

A MOTHER FOR LIFE

John 2:1-11

May 11, 2008 Sunday am.

INTRODUCTION

- A. A preacher was making the traditional Mother's Day recognitions of the woman with the most children, the oldest mother present, and the woman who traveled the farthest. To spice up things he added a new category: the woman who gained the most weight during pregnancy. No one wanted that award.
- B. There's an old saying: "God couldn't be everywhere at once, so he made moms". That's not good theology, but it does emphasize the importance of our mothers.
 - 1. At the beginning of Jesus' public ministry we see that his mother played a vital role then and throughout his lifetime.
 - 2. This story plays out in John 2:1-11 and is familiar to most of us (TELL STORY).
 - 3. Although we don't know who's wedding Jesus was attending, Ann Rice in her newest book on the life of Christ has an interesting answer. ("Christ the Lord, The Road to Cana").
 - 4. Let's notice three lessons for mothers seen in the way Jesus and Mary related to one another in our passage.

I. FIRST, MOTHERS SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN THEIR CHILD'S LIFE.

- A. One afternoon a man came home from work to find total mayhem in his house. His three children were outside, still in their pajamas, playing in the mud, with empty food boxes and wrappers strewn all around the front yard. The door of his wife's car was open, as was the front door to the house.

Proceeding into the entry, he found an even bigger mess. A lamp had been knocked over, and the throw rug was wadded against one wall.

In the front room the TV was loudly blaring a cartoon channel, and the family room was strewn with toys and various items of clothing. In the kitchen, dishes filled the sink, breakfast food was spilled on the counter, dog food was spilled on the floor, a broken glass lay under the table, and a small pile of sand was spread by the back door.

He quickly headed up the stairs, stepping over toys and more piles of clothes, looking for his wife. He was worried she may be ill, or that something serious had happened. He found her lounging in the bedroom, still curled in the bed in her pajamas, reading a novel. She looked up at him, smiled, and asked how his day went. He looked at her bewildered and asked, "What happened here today?"

She again smiled and answered, "You know every day when you come home from work and ask me what in the world did I do today?"

"Mhmmm."

She answered, "Well, today I didn't do it."
- B. Mary was certainly involved at the beginning of Jesus public ministry and we continue to see her right up to the time her son was on the cross.
- C. Parents often make jokes about how much they're looking forward to getting their kids out of the house. At least I think it's a joke. And kids do the same thing too.
 - 1. When we say mothers should remain involved in the kids life we don't mean they should control them or make their decisions.
 - 2. Neither do we mean that children should remain financially dependent on their children after they're grown.
 - 3. We are simply talking about keeping the channel of communication open as well as doing things together.

II. SECOND, MOTHERS SHOULD BE AWARE OF THEIR CHILD'S POTENTIAL.

- A. When the wine ran out at the wedding, Mary knew her son was capable of doing something about it. She recognized his potential before anyone else did. Now isn't that just like a mother.
- B. You can have a brighter child, it all depends on your expectations. Before you're tempted to say, "Not true," let me tell you about Harvard social psychologist Robert Rosenthal's classic study. All the children in one San Francisco grade school were given a standard I.Q. test at the beginning of the school year. The teachers were told the test could predict which students could be expected to have a spurt of academic and intellectual functioning. The researchers then drew names out of a hat and told the teachers that these were the children who had displayed a high potential for improvement. Naturally, the teachers thought they had been selected because of their test performance and began treating these children as special children. And the most amazing thing happened -- the spurters, spurted! Overall, the "late blooming" kids averaged four more I.Q. points on the second test than the other group of students. However, the gains were most dramatic in the lowest grades. First graders whose teachers expected them to advance intellectually jumped 27.4 points, and the second grade spurters increased on the average 16.5 points more than their peers. One little Latin-American child who had been classified as mentally retarded with an I.Q. of 61, scored 106 after his selection as a late bloomer.

Isn't this impressive! It reminds me of what Eliza Doolittle says in *My Fair Lady*, "The difference between a lady and a flower girl is not how she behaves, but how she is treated." You see, how a child is treated has a lot to do with how that child sees herself and ultimately behaves. If a child is treated as a slow learner and you don't expect much, the child shrugs her shoulders and says, "Why should I try, nobody thinks I can do it anyway!" And she gives up. But if you look at that child as someone who has more potential than she will ever be able to develop, you will challenge that child, work with her through discouragement, and find ways to explain concepts so the child can understand. You won't mind investing time in the child because you know your investment is going to pay off! And the result? It does!

So, what's the message for parents? Just this: Every child benefits from someone who believes in him, and the younger the child, the more important it is to have high expectations. You may not have an Einstein, but your child has possibilities! Expect the best and chances are, that's exactly what you'll get. *Kay Kuzma, Family Times, Vol. 1, No. 3, Fall, 1992, p. 1.*

- C. That's the kind of mother every son or daughter needs—one that recognizes their potential even before anyone else does.

III. THIRD, MOTHER'S SHOULD BE WILLING TO LET THEIR CHILD DO THINGS FOR THEMSELVES.

- A. Mary asked for Jesus' help then left the rest up to him-v.5. She didn't try to tell him how to perform a miracle.
- B. There comes a time when parents must step back and let their children make their own decisions, including mistakes as long as they don't ruin their lives.
 - 1. Personal illustration of Chris taking his NCLEX certification test to finish nursing school. The test can take six hours to complete in a controlled testing facility. I had a hard time not giving him suggestions on when and how to study. (i.e. called to say they went to the zoo today. I had to bite my tongue not to tell him he didn't have time to be with his family, in fact, why was he wasting time talking to me on the phone—he should be studying! Good news, somehow even without my expert fatherly advice and wisdom he passed the test this week.
 - 2. One reason why this is so difficult for parents to do is that they will always see their children as children.
 - 3. Its true they will always be your children, but you must recognize their responsibility to make their own decisions.

CONCLUSION

- A. What this story says is that a mother never stops being a mother.
- B. Also, children never stop needing a mother.
- C. However, mothers should emulate Jesus' mother and....
 1. Be involved in their lives.
 2. Be aware of their potential.
 3. Let them do things for themselves.