play **games** with them even when you don't feel like it.
- Be the **authority**. Give lots of **hugs**.
- Pray.



Teenagers

- Remember the R word: **Relax**.
- Serve **lots of tasty food**.
- Discuss **world events** from a biblical perspective.
- Get into **their world**.
- Continue with **hugs** and lots of **food**.
- Respect their **thoughts** and **privacy**.
- Let them know they are a **needed** member of the **family**.
- Give lots of **hugs**.
- Limit time with **foolish** people.
- Pray.

FOOOD!!!



Adult Children

- Remember the R word: **Relax**.
- Respect them as the **authority** of their own children.
 - Affirm them as a family.
 - Look for ways to encourage them.
 - Offer advice, but don't just give it.
- Come alongside and **offer** help, but **wait** for them to ask.
- Admit your **failures** and **apologize**.
- Give **hugs**. Tell them you love them.
- Wait **patiently** for them to come to the Lord. Pray and fast for them. Develop in your **walk** with God.



COLOSSIANS 1:9-12

For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.

“
Before you
were born,

you were a
thought
in the heart
of God.



And do not be
conformed to this world,
but be

transformed

by the
*renewing of
your mind,*

so that you may prove
what the will of God is,
that which is good and
acceptable and perfect.

ROMANS 12:2

Notes:

Notes:

How My Mother's Fanatical Views Tore Us Apart

By Rebecca Walker

She's revered as a trail-blazing feminist and author Alice Walker touched the lives of a generation of women. A champion of women's rights, she has always argued that motherhood is a form of servitude. But one woman didn't buy in to Alice's beliefs - her daughter, Rebecca, 38.

Here the writer describes what it was like to grow up as the daughter of a cultural icon, and why she feels so blessed to be the sort of woman 64-year-old Alice despises - a mother.

*Maternal rift: Rebecca Walker, whose mother was the feminist author of *The Color Purple* - who thought motherhood a form of servitude, is now proud to be a mother herself.*

The other day I was vacuuming when my son came bounding into the room. 'Mummy, Mummy, let me help,' he cried. His little hands were grabbing me around the knees and his huge brown eyes were looking up at me. I was overwhelmed by a huge surge of happiness.

I love the way his head nestles in the crook of my neck. I love the way his face falls into a mask of eager concentration when I help him learn the alphabet. But most of all, I simply love hearing his little voice calling: 'Mummy, Mummy.'

It reminds me of just how blessed I am. The truth is that I very nearly missed out on becoming a mother - thanks to being brought up by a rabid feminist who thought motherhood was about the worst thing that could happen to a woman.

You see, my mum taught me that children enslave women. I grew up believing that children are millstones around your neck, and the idea that motherhood can make you blissfully happy is a complete fairytale.

In fact, having a child has been the most rewarding experience of my life. Far from 'enslaving' me, three-and-a-half-year-old Tenzin has opened my world. My only regret is that I discovered the joys of motherhood so late - I have been trying for a second child for two years, but so far with no luck.

I was raised to believe that women need men like a fish needs a bicycle. But I strongly feel children need two parents and the thought of raising Tenzin without my partner, Glen, 52, would be terrifying.

As the child of divorced parents, I know only too well the painful consequences of being brought up in those circumstances. Feminism has much to answer for denigrating men and encouraging women to seek independence whatever the cost to their families.

My mother's feminist principles coloured every aspect of my life. As a little girl, I wasn't even allowed to play with dolls or stuffed toys in case they brought out a maternal instinct. It was drummed into me that being a mother, raising children and running a home were a form of slavery. Having a career, travelling the world and being independent were what really mattered according to her.

I love my mother very much, but I haven't seen her or spoken to her since I became pregnant. She has never seen my son - her only grandchild. My crime? Daring to question her ideology.

Well, so be it. My mother may be revered by women around the world - goodness knows, many even have shrines to her. But I honestly believe it's time to puncture the myth and to reveal what life was really like to grow up as a child of the feminist revolution.

My parents met and fell in love in Mississippi during the civil rights movement. Dad [Mel Leventhal], was the brilliant lawyer son of a Jewish family who had fled the Holocaust. Mum was the impoverished eighth child of sharecroppers from Georgia. When they married in 1967, inter-racial weddings were still illegal in some states.

My early childhood was very happy although my parents were terribly busy, encouraging me to grow up fast. I was only one when I was sent off to nursery school. I'm told they even made me walk down the street to the school.

When I was eight, my parents divorced. From then on I was shuttled between two worlds - my father's very conservative, traditional, wealthy, white suburban community in New York, and my mother's avant garde multi-racial community in California. I spent two years with each parent - a bizarre way of doing things.

Ironically, my mother regards herself as a hugely maternal woman. Believing that women are suppressed, she has campaigned for their rights around the world and set up organisations to aid women abandoned in Africa - offering herself up as a mother figure.

But, while she has taken care of daughters all over the world and is hugely revered for her public work and service, my childhood tells a very different story. I came very low down in her priorities - after work, political integrity, self-fulfilment, friendships, spiritual life, fame and travel.

My mother would always do what she wanted - for example taking off to Greece for two months in the summer, leaving me with relatives when I was a teenager. Is that independent, or just plain selfish?

I was 16 when I found a now-famous poem she wrote comparing me to various calamities that struck and impeded the lives of other women writers. Virginia Woolf was mentally ill and the Brontes died prematurely. My mother had me - a 'delightful distraction', but a calamity nevertheless. I found that a huge shock and very upsetting.

According to the strident feminist ideology of the Seventies, women were sisters first, and my mother chose to see me as a sister rather than a daughter. From the age of 13, I spent days at a time alone while my mother retreated to her writing studio - some 100 miles away. I was left with money to buy my own meals and lived on a diet of fast food.

Sisters together

A neighbour, not much older than me, was deputised to look after me. I never complained. I saw it as my job to protect my mother and never distract her from her writing. It never crossed my mind to say that I needed some time and attention from her.

When I was beaten up at school - accused of being a snob because I had lighter skin than my black classmates - I always told my mother that everything was fine, that I had won the fight. I didn't want to worry her.

But the truth was I was very lonely and, with my mother's knowledge, started having sex at 13. I guess it was a relief for my mother as it meant I was less demanding. And she felt that being sexually active was empowering for me because it meant I was in control of my body.

Now I simply cannot understand how she could have been so permissive. I barely want my son to leave the house on a play-date, let alone start sleeping around while barely out of junior school.

A good mother is attentive, sets boundaries and makes the world safe for her child. But my mother did none of those things.

Although I was on the Pill - something I had arranged at 13, visiting the doctor with my best friend - I fell pregnant at 14. I organised an abortion myself. Now I shudder at the memory. I was only a little girl. I don't remember my mother being shocked or upset. She tried to be supportive, accompanying me with her boyfriend.

Although I believe that an abortion was the right decision for me then, the aftermath haunted me for decades. It ate away at my self-confidence and, until I had Tenzin, I was terrified that I'd never be able to have a baby because of what I had done to the child I had destroyed. For feminists to say that abortion carries no consequences is simply wrong.

As a child, I was terribly confused, because while I was being fed a strong feminist message, I actually yearned for a traditional mother. My father's second wife, Judy, was a loving, maternal homemaker with five children she doted on.

There was always food in the fridge and she did all the things my mother didn't, such as attending their school events, taking endless photos and telling her children at every opportunity how wonderful they were.

My mother was the polar opposite. She never came to a single school event, she didn't buy me any clothes, she didn't even help me buy my first bra - a friend was paid to go shopping with me. If I needed help with homework I asked my boyfriend's mother.

Moving between the two homes was terrible. At my father's home I felt much more taken care of. But, if I told my mother that I'd had a good time with Judy, she'd look bereft - making me feel I was choosing this white, privileged woman above her. I was made to feel that I had to choose one set of ideals above the other.

When I hit my 20s and first felt a longing to be a mother, I was totally confused. I could feel my biological clock ticking, but I felt if I listened to it, I would be betraying my mother and all she had taught me.

I tried to push it to the back of my mind, but over the next ten years the longing became more intense, and when I met Glen, a teacher, at a seminar five years ago, I knew I had found the man I wanted to have a baby with. Gentle, kind and hugely supportive, he is, as I knew he would be, the most wonderful father.

Although I knew what my mother felt about babies, I still hoped that when I told her I was pregnant, she would be excited for me.

'Mum, I'm pregnant'

Instead, when I called her one morning in the spring of 2004, while I was at one of her homes housesitting, and told her my news and that I'd never been happier, she went very quiet. All she could say was that she was shocked. Then she asked if I could check on her garden. I put the phone down and sobbed - she had deliberately withheld her approval with the intention of hurting me. What loving mother would do that?

Worse was to follow. My mother took umbrage at an interview in which I'd mentioned that my parents didn't protect or look out for me. She sent me an e-mail, threatening to undermine my reputation as a writer. I couldn't believe she could be so hurtful - particularly when I was pregnant.

Devastated, I asked her to apologise and acknowledge how much she'd hurt me over the years with neglect, withholding affection and resenting me for things I had no control over - the fact that I am mixed-race, that I have a wealthy, white, professional father and that I was born at all.

But she wouldn't back down. Instead, she wrote me a letter saying that our relationship had been inconsequential for years and that she was no longer interested in being my mother. She even signed the letter with her first name, rather than 'Mom'.

That was a month before Tenzin's birth in December 2004, and I have had no contact with my mother since. She didn't even get in touch when he was rushed into the special care baby unit after he was born suffering breathing difficulties.

And I have since heard that my mother has cut me out of her will in favour of one of my cousins. I feel terribly sad - my mother is missing such a great opportunity to be close to her family. But I'm also relieved. Unlike most mothers, mine has never taken any pride in my achievements. She has always had a strange competitiveness that led her to undermine me at almost every turn.

When I got into Yale - a huge achievement - she asked why on earth I wanted to be educated at such a male bastion. Whenever I published anything, she wanted to write her version - trying to eclipse mine. When I wrote my memoir, *Black, White And Jewish*, my mother insisted on publishing her version. She finds it impossible to step out of the limelight, which is extremely ironic in light of her view that all women are sisters and should support one another.

It's been almost four years since I have had any contact with my mother, but it's for the

best - not only for my self-protection but for my son's well-being. I've done all I can to be a loyal, loving daughter, but I can no longer have this poisonous relationship destroy my life.

I know many women are shocked by my views. They expect the daughter of Alice Walker to deliver a very different message. Yes, feminism has undoubtedly given women opportunities. It's helped open the doors for us at schools, universities and in the workplace. But what about the problems it's caused for my contemporaries?

What about the children?

The ease with which people can get divorced these days doesn't take into account the toll on children. That's all part of the unfinished business of feminism.

Then there is the issue of not having children. Even now, I meet women in their 30s who are ambivalent about having a family. They say things like: 'I'd like a child. If it happens, it happens.' I tell them: 'Go home and get on with it because your window of opportunity is very small.' As I know only too well.

Then I meet women in their 40s who are devastated because they spent two decades working on a PhD or becoming a partner in a law firm, and they missed out on having a family. Thanks to the feminist movement, they discounted their biological clocks. They've missed the opportunity and they're bereft.

Feminism has betrayed an entire generation of women into childlessness. It is devastating.

But far from taking responsibility for any of this, the leaders of the women's movement close ranks against anyone who dares to question them - as I have learned to my cost. I don't want to hurt my mother, but I cannot stay silent. I believe feminism is an experiment, and all experiments need to be assessed on their results. Then, when you see huge mistakes have been paid, you need to make alterations.

I hope that my mother and I will be reconciled one day. Tenzin deserves to have a grandmother. But I am just so relieved that my viewpoint is no longer so utterly coloured by my mother's.

I am my own woman and I have discovered what really matters - a happy family.

Baby Love: Choosing Motherhood After A Lifetime Of Ambivalence by Rebecca Walker was published by Souvenir Press on May 8, £15.

Interview by Tessa Cunningham

TAKING IT FURTHER

Reflections for the Heart

Read the article by Rebecca Walker titled, "How My Mother's Fanatical Views Tore Us Apart."

Questions to Ponder

- How did her upbringing affect her view of children particularly the role of motherhood?
- Based on the message today, what kind of love does she and countless other women have for their children?
- Though she rightly states that she now realizes her mother was wrong about the role of men (daddies) in their children's lives, what is she missing?

Consider the way you were brought up.

- How did it affect your view of and your ideas about children particularly the role of motherhood?
- Were you taught, either by example or by words, that children were belongings, burdens, or blessings?
- If you are a mother of young children, do you persistently see them as interruptions in your life?
- Even if you have the biblical view of children, consider what you communicate by your example and by your words.
- What is the main application you will take home from today's message? How has God spoken to you through His Word?



SESSION 4

God's Heart for Discipline



It is better to give fewer
commands that you enforce
than a lot of commands with
no follow through.



SESSION 4

God's Heart for Discipline

JAMES 4:17

Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.

Point #1

The Importance of God's Word in

- Know God's **Word** and be filled with the **Spirit**.
 - Deuteronomy 6:5-7
 - Isaiah 28:10
 - 1 Corinthians 13
 - Ephesians 5:17-21
 - Colossians 3:16-25
 - Proverbs 29:17
 - Psalm 34



He takes the scripture and applies it to your life.

Point #2

The Importance of a [] with God

- Ask for **wisdom**. (James 1:1-8; 1 Kings 3)
- Don't rely on your own **thoughts**, but on His Word.

Point #3

Some Steps for a Woman's []

- Understand that we all have the capacity to be **horrible mothers**. (Matthew 15:18; John 14-16)
 - God's **grace** makes a good mother.
 - Focus first on your **own** behavior.
- Understand that no one can meet your **deepest needs** except God.
 - He is to be our source of **joy**. (John 15:9-11; 16:22-24;33)
 - The Holy Spirit is our **helper**. (John 14:16-24)
 - The Holy Spirit is our **teacher**. (John 14:25-26; 16:13)
 - The Holy Spirit **convicts** of sin. (John 16:7-13)
 - The Holy Spirit **glorifies** the Savior. (John 16:14)
 - The Holy Spirit is the One that we **walk in**. (Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 5:15-16)
- Understand that there is no one to blame for your actions or reactions but **yourself**. (James 1:14; Genesis 3:12-13)

- Understand the **flesh**. (Galatians 5:16; 1 Peter 3:8-9; Galatians 5:22-26)

PROVERBS 17:25

A foolish son is a grief to his father
And bitterness to her who bore him.

PROVERBS 29:15

The rod and reproof give wisdom,
But a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.

PROVERBS 29:17

Correct your son, and he will give you comfort;
He will also delight your soul.

Point #4

The Purpose of

- It takes discipline to **discipline**.
 - See that your child **obeys**. (Romans 12:11; 1 Corinthians 9:26-27; Philippians 4:12-13; Hebrews 6:12; Hebrews 11)

discipline

(noun)

training expected to produce a particular character or pattern of behavior, especially training that produces moral or mental improvement

New American Heritage Dictionary

- Discipline takes **training**.
 - Give fewer commands with more follow through.
 - God disciplines us. (Hebrews 12:5-11)
- Discipline is not to **satisfy** your wrath or frustrations.

HEBREWS 12:5-11

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,
Nor faint when you are reproved by Him;
For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines,
And He scourges every son whom He receives.”

It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our **good**, so that we may share His **holiness**. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the **peaceful fruit of righteousness**.

Discipline
is for our
children's
good.

Discipline
trains our
children in
holiness.

Discipline yields the **peaceful fruit of righteousness**.

HEBREWS 12:11-16

Therefore, **strengthen** the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be **healed**. Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of **bitterness** springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal.

Discipline is for our children's **healing**.

Discipline is not to **break** or **cripple** our children.

Discipline is not to create **bitterness** in our children.

Point #5

The Purpose of the

- The rod is not to be **withheld**. (Proverbs 13:24)
- The rod unwinds **foolishness** in a child's heart. (Proverbs 22:15)
- The rod is not for when you are **mad**. (Ephesians 6:4)
- The rod is for **correction** through the work of the Holy Spirit.
 - A **short-term** discomfort that saves from the **long-term** disaster of a foolish life

rod

(noun)

The shoot or long twig of any woody plant; a branch, or the stem of a shrub; as a rod of hazle, of birch, of oak or hickory. Hence, An instrument of punishment or correction; chastisement.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary



Children are to bring parents joy.

PROVERBS 23:24-25

The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice,
And he who sires a wise son will be glad in him.
Let your father and your mother be glad,
And let her rejoice who gave birth to you.

PROVERBS 6:16-19

There are six things which the Lord hates,
Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him:
Haughty eyes, a lying tongue,
And hands that shed innocent blood,
A heart that devises wicked plans,
Feet that run rapidly to evil,
A false witness who utters lies,
And one who spreads strife among brothers.



A guide for **foolish** behaviors the Lord hates.

Practical Everyday Stuff

Newborns and Babies

- Establish your **authority** from the cradle.
- Establish a **routine**, keeping in mind that it will need to be **flexible** at times.
- Teach **delayed gratification** as they grow.
- The baby fussing is no reason to **lose** your joy.
- No one needs to be **upset** except the baby.
- It is not what your baby does, it is what you **choose** to do about it.



Toddlers and Preschoolers

- Maintain your **authority**.
- Provide lots of **practice** in obedience.
- Train them by **showing** them learn how to obey.
- **Encourage** them.
- Teach that willful disobedience has physical **consequences**.
- Disciple them by helping them learn to be **disciplined**.
- **Teach** good habits first.
- **Depend** upon the Lord.
- Teach them what the Lord has **taught** you.



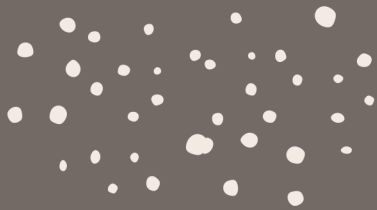
Adolescents and Teenagers

- Do not teach your teens to **deny** feelings of anger. Everyone gets angry at times.
- Teach them how to deal with their emotions.
- Let them know that natural tendencies are a part of our **sin nature**.
- Use biblical methods to reach your teen's **heart**.



Discipline from a heart of love.

“
Nothing
has kept me
on my knees
more than
raising
children.



“

You can't bring

out of the well

what is not there.



Notes:

Notes:

TAKING IT FURTHER

Reflections for the Heart

Questions to Ponder

- How were you disciplined as a child?
- How has it affected the way you disciplined (if your children are grown) or the way you discipline now (if your children are still in your home)?
- According to Hebrews 12, what are the purposes of discipline?
- What are the biggest changes you need to make either in:
 - the way you discipline your children
 - the way you view other people's children
 - the way you view parents who are struggling with their children
 - the way you stand in judgment

- What is the biggest challenge you will take away from today's message?
- Will you commit to praying for Christian parents, yourself included, that we would walk with God, seek His guidance, and view children from His perspective?



SESSION 5

God's Heart for the Home

SESSION 5

God's Heart for the Home

Point #1

She chooses to have a for God. (1 Peter 1:15-16)

Point #2

She chooses to be to God. (Hebrews 12:1)

Point #3

She chooses to be in God's purpose for her. (1 Timothy 6:6-8; 2 Corinthians 9:8)

Point #4

She chooses to walk in the of God.

- She recognizes her **inadequacies**.
- She recognizes her **limitations**.
- She is growing in her **knowledge** of her **God**.

(Galatians 5:13-26; Colossians 2:16-23; Romans 14:13-23)

Point #5

She chooses to be . (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

- She accepts **trials** from God and is **thankful** for the process.

Point #6

She chooses to .

(2 Corinthians 11:22-33; Philippians 3:13-14; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11-12)

Where will you go from here? Will you obey His voice?

What will you choose?

SCRIPTURE	WISE WOMAN	FOOLISH WOMAN
Proverbs 9		
Proverbs 19:13-15		
Proverbs 24:3-4		
Proverbs 21:19		
Proverbs 14:1		
Proverbs 7:11		
Proverbs 22:13		
Proverbs 13:4		
Proverbs 21:25		
Proverbs 15:19		
Proverbs 26:16		
Proverbs 20:4		
Proverbs 6:9-11		
Titus 2:3-5		
2 Timothy 5:5-6		
2 Timothy 5:9-15		
1 Peter 3:1-6		

Notes:

Notes:



APPENDIX

Additional Resources

The Boy and the Rattlesnake

A little boy was walking down a path and he came across a rattlesnake. The rattlesnake was getting old. He asked, "Please little boy, can you take me to the top of the mountain? I hope to see the sunset one last time before I die." The little boy answered "No Mr. Rattlesnake. If I pick you up, you'll bite me, and I'll die." The rattlesnake said, "No, I promise. I won't bite you. Just please take me up to the mountain." The little boy thought about it and finally picked up that rattlesnake and took it close to his chest and carried it up to the top of the mountain.

They sat there and watched the sunset together. It was so beautiful. Then after sunset the rattlesnake turned to the little boy and asked, "Can I go home now? I am tired, and I am old." The little boy picked up the rattlesnake and again took it to his chest and held it tightly and safely. He came all the way down the mountain holding the snake carefully and took it to his home to give him some food and a place to sleep. The next day the rattlesnake turned to the boy and asked, "Please little boy, will you take me back to my home now? It is time for me to leave this world, and I would like to be at my home now." The little boy felt he had been safe all this time and the snake had kept his word, so he would take it home as asked.

He carefully picked up the snake, took it close to his chest, and carried him back to the woods, to his home to die. Just before he laid the rattlesnake down, the rattlesnake turned and bit him in the chest. The little boy cried out and threw the snake upon the ground. "Mr. Snake, why did you do that? Now I will surely die!" The rattlesnake looked up at him and grinned, "You knew what I was when you picked me up."



Parable of Motherhood

The young mother set her foot on the path of life. "Is this the long way?" she asked.

And the guide said: "Yes, and the way is hard. And you will be old before you reach the end of it. But the end will be better than the beginning."

But the young mother was happy, and she would not believe that anything could be better than these years. So, she played with her children, and gathered flowers for them along the way, and bathed them in the clear streams; and the sun shone on them, and the young Mother cried, "Nothing will ever be lovelier than this."

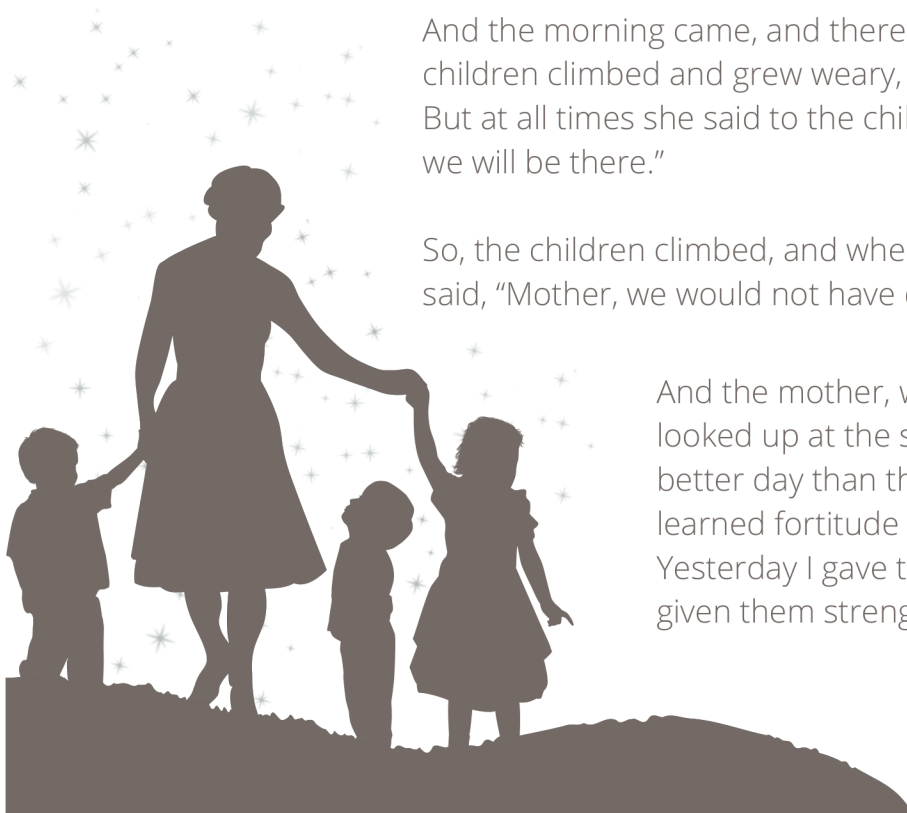


Then the night came, and the storm, and the path was dark, and the children shook with fear and cold, and the mother drew them close and covered them with her mantle, and the children said, "Mother, we are not afraid, for you are near, and no harm can come."

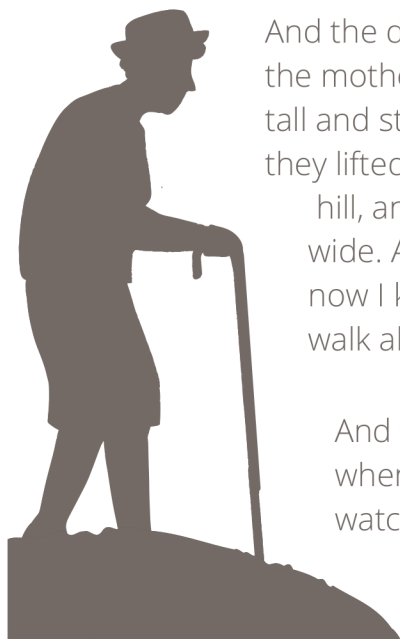
And the morning came, and there was a hill ahead, and the children climbed and grew weary, and the mother was weary. But at all times she said to the children, "A little patience and we will be there."

So, the children climbed, and when they reached the top they said, "Mother, we would not have done it without you."

And the mother, when she lay down at night looked up at the stars and said, "This is a better day than the last, for my children have learned fortitude in the face of hardness. Yesterday I gave them courage. Today, I have given them strength."



And the next day came strange clouds which darkened the earth, clouds of war and hate and evil, and the children groped and stumbled, and the mother said: "Look up. Lift your eyes to the light." And the children looked and saw above the clouds an everlasting glory, and it guided them beyond the darkness. And that night the Mother said, "This is the best day of all, for I have shown my children God."



And the days went on, and the weeks and the months and the years, and the mother grew old and she was little and bent. But her children were tall and strong and walked with courage. And when the way was rough, they lifted her, for she was as light as a feather; and at last they came to a hill, and beyond they could see a shining road and golden gates flung wide. And mother said, "I have reached the end of my journey. And now I know the end is better than the beginning, for my children can walk alone, and their children after them."

And the children said, "You will always walk with us, Mother, even when you have gone through the gates." And they stood and watched her as she went on alone, and the gates closed after her.

is with us still. A mother like ours is more than a memory. She is a living presence."

And they said: "We cannot see her but she



By Temple Bailey

Praying for Your Children

- 1 That they will know Christ early in life. *Psalm 63:1; 2 Timothy 3:15*
- 2 That they will hate sin. *Psalm 97:10*
- 3 That they will be caught when guilty. *Psalm 119:71*
- 4 That they will be protected from the evil one in each area of their lives: spiritual, emotional, physical. *John 17:15*
- 5 That they will have a responsible attitude in all their personal relationships. *Daniel 6:3*
- 6 That they will respect those in authority over them. *Romans 13:1*
- 7 That they will desire the right kind of friends and be protected from the wrong friends. *Proverbs 1:10-11*
- 8 That they will be kept from the wrong mate and saved for the right one. *2 Corinthians 6:14-17*
- 9 That they, as well as those they marry, will be kept pure. *1 Corinthians 6:18-20*
- 10 That they will learn to totally submit to God and actively resist Satan in all circumstances. *James 4:7*
- 11 That they will be single-hearted, willing to be sold out to Jesus Christ. *Romans 12:1-2*
- 12 That they will be hedged in so they cannot find their way to wrong people or wrong places and that the wrong people cannot find them. *Hosea 2:6*

There are 12; one for each month.
Within a year, you will have consistently prayed this entire list.

