

Moms, God Bless You – 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

Mother's Day 2025

In the meantime, let's turn to 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3. It's Mother's Day, and though it's not a *biblical* day per se, it *is* biblical to bless them. It *is* biblical to honor them; thank them; recognize their indispensable value in our lives.

Proverbs 31:28-29 says – [28] *Her children rise up and call her blessed* [favored of God]; *her husband also, and he praises her* [a form of blessing; saying]: [29] *“Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.”* (ESV) It's biblical to bless the Moms among us.

In fact, it's commanded. Going all the way back to **Numbers 6:22–27**. Where it says . . . [22] *The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, [23] “Speak to Aaron and his sons [the priests; the leaders of God's people], saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, [24] The LORD bless you and keep you [as in pour out his favor on you and protect you, preserve you]; [25] the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you [as in bring his presence to bear on your life with goodness and kindness]; [26] the LORD lift up his countenance upon you [his attention] and give you peace [as in wholeness, fullness, settled-ness in life]. [27] “So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel [my label and my approval], and I will bless them.”* I'll do it.

It's a command, to *commend* the people of God, and confer his *favor* on them. To bless someone is to commend them for something, and express your desire for God to bless them even more.

And as a priesthood of *believers*, it's for all of us. Not just pastors and leaders, but *every* believer. The command is for *all* of us to commend and confer God's blessing on one another. And Moms are some of the most deserving.

Intro

That's especially true in *our* day. When motherhood is increasingly avoided. Less and less women are getting married, and more and more are remaining childless. So that our birth rate in the United States is *far* below the replacement rate. Far below the number of babies needed to replace all those who die in our country.

In fact, it's at historic lows. (**Graph** – US Birthrate 1800-2020) This is a graph showing the birthrate in the United States from 1800 to 2020. And with the exception of the baby boom following WWII, the trend is shockingly downward.

And the most recent data is even lower. As of 2023, it's 1.6 births per woman. While the replacement rate is 2.1. Which means by 2033, assuming everything else remains the same – immigration rates, death rates, life expectancy – our population will start decreasing. And you don't have to think very long to imagine the negative effects of that. Just look at a small town in the last 50 years.

What's more, our particular area is only marginally better. Here's another **graph**. The *US Birthrate By County* in the United States. Anything white, pink, or red is *below* the

replacement rate, while anything *blue* is above it. Scott County is slightly pink. A little below.

And if you overlay *that* graph with *religious* filters, people who attend church regularly, *this* is what you get. (**Graph** – US Religious Population) The darker the brown, the more religious the population. Same counties with higher birthrates. Showing that right now, the rural, religious, and conservative areas of our country are keeping us afloat.

So Moms, God bless you. Whether you're in the *thick* of child-rearing, or watching from afar. If you hear nothing else this morning, hear this: God bless you.

But I want to get specific. Starting with your love. God bless you . . .

For your labor of love

It comes straight out of 1 Thessalonians 1. *We give thanks to God* [Paul says in v2] *always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, [3] remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

While Paul originally intended this to be a blessing and encouragement to *all* those who love the Lord, it certainly includes believing moms. Not perfect moms, but devoted moms. Dedicated moms. *Perfection* left the house the day you got home from the hospital. God knows.

But he also knows your heart. He also knows your love; your *love* for your kids. And your labor on their behalf. Your labor *prompted* by your love. Driven by your love. Compelled by it. Or as Paul says it, your *labor of love*. God bless you for that.

God bless you for your blood, sweat, and tears to give yourself to your kids. Your all-out, all-in effort to *provide* for them. Your physical toil to *help* them. Your emotional strain to *nurture* them. It's all part of your care for them. God bless you for your labor of love **to care** for your kids. From toddlers to teenagers. Even adults from time to time.

Now, some of you would give June Cleaver a run for her money in this respect. You're killing it. You're a “Trad Mom.” Rivalling the imaginary lives of even the best influencers. You're able to stay home, you're able to make that your sole job, and the job you're doing to care for your kids is off the charts. Bless you. Seriously.

Others of you *aren't* able to stay home, or have *chosen* not to, and you have two jobs. The one you get paid for, and the one you get blessed for. And some of *you* are killing it.

But most of you probably feel woefully inadequate and one moment away from completely losing it. If that's you, or was you, there's so much grace you can't even imagine it. Grace from God, grace from us, grace from your kids, everyone. Because your day-in-day-out labor of love covers it all. A multitude of *sin*, a multitude of mistakes, a multitude of impatience, anger, exhaustion, everything.

Are your kids fed? God bless you. If dads were responsible they'd either go hungry or eat pizza every meal. Are they clothed? God bless you. Bathed? God bless you. Do you hug them, and kiss them, and nurture them on a regular basis? God bless you. God bless you for *all* the things you do to care for your kids. It covers a *world* of failure.

And God bless you for your labor of love **to teach** them. From how to use a fork to how to read a book. How to do a puzzle and how to behave. How to obey and how to work. How to share and how to think. God bless you for that. God bless you for making every moment a *teaching* moment. It's a labor of love.

As is your labor of love **to sacrifice** for your kids. In big ways *and* little ones. Like giving them the center of your cinnamon roll. I watched one of our daughters do that this past week with *her* sons, and thought, "You're not gettin' mine."

But moms are a different story. They sacrifice. Time, talent, *and* cinnamon rolls. Many of them giving up a *career* for their kids. And certainly a bigger house and better car. They sacrifice without even thinking twice. Putting their kids first and themselves a distant, distant second. God bless you for that. It's extraordinary.

And one more thought here: God bless you for your labor of love to do it all over again. Rinse and repeat. From one child to the next, one minute to the next; and one hour after another, and another, and another. Loving them a hundred times a day until the days turn to weeks, weeks to months, and months to gray hairs.

Are you perfect? No. Do you fail? Sure. But you sure do try. God knows. And may God bless you for it. Your labor of love to care, teach, and sacrifice, over and over again.

Second, God bless you . . .

For your work of faith

That's the *first* thing Paul remembers in v3. *We give thanks to God . . . remembering . . . your work of faith.* (1 Thessalonians 1:3) It's a play on words. Because most of the time Paul uses those two words as opposites. But here he combines them to commend us for our "work *produced* by faith." (NIV) That's the idea. He thanks God for the things they do for him, stemming from their faith in him.

Like the faith of moms **to have kids** in the first place. Whether by birth, adoption, or both. God bless you. It's a work of faith. Trusting that if you're fruitful and multiply, he will meet your needs. He will give you the *strength*. He will bless your effort.

We don't always *think* of having kids that way. Most of the time moms are just responding to the innate desire God *gives* them to have children. But it doesn't take long to realize it's a work of faith. Trusting him to *give* you a child, and trusting him for the unique child he gives.

God bless you for that. God bless you for your work of faith to have kids in the first place.

Second, God bless you for your work of faith **to train them up**. Train them up in the way they should go. *Bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.* (Eph 6:4). Raise them according to the principles of God's Word. God bless you for that as well. Not only for doing it, and being faithful about it, but *having* the faith to do it. The faith that God will bless it.

Why else would you train them? Why else would you strive to teach them about God? Why else would you have them in church every time the doors are open? Why else would you read to them from a children's Bible? And encourage them to read it on their *own*

when they're old enough. And talk about it with them. Why? Why to all that?

Because you believe, you trust, that if you do *those* things, God will do his thing. You have faith that training them to believe, and behave, and belong, will bear good fruit.

That's the whole idea of **Proverbs 22:6** – *Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.* It's a work of faith. A tireless work of trust. That if you do what's right *now*, it will pay off later. God bless you for that.

And God bless you for your work of faith **to do your best**. To pour yourself out and pour yourself in. I marvel at moms who do this. Going above and *beyond* to parent their kids. Above and beyond to shape their teens. Above and beyond to influence their lives.

You take 1 Corinthians 10:31 seriously. That *whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do* – change diapers, wipe noses, discipline tantrums, bake cookies, play games, spank bottoms, go to parks, ride bikes, hold the line, drive carpools, and everything else – *whatever you do*, you do it all for *the glory of God*. All to magnify and exalt *him* in your life. And theirs.

God bless you for that. God bless you for your work of faith to do your best.

Fourth, God bless you for your work of faith **to be an example**. A godly example. For how to live in a God-honoring way. How to think, and think biblically. How to worship, and why. How to give. How to tithe. How to budget. How to serve. How to compete. How to love. How to laugh. God bless you for that. All of it. Your work of faith to be an example.

And last, God bless you for your work of faith **to persevere**. Persevere in the faith, persevere in your marriage, and persevere with your parenting. Never giving up and never stopping. Never ceasing and never quitting. God bless you.

And last for the moms among us, God bless you . . .

For your steadfast hope

Closely related to perseverance, it's the third quality Paul remembers. *We give thanks to God* [he said] . . . *remembering . . . your . . . steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.* (1 Thessalonians 1:3) Your *endurance*, inspired by your confidence; your confidence in Jesus. Your unwavering faith to love and follow him. Your firm expectation that he will do what he said. That he'll provide and guide. Lead and protect. God bless you for that.

Especially your steadfast hope . . .

• That he will meet you every morning with mercies anew

Especially when the night before was broken and short. Or you stayed up late to wait for your teenager. Or got up early to prepare for the day.

God bless you for your steadfast hope that he will fill you and fuel you with all that you need. All the grace, all the mercy, and all the love. No matter *how* much you expended yesterday. No matter how much you wasted the day before. (**Lam 3:22–23**)

God bless you for your steadfast hope, that – [22] *The steadfast love of the LORD never*

ceases; his mercies never come to an end; [23] they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. God bless you for that.

And God bless you for your steadfast hope . . .

• **That he will sustain you every day with divine strength**

Supernatural strength. God-given strength. Which usually means patience to no end, and energy that rivals Red Bull. Is that not what you need as a mom? Patience and energy?

Once again, I don't know how you do it. If I spend even one *day* with my grandkids, I find myself counting the hours until bedtime. Usually starting around 10 in the morning.

God bless you for your steadfast hope. Your enduring faith that he will supply the strength you need, every single day. Your confident expectation that he will sustain you through thick and thin, every single hour.

And last, God bless you for your steadfast hope . . .

• **That he will fill you every moment with the fruit of his Spirit**

And not just barely, but fully. Fruit in full bloom. A kind of daily bread to not just sustain you, but enable you to flourish. Not just keep your *head* above water, but walk on it.

Fruit like **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness**, and **self-control**. (Gal 5:22) It's almost as if Paul had *moms* in mind when he wrote those words. Moms at about 5 o'clock in the evening, just before their husband gets home. Fighting for the last piece of *any* fruit for their kids. Any gentleness. Any patience.

I remember my Dad coming home every now and then, and Mom would say, "They're yours. I can't stand them anymore, and don't want to see them until dinner." Which I thought was funny, until Becky said the same thing to me on occasion.

Moms, God bless you for fighting the good fight in that respect. God bless you for being filled with the Spirit and trusting him for the fruit. God bless you for your steadfast hope that he will meet you, and sustain you, and fill you every single day. Every single moment.

You're an inspiration to us all. You really are. For your labor of love, your work of faith, and your steadfast hope.

So, may *the LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.*

Prayer – Give each and every mom a quiet joy and a joyful peace. For all they've done and all they're doing. All they hope for and all that's ahead. And be near to those who have *lost* a child; those who *want* a child; those who wish they could go back; those who made irreparable mistakes. Comfort them in their weeping. Assure them of your forgiveness. And surround them all with your presence. (No amen)

Moms, **You Are Loved**