

Influential M.O.M.s - 05.13.10

Intro: “Where Is God?” joke: <http://www.freetimejokes.com/mothers-day-jokes/where-is-god> **“We’re in BIG trouble this time. God is missing and they think WE did it!”** *Moms have so much more influence than pastors!* If you’re a mom here at Church Requel tonight, I want to honor you, appreciate you, and thank you. None of us would be here tonight if it wasn’t for you! Perhaps one of the best gifts I can give you would be a simple, easy-to-remember Mother’s Day sermon. (If you’re not a mom, you can still benefit.. as a Dad... as a mentor...) **So here it is, a simple, 3-point acrostic: M.O.M. When we think of mom, we think of someone who Models, Observes, and Motivates.**

MODEL

A great mom is one who models how to live. She’s a great example of all good things, demonstrating hard work, never-ceasing love and acceptance, and incredible unselfishness.

One of the most important things you can model to your children and your grandchildren, moms, is your faith in Christ. When Paul begins to write his second letter to Timothy, he says,

“I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.”
2 Timothy 1:5 ESV

Think of the rich heritage of Timothy and the great kingdom results that have occurred because of the faithful MODELING of Lois and Eunice, who we still speak of 2,000 years later! To be a great model for your child and/or grandchild requires two things:

1st - Do the right things at the right times in front of your child.

2nd - Tell them WHY you do what you do when you do it!

We need to always remember to put words of explanation to our right actions. Both are required. To do one without the other leaves us wondering... If we always hear words without action, we wonder if there’s any validity to the words, but if we only see the actions without the words, we’ll always wonder why you do what you do.

Illustration - My grandmother taught me to pray. When I was about nine years old, my parents took us camping into a remote area of Canada. A bear came into our camp. My father demonstrated bravery by going out to the car while my grandma and I stayed in the tent. Dad honked the horn to scare the bear off. But the bear only climbed on top of the car. In this moment of frightening uncertainty, my grandmother wrapped her arms around me and said, “Now is the time to pray, Mark.” And she proceeded to pray out loud for God to rescue us from the bear. Eventually the bear ran off. I remember two things from this experience. Until this day my dad loves to tell the story of “when the bear was on the top and he was on the bottom.” But I always have remembered that the FIRST thing my grandmother did was to pray... and to teach me to pray!

**Not only does a great mom (or grandma) MODEL, but she also...
OBSERVE**

What do I mean by “observe?” I mean that you become a student of the life of the child you are raising. Every person is an absolutely unique creation of God!

“You shaped me first inside, then out; you formed me in my mother’s womb.”
Psalm 139:13 The Message

The child you are raising is different than anyone else!

Illustration - DNA molecules can unite in an almost infinite number of ways. Scientists estimate the number of combinations is 10 to the 2,400,000,000th power. That number is the likelihood that you’d ever find somebody just like you... or just like your child. If you were to write out that number with each zero being one inch wide, you’d need a strip of paper 37,000 miles long!

To be a great mom (or dad) means to observe, to watch, to learn about this unique gift of creation who is your child. You want to know them better than anyone else.

“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6 ESV

I used to think that “in the way he should go” meant the “right way as opposed to the wrong way.” But I don’t think that any more. *It means in the way your child is bent.* **And every child is bent in a different way.** I have four children and I’ve raised each one of them differently. They’re all in their twenties now, but I’m still learning about them and their uniqueness. Jennifer is a thinker, while Jonathan is a feeler. Jennifer and Jillian are more extroverts, while Jonathan and Jessica are more introverts. Jennifer and Jonathan both like to work as team members. Both Jessica and Jillian can work in teams, but are more comfortable working on an individual assignment. Jonathan can walk into a room and never forget the pattern of the wallpaper. He’s incredibly visual in the way he processes his thoughts. Jessica walks into a room and never forgets what was said. She’s incredibly audible in the way she processes her thoughts.

Here’s why this is so important. The Bible tells us that...

“God works through different people in different ways, but it is the same God who achieves his purpose through them all.” 1 Corinthians 12:6 (Phillips)

As a mom, you help your child discover how God can use him or her. Wood workers know that it’s easier to work with the grain than against it. In the same way you want to train up your child to work with his or her unique S.H.A.P.E. - Spiritual gifts, Heart and passions, natural Abilities, Personality, and Experiences.

A great mom MODELS and OBSERVES. But every great mom I’ve ever met does one other thing. She...

MOTIVATE

A great mom motivates her child to become all he or she can become. Few things can be compared to a mother's motivation. It's amazing what a mom can accomplish with a single look or a single word. Did you know that the very first miracle of Jesus recorded in the Bible was motivated by his mother?!

When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."
And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."
John 2:3-5 ESV

Sometimes it helps to read between the lines. Notice what is not said as much as what is said! It's interesting that Mary NEVER tells Jesus to miraculously turn the water into wine. But she motivates him to do it nonetheless! "They have no wine." A mother's statement of understatement. And while we may read TOO MUCH into Jesus' response, "Woman...", it doesn't sound entirely endearing! Notice also that Mary never then says another word to Jesus about it. She PRESUMES he will do something about it. Instead she talks to the servants. "Do whatever he tells you!"

NEVER GET IN THE WAY OF A MOTHER'S MOTIVATION! [laughter]

It is remarkable how much of a difference a mother's faith in her child can make in the life of her child.

Personal illustration - My mom always believed that I would be a preacher some day. She told this to me when I was only nine. When I decided to become a stockbroker, she never discouraged me from that profession. But she continuously spoke to me about God's calling upon my life. Never did a Christmas or a birthday go by that she didn't buy me a Bible commentary. And now some of the most precious books in my library or those that she has signed.

Written in the inside cover of my Matthew commentary: "*Love is an understatement from me to you as your commitment to Christ and ministry grows, so grows my pride and appreciation for my eldest son. So when you teach from these commentaries, remember my prayers are with you. Love and prayers - Mother. Christmas 1997*" That was nine years before I went into full-time ministry!

CONCLUSION: I was blessed to have a great mom. And we here at Church Requel are blessed to have some great moms. **Moms that MODEL. Moms that OBSERVE. And moms that MOTIVATE.**

PRAY. Ask all the mothers to stand. Pray a prayer of blessing: Loving God, as a mother gives life and nourishment to her children, so you watch over your Church. Bless these women, that they may be strengthened as Christian mothers. Let the example of their faith and love shine forth. Grant that we, their sons and daughters, may honor them always with a spirit of profound respect. Grant this through Christ our Lord.