



A Mother's Love

Brownsburg Church of Christ

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AM Assembly



Introduction:

A mother's love. That phrase brings many pictures to mind. We think of tenderness and unconditional devotion. We think of bandaged knees and kissed boo-boos. We think of late night talks and emotional protection. We have seen movies that highlight the love of a mother. We have read stories and heard poems. We have even told the joke about the guy who had a face only a mother could love. These are all great pictures and are even used in scripture (e.g. **I Thessalonians 2:7-8**). However, do they fully define a mother's love? Like most discussions on love, we need to talk about how it behaves, not just how it feels. The Bible actually provides a great synopsis of how a mother's love should act in **Titus 2:4-5**. Examine this passage and learn the true definition of a mother's love.

Discussion:

I. Mothers must love and be submissive to their husbands.

- A. As Paul summed up a mother's love, he bookended his definition by describing her relationship with her husband, saying she must love and be subject to him. Before a woman can be the mother she is to be, she must be the wife she is to be.
- B. The issue of subjection and submission is perhaps the most repeated statement about the role of wives in the New Testament—**Ephesians 5:22, 24; Colossians 3:18; I Peter 3:1, 5**. This concept does not mean the husband is to be a tyrant or the wife a doormat. It means a mother's love recognizes the father as head of the family and submits to his direction (unless, of course, his direction is diametrically opposed to God's).
- C. The word translated love here is a form of the word "philos," which actually means "friend." Mothers, you are to be friends with your husbands. I think the picture of friendship is best described by **Proverbs 31:12**, doing good for your husband all the days of your life. If you want to love your children, then love their father. Don't resent him. Don't compete with him. Don't turn your kids against him. Be his friend. Talk with him. Open up to him, and let him do the same with you. Be friends. It is proper to say that our best friend should be our spouse.

II. Mothers must love their children.

- A. This word is also a form of the word "philos," meaning friend. It is not the natural affection mothers have for their children. Tim Hawkins jokes, "I love all my kids, but sometimes I don't like that one." That liking them is the kind of love Paul is talking about.
- B. Being a friend to your children means wanting to be with them, not wanting to get away from them. It means helping them and doing what is best for them, even when they are not doing what is best for you. It means looking past their immaturity, their foolishness, their mistakes, and seeing someone who needs your affection and warmth. It means supporting them in godly endeavors and training them in proper behavior.
- C. Being a friend, however, does not mean you always agree with them, let them do whatever they want, or try to be that hip and happy mama who lets them dress however they want, go to whichever church they want, or have beer parties at your home. A friend is someone who holds people accountable to God's standards. When that friend is their mother, they even have to discipline those children. As **Proverbs 27:6** says, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend..." (ESV). Mothers, sometimes you need to wound your children when you are their friend. But when you wound them, it must be out of friendship, not out of vengeance, selfishness, or personal embarrassment.

III. Mothers must be self-controlled.

- A. Other translations say discreet, prudent, sensible, sober. The mother's love proceeds from a sound and sober mind. How easy it is for anyone to fly by the seat of their pants, making spur of the moment decisions that flow from emotions. I realize some people have great instincts—and women seem to have that sixth sense we call a woman's intuition. However, at the same time, a mother's love must be governed by sensibility, not emotionalism, paranoia, or envy.
- B. Consider a few statements made regarding the **Proverbs 31** woman. "She seeks wool and flax, and works with willing hands. She is like the ships of the merchant; she brings her food from afar...She considers a

field and buys it; with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard...She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household are clothed in scarlet...Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. She opens her mouth with wisdom..." (ESV). These statements highlight sensibility. A mother's love is governed by consideration, planning, and wisdom.

IV. Mothers must be pure.

- A. The need for this teaching seems to be particularly great in today's society. Immorality and immodesty seem to be at an all-time high. While we often hammer the men on these issues, please remember that for every David there is a Bathsheba. For every man who lusts after an immodestly clad woman, there is the immodestly clad woman. Mothers, your love must be pure.
- B. I know you had all kinds of visions of a knight in shining armor on his charging white steed who would sweep you off your feet and ravish you with his love and complete devotion. Then you married that guy who belches, sweats, and stinks, spends most of his time at work, doesn't listen to you, takes you for granted, is constantly trying to fix you, and frankly has gained so much weight that he no longer fits in his armor. Television, the movies, and romance novels feed far too many impure thoughts for mothers these days, creating fantasy worlds of "true love." Regrettably, too many mothers look for their knight in a neighbor or co-worker, turning from their purity.
- C. Peter describes the purity the mother must have in **I Peter 3:2-4**. It begins in your heart, having a gentle and quiet spirit. When you get your heart in line, your dress and conduct will follow.

V. Mothers must be workers at home.

- A. Many have read these words and thought Paul was saying housework is woman's work. It has been central in the debate regarding whether or not women are allowed to work outside the home. This word, however, is not about keeping house in the sense that we most often think. It is not about who cooks and cleans. According to Strong's lexicon, the term used here literally means a "house guard."¹
- B. A mother's love is most demonstrated by this characteristic. Her purpose is to guard her home from the encroachments of the enemy. As the keeper of purity and the purveyor of wisdom, the mother stands up against the devil and his worldly servants to make sure her home is a safe haven from all that might turn her family away from God's path. This is going to entail everything from monitoring television and internet usage to protecting the feel and mood of the home.
- C. One point to make contrasted with being a house guard can be found in **I Timothy 5:11-14**. Younger widows were not to be placed on the church's list because they would become idle busybodies. The love of a mother is to be focused on guarding her own home, not dabbling in everyone else's. If anything is demonstrated by the **Proverbs 31** woman, it is this concept of working to protect and care for her home, her children, and her family. As **Proverbs 31:27** says, "She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness" (ESV).

VI. Mothers must be kind.

- A. The word translated "kind" in the ESV means good, virtuous, or upright. In this context, "kind" is a decent translation because it conveys the concept of doing what is good for others. As we have already learned from **Proverbs 31:12**, the mother who loves properly always does what is good for her husband. In the same way, she does what is good for her children.
- B. As **Proverbs 31:26** says, "...the teaching of kindness is on her tongue" (ESV). A mother's love is marked by goodness in action and in word. Her speech is like that described in **Ephesians 4:29**, speaking only that which builds up and refraining from that which tears down.
- C. Because you are often doing good for your families and your families are rarely as appreciative as they ought to be, mothers, you would do well to remember **Galatians 6:9**. Do not lose heart in doing good. You will reap God's goodness if you do not grow weary.

Conclusion:

Titus concludes by explaining why a mother's love is so important (**Titus 2:5**). When a mother loves her family as she ought, there is no room for the Word of God to be dishonored in her life or because of her life. First, her very life and action honors God. Further, those who see her in action will honor God. Most importantly, those children she raises will honor God. What a great work mothers perform, may they always do it with a mother's love.

¹ <http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong=G3626&t=ESV>