

**Sermon:** *Mothers Who Make a Difference*  
**Text:** *Various*  
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When George Burns was 7, he sang in a neighborhood quartet with three other Jewish boys and they called themselves "*The PeeWee Quartet.*" Well, one day, they entered a contest at the Presbyterian Church down the street and won. And George ran home to his mama who was hanging out the laundry and said: "*Mama! Mama! I don't want to be a Jew anymore.*" She said: "*Do you mind if I ask why?*" He said: "*Well, I've been a Jew for 7 years and never got anything; and I was Presbyterian for 15 minutes and they gave me a watch.*" And without batting an eye, she said: "*Well, first help me hang up the laundry and then, you can be a Presbyterian.*"

Mothers! On this special day, as we come to worship God, we also come to honor our mothers. Now, in the mind of God, these two have always been connected. You see, the same God who said: "*You will love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength*" also said: "*You will honor your father and mother.*"

In 1870, a Methodist woman named Julia Ward Howe set aside a special day to honor her mother. And then, in 1907, another Methodist woman named Anna Jarvic organized a special worship service on the second Sunday in May to honor her mother too. And a few years after that, the Methodist Church put Mother's Day on its calendar and the celebration spread around the world. It's interesting that neither of these ladies honored their mothers for what they

did at home as a mother; instead they honored their mothers for her contributions beyond the home in business, in schools, in hospitals, and in the community. These women were definitely ahead of their time.

There's no doubt about it, a godly mother can make a significant difference ... in the home and outside of the home. And so, today, in the rest of our time together, I want us to reflect on some characteristics of mothers who make a difference.

***First, Mothers who make a Difference are Protective!*** Now, modern science tells us that a mother's protective instinct is hormonal. There is a hormone called CRH that causes women to circle the wagons and defend their children against outside threats.

Well, in Exodus 2, we read the story of Moses' mother. Remember her story? The Israelites were living as slaves in Egypt and their numbers had increased. So, Pharaoh issued a decree that overlords would make the Israelites work harder and midwives would kill the newborn Hebrew boys. And that's the way it happened, but ... but there was a mama who took her baby boy and placed him in an ark among the reeds by the banks of the Nile River. And she watched over him carefully until he was found by Pharaoh's daughter. She was a protective mama.

Helen Steiner Rice writes: "*A mother's love is like a fortress and we seek protection there when the waves of tribulation seem to drown us in despair.*" It doesn't

matter if the threat is physical, emotional, or spiritual ... a godly mother protects her children.

***Second, mothers who make a difference are supportive!*** Sometimes that support is emotional and sometimes, it's material. The same mother who works all day to make sure Little Suzie has everything she ever wanted, takes her into her arms and comforts her when Little Suzie's day didn't go so well.

Now, I Samuel tells us the story of Hannah. Remember her story? Hannah had no children, but one day she went to the Tabernacle and prayed. And she promised God: *"If you will give me a son, I will dedicate him to your service all the days of his life."* And sure enough, she had a son and she named him, Samuel, which means *"God hears."* And she kept her promise to God; she dedicated Samuel to the Lord's service and when he was old enough, she took him to the Tabernacle and left him with Eli, the priest, and Samuel served the Lord. Now, just because she left him with Eli doesn't mean she deserted him. No, in fact, the writer of I Samuel tells us that Hannah provided for her son's needs. She made his clothes and went up to visit him at the Tabernacle. She was a supportive mama.

I thank God today for my mama. I am who I am because of her. Mama is a Paramedic and she worked 3 or 4 24-hour shifts every week to help put clothes on my back and a roof over my head. And yet, when I've needed someone to talk to, when I've needed a shoulder to cry on or a swift kick in the seat of my pants, mama has been there. Anything I've

ever wanted to do, mama has supported ... from Rec Ball to the Ordained Ministry.

You know, Abraham Lincoln was right when he said: *“All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother.”* A godly mother supports her children.

***Third, Mothers who make a Difference are Instructive!*** The New Testament introduces us to a young man named Timothy, who was a traveling companion of Paul. Paul met Timothy on his first missionary journey and disciplined him and trained him to be a leader in the church. But late in his ministry, Paul wrote a letter to Timothy in which he traced Timothy’s faith all the way back to the instruction that he received from his mother and grandmother. Listen again to these words: *“I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you ... and so, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed knowing ... how from childhood you have known the sacred writings.”* Eunice (and Lois) was an instructive mama.

Very early in our marriage, before the children were even dreamed of, Lori and I made a decision to homeschool our kids. Now, some folks think we’re crazy and some folks just don’t understand, but Lori has been a wonderful teacher – not only of Reading, wRiting, and aRithmetic but – of what it truly means to live for Jesus every day.

Abraham Lincoln said: *“I remember my mother’s prayers and they have followed me. They have clung to me all my life.”* A godly mother instructs her children.

***Fourth, Mothers who make a Difference are Loyal!*** Mothers never give up on their children. It's hard to believe but Thomas Edison was a problem child, especially at school. The teachers constantly complained about young Thomas' inability to concentrate, but his mother stood by him. Then, one day, his teacher sent him home with a note that said: *"Your child is dumb. We can't do anything for him."* So, she sent a note back that said: *"You do not understand my boy. I will teach him myself."* And she did and the rest is history.

The Gospels tell us the story of Mary. Remember her story? One day an angel appeared to a young teenager, growing up in Nazareth, and told her that she would be the mother of the Messiah and even though she didn't understand it all, she accepted God's will for her life. And she carried that baby boy just like every other mother. She made that long trip to Bethlehem when she was 9 months pregnant. She delivered her son in a cattle stall. She dedicated him to the Lord and with Joseph raised him in a godly home. And when He became a traveling preacher, even when she didn't understand it all, she stayed with Him. And when He was hanging on the cross, she was one of the last people to leave Him. John 19 tells us that one of Jesus' last acts was an expression of concern for His loyal mother.

A godly mother is loyal to her children.

Mothers: your life isn't always easy, but what you do really matters. Your protection, your support, your instruction and your loyalty has made a difference in

our lives and today, on this Mother's Day, we thank God for you.

One day a woman was talking to her sister on the phone when her two kids started cutting up in the background. She tried to calm them down several times, but every time they just got louder and louder. So, she said: "*Sis, will you hold on for a moment while I take care of something?*" And she put the phone down and then, about 30 seconds later, everything went silent and the woman picked up the phone again and said: "Okay, I'm back." The sister said: "It got so quiet. You must have everything under control." And the woman said: "No. I just moved to the closet."

Mom you are a shining star though the world doesn't know your name.

You have no fancy title like Baroness or Dame.

Mom, you really are a star: my mother, mentor, and friend.

A Nobel Prize for motherhood is what I would recommend.

And if I won the lottery I'd share my win with you.

I'd take you on a spending spree, each day the whole year through.

Mom, You may not be famous and your face is known to few.

But hey, I think you are wonderful and I'm so proud of you.