

A four-year-old and a six-year-old presented their mom with a house plant. They had used their own money and she was thrilled. The older of them said with a sad face, "There was a bouquet that we wanted to give you at the flower shop. It was real pretty, but it was too expensive. It had a ribbon on it that said, 'Rest In Peace'", and we thought it would be just perfect since you are always asking for a little peace so that you can rest.

Today we are here to worship the Lord. And we celebrate those who have children and those who don't. We celebrate those who are aunts or godmothers. We celebrate all women to be a physical, intellectual, emotional or spiritual role model for the young.

I want to share a story that we can think of how much a mom's role is worth.

A boy got his first job. As he was boasting about the amount of work he did, he said, "I get up at 5 a.m. and have my breakfast." He was asked, "Does anyone else get up too?" He replied, "Oh yes, mother gets up and fixes my breakfast and then fixes dad's breakfast."

"And what about your dinner?" The boy said, "Oh, mother, fixes that too."

"Does your mother have the afternoon to herself?" The boy replied, "No, mama cleans the house, looks after the other children, and then gets supper for me and dad when we come home. Then we watch TV before we go to bed."

"What about your mother? What does she do?" The boy replied, "Mama washes some clothes and irons the rest of the evening."

"Do you get paid?" "Of course, Dad and I get paid."

"And what about your mother, does she get paid too?"

The boy replied, "MOTHER, GET PAID?! MOTHER DON'T GET PAID. SHE DON'T DO NO WORK."

If anyone here today believes that moms don't work, I would suggest that you'd better keep your mouth shut. You may think that being a mother is not the most important job in the world. Salary.com says, "a salary of a mother in 2018 is \$162,581.00. We used to miss how much mom's role is worth. Our world is full of mothers, but we have only one mother who is special. There is no one like our mothers. And no one can take the place of our mothers.

Someone has said, "Mothers write on the hearts of their children what the rough hand of the world cannot erase."

Preacher G. Campbell Morgan had four sons and they all became ministers of the gospel. At a family reunion, a friend asked one of the sons, "Which Morgan is the greatest preacher?" While that son looked at his father, he replied, "MOTHER." Mother was the greatest preacher. Many mothers have done a lot of preaching to their children, whether they considered it preaching or not.

God has uniquely given mothers the opportunity and responsibility to intentionally disciple their children. They have the opportunity to hand down their faith about God. They have the unique ability to demonstrate God's love and grace. Moms are designed to be disciple-makers.

Do you think of your children as your disciples? Many of us need to make a paradigm shift.

According to a recent Barna report, about 6 in 10 practicing Christians in the U.S. today say they came to faith because of the influence of a believer in the household where they grew up. Of those, 68 percent say a mother's faith influenced them.

Roughly 70 percent of Christian teens told Barna they had talked with their mothers about God and faith in the past month, and more than 60 percent had prayed with their moms. In fact, teens are more likely to turn to their mothers for spiritual guidance than to other family members or friends.

About 90 percent of Christian teens say they would take questions about faith and the Bible directly to their mothers. And nearly all say their moms encourage them to attend church.

Without a mother, we can't imagine we make a disciple of Jesus Christ to transform the world. A mother plays a vital role for the next generation.

From the earliest days of the Church, women have been diligently discipling the next generation of believers. In our Scripture this morning we have the story of Tabitha. Tabitha was just an ordinary woman in the city of Joppa, who did ordinary everyday things, for ordinary everyday people. She didn't preach before thousands. She didn't stand before governors and kings. She didn't write a powerful theological set of commentaries or perform astounding feats. She simply served those who were in need. She simply did what needed to be done, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For us, Tabitha is one of those people who is almost a footnote in Scripture. She is someone who many of us pass over when we read the Bible. For us, she is a minor character in the building of the early church, a person of no real significance. But for God, she is so significant in the eyes of God. She is so important to the continuing work to build the kingdom of God. God needs to have this woman brought back. This woman is so significant that the building of the early church cannot go on without her. Not a single one of the twelve disciples were brought back from the dead, yet Tabitha was.

Why is that? Why is it that this woman, who we can't even know exactly what she did, why is it that she had the most impact upon the early church?

She displayed her love for Christ in very practical ways. Scripture tells us that she was devoted to good works and acts of charity. She loved to sew and was good at it. She probably saw a piece of beautiful cloth and had ideas about what she could make out of it and who she could make it for. Tabitha making clothes for people who needed them is just the example of ministry.

Like Tabitha, we need faithful moms and grandmas in our lives and in our congregations. I don't just mean biological relations. Many Christian women are investing in the younger generation as pastors, teachers, coaches, business leaders, friends and neighbors. This is the way the Church is supposed to operate. Paul told Titus to teach the older women, so they can encourage and instruct younger women (Titus 2:3-5).

Beyond our biological family, we've benefited from the wisdom, support, and prayers of a number of church "mothers" over the years. We need more such role models today, in an age when many young people are growing up without a spiritual foundation and others are dropping out of church to join the growing ranks of the religiously unaffiliated. We need godly women and men who will step up and lovingly, confidently say, "I've prayed for you."

I would like to share the poem by Reva Miller, "A Mother's Secret For Success"

When in the morning I wash my children, I prayed that they might be washed by the Savior's precious blood.

When I put on their garments, I prayed that they might be arrayed by the garments of salvation in the robe of God's righteousness.

When I give them food, I prayed that they might be fed with the bread of life.

When I started them on the road to school, I prayed that their faith might be as a shining light brighter and brighter to the perfect day.

When I put them to sleep, I prayed that they might be enfolded in the Savior's everlasting arms.

Mother's Day is an opportunity to reflect on the vital role that moms and spiritual moms play in the life of the Church. Honor them. Thank God for them.