

Mother's Day 2025

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning, Maranatha family. That was pretty good. It's good to be in God's house with our family, our church family.

! So as we look to get into God's Word together, as Pastor Knoyer likes to say, please multitask this morning. Be listening, taking notes, and also praying for me that I would share God's Word clearly.

And then as Alistair Begg has said, this morning it is my job to preach the Word and your job to listen to the Word. If you finish before I do, please just sit quietly and we will all then leave together.

But we didn't come here this morning to hear what Pastor Knoyer says or Alistair Begg says or even what Andy Manwiller says, but we came to hear what God says.

And so let's pray and then we'll dig into God's Word together. Thank you, God, that you, it's all about you. Thank you for the songs, these truths that we've been reminded of through the singing of these songs, that Christ is our firm foundation.

[1 : 21] God, when we stand before you, we have no hope, no plea at all, except for the blood of Christ. Thank you for the unity that we can have as a church family because of what you've done for us.

And Lord, I pray that today as we look at this topic of Mother's Day and the role that mothers have and how amazing it is, it's such a blessing. And how we should respond to them, Lord, I pray that you would work in our hearts and minds and lives.

Lord, help us even in this moment to plow up our fallow ground, our hard hearts, to prepare our hearts that we might receive. Open our eyes that we might see wonderful things in your law this morning.

And Lord, I pray that we would receive it, your Spirit would apply it deep in our hearts, and that it would grow and bear fruit 30, 60, and 100-fold. May the treasure in this earthen vessel be clear this morning.

May your words be many and mine be few. Thank you, God, for the privilege of being in your house and digging into your Word together. In Jesus' name, amen. Oh, I forgot to introduce myself.

[2 : 23] I'm Andy Manwiller. I know many of you, most of you. My wife and I, we've been coming to the church, to Maranatha, for about 16 years now. Angela and I have been married for 25 years, 6 months, and 25 days.

We have four amazing children. So my wife has been a mother now for over 20 years, as our oldest is 20 years old. And just a blessing, a joy.

And so we have been here, and it's a privilege to get to share some of the things I've learned, we've learned, and just looking at that mother's role this morning.

So I want to start with a little bit of a story. A long time ago, I had a dinosaur book that was really cool.

It had pictures, and it was just really neat. I really liked that book. This is not that book. My mom was looking at that book, and she said, this has some stuff in it that doesn't match up with Scripture.

[3 : 29] So she took me to Hackman's Bible Bookstore. Anyone miss physical Bible bookstores? I'm not the only one. Okay, good. But anyway, she took me to, and I know that because the sticker's still on here, the Hackman's Bible Bookstore, and I remember it.

And she got me this book. This book is nowhere near as cool as that other book. It does not have as many pictures or color pictures. But while I don't think I have ever read this book, very much of it at all, the fact that she took me to the store, and that this was important to her, and that what I was reading matched up with Scripture, and I was filling my heart and mind with truth, that was so impactful to me that 40 years later, I still have this book.

Look, my mom was probably the most influential person in my life spiritually. And so anyone else impacted by their moms spiritually?

Many, many. It's such a blessing, right? And it's not going to be everybody. Today, for Mother's Day, I'm going to be kind of looking at a few facets of motherhood. All right?

There's a lot of different aspects that we can look at. They're going to be maybe different. But I am focusing on just what Scripture says about the role of the mother and how we should respond to them.

[4 : 50] And I know there's a lot of other situations out there. And so I encourage you to think about it from that perspective. I'm just looking at kind of one facet of the gem of motherhood. I'm not looking at dads.

All right? If you know me, you know I love being a dad. I'm passionate about being a dad. So talk to me about it afterwards or in a month from now for Father's Day. But that's not our focus this morning.

I also recognize that there's many out there, many of us, who have been hurt by mothers. There's mothers who aren't able to stay home and care for their children.

They choose to or need to maybe even work, are working moms, working outside the home. That's okay. There are single moms. There are those whose mothers have already passed away.

There's people, as was mentioned from up here a few moments ago, those who long to be mothers. But for whatever reason, God has not seen fit to bring that at this point.

[5 : 47] There are those who maybe are the last in their family line. There's a lot of things. Again, as was said, this can be a day of many mixed emotions. But I want to encourage you, wherever you're at, again, we're going to be looking at mothers and their role.

But if you have some of those variations, you've been hurt by others or circumstances, I want to encourage you with some things. Psalm 68, verses 5 and 6, says this.

Referring to God, he says, Maybe you are on your own.

God settles you in a home. And I'd encourage you to look around. This is home. Many of you are visiting. That's great. Thank you. Welcome. Thank you for coming today. Visiting family or maybe visiting for the first time.

But this is my church family. This is my home. I'm not solitary. But man, as a family, this is our church family. This is our church home. And I invite you to look around and see who is here and who can be your family, if for whatever reason your physical family is lacking.

[6 : 59] Psalm 113, verse 9, says, He gives the barren woman a home, making her the joyous mother of children.

Praise the Lord. This is a home where you can have many children. Even just looking around at the children around here you can invest in. The MBC kids, the nursery ministry.

This is a church family. And you can have that church family. I just want to encourage you to take advantage of that opportunity. And even then, Matthew chapter 12, verses 49 and 50.

Jesus said, it says, And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.

So as I focus on the facets of motherhood that have to do with fairly traditional versions of what it means to be a mom, may I encourage you to see God's word for what it is and think through and maybe invest here.

[8 : 04] We are so thankful for the adoptive grandparents who have adopted us and our children and have invested in us. And take advantage of that opportunity.

Look around and see who you can invest in and who can invest in you as well. So that being said, I do want to dig in and look at, first of all, the mother's role.

What is the mother's role? Moms have a rather difficult job. It is probably the hardest job in the world. And so first of all, I want to look at the mother's physical care.

Mothers care for the physical needs of their family. And I wanted to share some words from the great theologians Go Fish, which is a Christian, a kids Christian music group.

They have a song called The Mom Song. And it talks about the mother's role in this way. They say, if you have a stroller, but you're still a rock and roller, you're a mom. If you're tired of doing dishes and you know who Elmo's Fish is, you're a mom.

[9 : 10] If you have a lot of fun, but your work is never done, you're a mom. If you need a sick day, but instead you're going to play, you're a mom. If your first occupation sounds like a sweet vacation, you're a mom.

If your living room floor looks like a toy store, you're a mom. You're the boss, the driver, the ultimate survivor, a doctor, a cooker, your man thinks you're a looker.

If you work all day, but you never get paid, you're a mom. So that's kind of, from a humorous human perspective, the difficulties of the mother's role.

But let's look into God's Word. And, of course, I'm going to go to probably the most challenging passage when it comes to motherhood, but it's Proverbs 31. This can be overwhelming.

And to a certain degree, that's okay. Because can I encourage you mothers? You can't do this. You can't.

[10 : 10] It's impossible. Being a mother is an impossible job. To do it well is impossible. Apart from the grace and work of Jesus Christ. So, let's look at this and see what we can learn and what we can consider as we move forward and pray for God's grace to help in this role.

But I'm not going to look through the whole passage, but just a few highlights. Proverbs 31, 10 to 12 says, So, first of all, we're going to talk more about the relationship of husband and wife in a little bit.

And we'll lay into the men. Don't worry. I'm not going to let them off the hook. But there's the relationship with husband. And caring for and supporting and being supported by.

The husband, the husband-wife relationship is a gift. You're not alone in this. We are in this together and supporting each other. Verses 13 through 15 and 21 says this, She seeks wool and flax and works with willing hands.

She is like ships of the merchant. She brings her food from afar. She rises while it is yet night and provides food for her household and portions for her maidens. Verse 21, She is not afraid of snow for her household.

[11:36] For all her household are clothed in scarlet. The wife. There's this physical care often for family's needs.

Providing the food. Providing the clothing. Yesterday, as I was, my wife was away visiting her mom and 100-year-old grandmother. And so I was at home and I was looking at the kitchen counter.

And on there was a list of the needs that the kids, our four kids have for clothing for this coming summer season. Right? My wife is taking care of that.

If it were up to me, my children would be wearing long pants that just go below the knees. And shirts and clothes that are ripped and old and torn. But thankfully, God has given me a wife who is capable and is able to care for those things.

Again, a modern version of this might say something like she seeks Walmart and Amazon for the best deals and provides clothing and food for her household.

[12:34] She checks the ads and goes to faraway Aldi or whatever, Costco, whatever, and provides food for her family. Again, there are different ways for this to be done.

But the role that the mother has in caring for the physical needs of her household is a blessing and a good thing. Verses 26 and 27 says, Her words are kind.

Why do you think it is that most of the time when children fall and hurt themselves, they run to mommy and not daddy? Right? She just has those kind words, that gentleness. So kind words.

And she cares for her household diligently. What a blessing it is when that happens and that role in taking care of that. Again, as a facet, it's not always that way.

But it is a good thing when it does. And verses 28 to 31, some of the benefits of this. Her children rise up and call her blessed. Her husband also, and he praises her.

[13:46] Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all. Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain. But a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands and let her works praise her in the gates.

The work a mother does is exhausting. It's often thankless. But it's vital. And we should recognize that. We should rise up and call her blessed.

So your homework today is around the dinner table. When you're having dinner with your mom, tell her why she is such a blessing to you.

Tell her how blessed you are and tell her why. So children, tell your moms, husbands, tell your wives, and all the other relationships there. And we'll talk more about that in a little bit.

So first of all is the physical care and the opportunity, the unique opportunity that mothers have to provide for the physical needs of the children and the family.

[14:44] It is a good thing. What about the spiritual impact? 2 Timothy 1, verse 5. In 2 Timothy 1, verse 5.

And, oh, they did put it up. I was going to say, I didn't give them the passages to put up, but they put it up for me. Because I kind of like listening to the paper turn as you guys turn in your Bibles.

It's good. I like using a phone, my Bible on my phone. I can highlight things and it communicates with the computer. I can pull it up and have my highlights anywhere. It's a good thing. But there's just nothing like that, that Russell of the India paper when we turn the pages, right?

So if you turn your pages, turn them nice and loud for me. All right? Good job. I love it. That's good. Good deal. Don't rip them, though. Don't rip them. 2 Timothy 1, verse 5.

Paul is talking to Timothy. And he says, I am reminded of your sincere faith. A faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice.

[15:48] And now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. The spiritual impact that Timothy's mother and grandmother had was huge. They poured into Timothy, their son, their grandson, and he was bearing spiritual fruit.

Again, for me, I shared the story of the dinosaur book. That's one of the first memories I have of my mom shaping me spiritually. I grew up in a solid Christian home and going to a good church that taught me the truth.

And I remember raising my hand to trust Christ as Savior probably two or three times. And my mom, every time when she would hear about it or find out, would follow up with me. You know, on a Wednesday night, I raised my hand.

It would follow up with me to help me understand. I don't know which time I was actually saved. I am trusting Jesus as Savior now. And so one of those must have taken somewhere along the line. But mom was faithful to ask me those questions and try and ground me in God's word when I was first understanding and trusting Christ.

When I was about 12, I remember calling my mom, calling out to my mom. Of course, it was at night, right? Because that's when kids always ask deep theological questions. I called out to my mom and I said, I just don't feel saved.

[17:03] And she walked me through the truths of that. It's not about how I feel, but it's based on God and his promises and his word and what Jesus has done. And so that night, I rededicated my life to God and said, God, whatever you want me to do, even a missionary in deep, dark Africa, preferably not.

But whatever it is, I'll do it. And just following him from there. My mom was key in that. My parents somehow sent five of us, I'm the oldest of five, five of us to a small Christian school.

And we lived just a little too far away. We couldn't take the bus. And so my parents would drive me. For a little while, we carpooled with others. But I remember one time we were driving home from school.

My mom was driving me home from school. And she reached back and handed me, again, a book. This book was called *Brand Name Christian* by Mike Worley.

I've looked it up, but I haven't bought another copy of it. But it was a devotional book of getting into God's word and getting into God's word for yourself and making your faith your own.

[18:08] And that book began a lifelong habit of getting into the word, reading God's word. And I'm so thankful for that. It is a habit by God's grace for me.

And I'm passing it on to my children. But it started with my mom handing me a book driving home from school. My mom was the one who gave me the talk, right? Twice.

Not sure. Maybe it didn't take the first time or something. I don't know. But for what it's worth, parents, right? The talk starts when they're about that young. All the way up until it's still going.

Caleb's 20 and we still talk, right? So for what it's worth, that's a little side note. The talk should be all the time. And learning and growing and teaching and training. But my mom was the one that took the effort to have that awkward conversation with me and talk through it.

I could say more. And I'm not saying that my dad didn't have an impact. He did. But it was my mom who over and over again God used to shape me spiritually in my younger days.

[19:07] My wife, who's serving with the twos and threes during this service, of our four kids, the way I tell the story at least, maybe not the way they tell it. But in my version of the story, my wife got to pray with three of the four kids, at least three of the four kids when they first trusted Christ as Savior.

I'm a little jealous of that. But it's my wife who has had that opportunity and that impact. She invests in them daily, informally as things go on and as they fight and teaching and training them how to work through that.

And when the heart issues come out, she's informally taking advantage of those opportunities. And also intentionally. We homeschool through fourth grade. And so she's intentionally planning and preparing and always pointing them back to Scripture and God's Word.

My wife is investing in my kids. My mom impacted me. My wife is impacting my children. Have you been impacted by mothers or others? As John mentioned, the kind of stereotypical, even like little old lady who teaches Sunday school for years and years and years.

For me, it was Tiny Liebig was her name, right? Kind of like the Kate Bartley of the church I grew up in, right? Who here has been impacted by Kate Bartley, right? Just what a blessing these people are.

[20:20] And even now, I am so thankful for the ladies who teach my children in Sunday school. That is such a blessing. What a blessing these people are who are investing spiritually.

We should be thankful and encouraging them and supporting them. And so that spiritual impact that mothers can have on their children is immense.

Look, if you're in 2 Timothy, just flip a couple pages to Titus chapter 2, verses 3 through 5. And we'll look at what the Bible says about how mothers can, what motherhood can and should look like.

Again, facets. There's always variations. Things happen. But it says this. This is a beautiful and good thing.

It doesn't necessarily have to be the only way for the mom to stay at home. But it is a good way. It is an honorable way. It is a praiseworthy way.

[21:38] The world looks down on it and says, no, but it is a good thing. It is a blessing to be able to do that. The impact that older women can have on younger women and investing as they invest in their children.

Look around. Who can you help and serve here? Please invest in your physical family. But look around. Who else can we serve? Who are the, as parents, and you look ahead. Who's ahead of you and says, I don't like saying this because I think I'm not one of the older ones.

But who are the older parents that are where you want to be or have been where you are? And who can you ask for help? There are so many rich resources here.

And look around. And who are the people in the same stage of life as you and say, hey, how are you handling this? And you can share with each other. Oh, this doesn't work. Don't do that. And sharing with each other. And even looking behind you and seeing who's coming up that has children that are younger than mine.

And we can invest in each other. The church family. We can support each other as we walk through this and invest spiritually and physically in our children. In the words of Go Fish Again in verse 3, they say, If you mean the whole world to a little boy or girl, you're a mom.

[22:53] The Bible that you hold can shape these little souls. You're a mom. If you have the most important job in the world, you're a mom.

What a blessing it is. And so moms, I want to challenge. I want to encourage you. Keep pouring yourselves out. Investing in your children. Whether you're a stay-at-home mom or not, your efforts are seen by God.

They are valued and they are used by Him. Again, this is an honorable, praiseworthy, and good thing to do. So keep going. I want to encourage you in three specific ways.

First of all, I want to encourage you, mothers, to let the joy of the Lord be your strength. When you're tired, again, we can't do this. It's impossible. I mean, just with my wife and raising four children and just what she did and all the pouring herself out into and for our children.

We can't do this. But the joy of the Lord can be the strength. We're not going to read it. But Nehemiah 8, 8 through 10, talks about the people. The word was being preached.

[24 : 03] And people were explaining it to help them understand. And they were impacted by it. And Nehemiah said, the joy of the Lord will be your strength. Can I encourage you? Dig into God's word. Come to church, even with crying children.

It's a blessing that the children come here and cry in church. Isn't that a good thing? Isn't that a blessing? I'd rather have them crying here than out somewhere else, right? Or the nursery. Nursery is okay, too.

But my wife and I oversee the nursery. So please, anyway. But in this building, let them come. Let them cry. It's okay. And learn. And sit under the teaching of the word. Even if you're distracted and it's hard, it's a blessing to be there.

So let the joy of the Lord be your strength. Let the people of God encourage you. Share your challenges. Share your successes. And learn from each other. So moms, let the joy of the Lord be your strength.

And again, the foundation for that is the gospel of Jesus Christ. You can't do it. My wife can't do it. She's amazing. But she can't do it without Jesus.

[25 : 02] Reminding ourselves of that gospel truth that we are all sinners. We all mess up. We all fail. We are all sinners and fall short of the glory of God. But the wages of sin are death.

But the free gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord. What we celebrated at Resurrection Day just a few weeks ago is the hope and the opportunity for change and hope to accomplish that job.

When Jesus died on the cross, 2 Corinthians 5.21 says, He, God, made him, Jesus, to be sin for us. That we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Jesus obeyed every time. As hard as it is to not lose our patience with our children. And Jesus never lost his patience with anyone he ever interacted with. And he obeyed for you, for me.

And all the temptations that we face, Jesus faced every single one and never gave in. And so when Jesus died, he took my sin. He took your sin. He took all of our sin.

[26 : 06] And that perfect obedience that he had, he gave it to us. He traded places, cut and paste, right, spiritually. And so when he died, God looked on him and saw my failures. He saw your failures.

And he punished Jesus. He gave Jesus that punishment that my sin, your sin, deserved. So that now, when I stand before God, when you stand before God, if we are trusting in Jesus alone for our salvation, not our good works, not our church, even though it's a good one, not our family, even if it's a good one, none of those things will get you to heaven.

If we're trusting in Jesus alone for salvation, when we stand before God, he no longer sees my failures. He sees Jesus' obedience. He looks on him and pardons me, as the song we like to sing says.

And I can be forgiven. And so when he, when he, I understand that he's forgiven me, now I can go and, and love my kids. And I can do the things that I'm supposed to do, not to earn God's favor, but because I've been given God's favor.

And so may I encourage you, mothers, stand near the cross. Let it remind you of the forgiveness and grace you have. And then may it strengthen you.

[27:13] May the joy of the Lord be your strength as you do this impossible task through the power of Christ. Second, I'd encourage you to view your children as the gift that they are.

The world tells us that children are a burden and they, and because of kids, you can't go and do this and can't go and do that. And you can't be all of these, that's, that's a lie. It's trying to, to, to make you discontent and unhappy.

God says in Psalm 123 that children are a gift. Children are a heritage, a reward. Children are a blessing. They're not easy, but they're a blessing and a gift.

Look at your children as the gift that they are. Angela and I, when we had our second two, we had, we had Caleb and Ethan. And then we thought we were done. And then God said, nope, here's two more. And we were 39 and 41 when they were born.

And so as a reminder to us, we named, their names mean gift. Gift. And it was a reminder to us at 2 a.m. and all the times that these children are a gift.

[28:16] And so I can be patient. It's a reminder of that. And so remember that your children are gifts, even in the hard times. And stick with it, right?

It's a long game, right? It's a long-term goal. I'm preparing my children, not just for these moments now and for the foreseeable future.

I'm preparing my children for a day when I won't be around. If things happen as things naturally do, I will die before my children. I'm preparing them. I want to prepare them to survive when I'm gone.

So I'm preparing them for a day I won't see, but I'm also preparing them for another day that I will see. One day my children will also stand before the God of the universe and give an account. And what a privilege to be able to prepare them for that.

And to prepare them to stand before God knowing that Jesus paid for their sin. See them as the gift and opportunity they are. And then third, let your husband support you.

[29:15] Share your heart with him. Ask him for what you need. It's hard. This is a partnership. And you know what? Things change. And times are hard. And maybe you have a tough relationship.

But invest in it. It is worth it. Support your husband. And help him to be successful as well. Be a multiplier for him. I heard one of the men in our church refer to the wives of the group we were in.

They are a multiplier. They're helping them be better. Be a multiplier for your husband. And don't give up on your relationship with him. Cultivate it. Work at it. It will not be easy, but it will be worth it.

You're on the same team. Satan is the one that's trying to divide. So let the joy of the Lord be your strength. See children as the gift that they are. And let your husbands support you.

I'll get after the husbands here in a minute. So Proverbs 31, to wrap up this part about mothers and their role. Proverbs 31, verse 28, says this.

[30:13] Her children rise up and call her blessed. Her husband also, and he praises her. All right. If your mom is in this room, stand up.

If your wife, who is the mother of your children, is in this room, stand up. I want you who are standing up to look at your mom.

To look at your wife and say, you are a blessing. Go ahead and do that. You are a blessing. All right. Thank you. You can go ahead and sit down.

You can go ahead and sit down. Now, again, your homework assignment today at lunch is to tell them why. Why are they a blessing? And if you haven't thought about it for a while, you got, well, depends how long I preach.

You got a few minutes. But prepare and think. This is something good. This is a good thing. And so tell them. Rise up and call them blessed.

[31:13] So mothers, thank you for your hard work. It is hard, but it is worth it. It is good. Keep going. Keep investing. So how should we respond to our mothers?

How should we respond to moms? I've got three categories I'd like us to look at, starting with young children. And that includes teens. So children, how should we respond to our parents?

Ephesians 6, 1 to 3. Isn't this every parent's favorite passage, right? Ephesians 6, 1. Here we go. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

Honor your father and mother. This is the first commandment with a promise, that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land. God tells us to obey, to honor our parents, to serve them even.

It says, excuse me, it says, this is right. This is the right thing to do, and it's good for you. It's good for you. Colossians 3, 20 says something similar.

[32:12] It says, children, obey your parents in everything, in everything, for this pleases the Lord. God wants you to obey your parents in everything, because it pleases Him.

He has sent Jesus to pay for your sin. And so to say, thank you for that, obey your parents. The world is screaming at you that this is not right. The world is screaming at you, saying, parents don't know anything.

They're just trying to take away your fun. And the world is wrong. God's word says something very different. Your parents are a gift to you. They are a blessing. They've been there.

They can help you. They were kids once too. And yes, the technology is different, but the heart is the same. Your parents love you. They are for you. Obey your parents.

Don't listen to the world. They are a treasure trove of knowledge and wisdom that God has given you. Read Proverbs and see what it says about how we should respond to our parents and the benefits of doing so.

[33:15] A little bonus lesson. Guys, especially the teen boys down here, right? How do you treat your mom? The way you treat your mom will be your default when you get married of how you treat your wife.

Maybe not at first in the lovey-dovey honeymoon phase, but eventually when things start to get a little harder, your default is going to be how you responded to your mom. So do your future self and your future wife a favor and start—keep working on that relationship, right?

Girls, when you start getting interested in boys, watch how they treat their mom. All right, that's—that's—I stood over here instead of in front of the Bible for that one. But just a little bonus thing because I'm a guy, and you can change for what it's worth, but you have to work at it hard.

It takes intentional effort to change how you responded. All right. It's impossible, by the way, again. It's impossible to obey our parents all the time, but Jesus did.

Luke 2, 51. Luke 2, 51. When it comes to Christmas, you know, we tell the story of his birth from Luke 2, and then usually we jump into his ministry. But this one passage about Jesus's life when he was a child is in here in Luke chapter 2.

[34:28] And you know the story. He got—somehow he got left behind, and then he was in the temple talking theology with the theologians, and they found him. And how did he respond? Luke 2, 51. And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them.

And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart. Jesus obeyed his mom. When you fail, go to God and ask forgiveness. And then ask him to change your heart and to do better next time because Jesus died for you.

Jesus obeyed his mom every time. And we can rest in that. We can see it as an example, but we can always rest in it that he obeyed. And for what it's worth, mothers, treasure it in your heart when your children do obey you.

How often do we only talk to or yell at our kids when they do something wrong? How about recognizing and praising them when they do something well? So children, obey your parents. Second, husbands, fathers, men.

How do we respond to the wives, the mothers of our children? 1 Peter 3, verse 7. 1 Peter 3, 7 says this. Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel since they are heirs with you of the grace of life so that your prayers may not be hindered.

[35:46] We are to live with our wives in an understanding way. Our wives change over time. I'm 25 years in now and I'm realizing that.

Oh, but it's okay. Our children change, right? Two terrible twos in the teenage years. Most of those are problems because I don't change as a parent. There, I walked away from the pulpit again.

But as things change and our children grow and things change, we need to live with our wives in an understanding way. Am I still studying her and understanding what her needs are?

We need to show honor to her as the fine china that she is. She is a beautiful and valuable gift to you. She is an heir with you in Christ. She is your sister in Christ.

If we don't value and treat her this way, it's going to impact our relationship with God, including hindering our prayers. Guys, do we ever wonder why our prayers go up and bounce off the ceiling? Maybe we need to check our relationship with our wife.

[36:44] If we're not going to obey God in the, not simple, but in the simple things that we've been told, then how can we expect to follow him in the others? So men, check your relationship with your wife and with God.

Let's invest in them. Men, we are representing Christ in the church to our wives, to our children, to our households, to our church family, and to the world. And if this is discouraging, I hope and pray it's not.

But you know what? Proverbs says the righteous falls seven times, and then what does he do? Gets back up again. It's okay. We failed. Get back up. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

There is a fresh start every time. And so, men, Ephesians chapter 5. Let's look at that one real quick.

I'm not going to read the whole thing, but just the first verse of this section. Ephesians 5, verse 25. And at home, you can read through 32.

[37:44] But it says, This is sacrificial love. This is not, you know, woman, serve me, get me my slippers, make me a sandwich.

That is the world's kind of love. And for the teens and the adults, can I tell you, the world is standing on its head and telling us we're upside down. God has designed it this way. Men, we need to love and serve and give ourselves for these women that God has placed in our lives and make their jobs easier, not harder.

How can I serve my wife? As you read through the passage, we need to sanctify her, cleanse her with the word, love her as I already love my own body. I need to nourish her and cherish her. I need to leave father and mother and cling to her.

This is the most important relationship God has given me. And again, we are representing Christ and the church to everyone who sees. It's never too late to have a fresh start and keep going.

So men, let us honor these women that God has given us that are raising our children along with us. Be partners with them and invest in them. And if or when we fail, guess what?

[38 : 49] Jesus did this. Jesus supported moms. He cared for moms. Luke 18, verses 15 to 17. It says this.

Now when they were bringing, they were bringing even infants to him. That would clearly be the moms bringing the infants to him. They were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

But Jesus called to him saying, Let the children come to me and do not hinder them. For to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.

Jesus supported mothers raising their children who wanted to point them to him. And Jesus wants to support your wife. Wives, Jesus supports you and wants you to be successful.

So men, let's be the tools that God uses in our lives to bless our wives and to be co-partners with them in raising these young lives and shaping them for eternity. So again, men, like I said to the wives, men, don't give up on your relationship with your wife.

[39 : 56] Cultivate it. Work at it. It may not come easy, but it will be worth it. So men, let me ask you. Do you pray for your wife? Do you pray with your wife?

Do you know if she's in the word? And if so, what is she reading? Do you serve together? What are some things that she does well? What are some areas that you could offer to help in?

And how can you help, best help her be successful in the things that are important to her? Do you know what's important to her? Have you ever watched her with your children? I want to encourage you, think through these things and consider them.

And let's invest. The men's connect group several months ago, the guy said, go to work and work hard. Come home and work harder and go to bed tired.

What a blessing that is, right? We don't come home from work and then expect to be served. The man in his castle and all that rot the world tells you, this is our opportunity to serve and love and invest.

[40 : 54] And it is way more fulfilling than sitting there and goofing off on your phone or watching whatever. It's a blessing to serve our wives, to serve our children. So men, let's do that. Let's make their job easier, not harder.

And finally, older children is an area of life that Angela and I are just now getting into. And oh, how do we manage this? So we could definitely use some help here for those who have experienced it.

And there are many great examples here, by the way. So 1 Timothy 4 verse 8. How do we care for and provide for our mothers? 1 Timothy 5 verses 4 and 8.

Just those two verses. But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household and to make some return to their parents. For this is pleasing in the sight of God.

Verse 8. This is a tall responsibility.

[41:55] Our responsibility to our parents doesn't end when we get out of the household. We need to care for our parents, especially as they get older. The church is to care for widows who are widows indeed.

But the first responsibility falls on the children. We are to care for our parents. And again, Angela and I are just getting into this stage with Angela's parents and some of their health needs.

And my parents are a little younger and slowly getting there, but starting to think that way. But there are many good examples in this church. I have seen some amazing examples of some of you serving your parents.

And it's been such a blessing and encouragement. And so, again, the church is our family. We can get help. We're not on our own on these things. So, care for your parents. When we don't do this, we're worse than unbelievers, it says.

That's pretty strong language. But we should invest in and care for even our parents, even as they have cared for us. Making some repayment is how it said. How it said it in the word there. And may I say, when we fail, or even when we don't, Jesus did this.

[43:01] Jesus cared for his mother. In John chapter 19, when he was on the cross and he was dying, when every thought for any of us would have been, how am I even going to take my next breath?

When will this end? Self, self, self. Jesus was thinking of others and specifically his own mother. John 19, verses 26 and 27. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved, that's John, standing nearby, he said to his mother, woman, behold your son.

Then he said to the disciple, behold your mother. And from that hour, the disciple took her into his own home. As Jesus was dying with his second last breath, basically, he didn't say much after this.

But with one of his last breaths, he asked John, will you take care of my mom? He cared for his mother. And so when we fail, Jesus obeyed.

And we can rest in that for forgiveness. And we can also see that as an opportunity to go and serve and care for our mothers. So to wrap up, covered a lot of ground.

[44:09] Moms, you have the hardest job in the world, but it is an amazing blessing and calling. Thank you for what you do. Thank you for what you've done. And may God bless you in it.

Moms, may I encourage you. May the joy of the Lord be your strength. Dig into God and his word and his people. View children as a gift from God and partner with your husband. Children, obey and honor your mother.

Husbands and fathers, love and care for your wife, helping her be successful. In this very challenging job, impossible job. Point her to Christ and help her in that role. And adults with aging parents, care for your mothers.

And repay them for the care and for the investment that they have given to you. So much, but such a blessing. Mothers are a blessing. And again, there's so many different facets of this.

And many of you have different experiences. May I encourage you to look to God's word. Look to God's people. To find healing. God will restore the years the locusts have eaten. And give you family.

[45:13] But invest here. And so may I encourage all of us as we go. Again, as it says in Proverbs 31, 10 and 28. An excellent wife who can find she is more precious than jewels.

Her children rise up and call her blessed. Her husband also. And he praises her. Let's be thankful for our moms. And let's go and help them be successful in this key area of living out our relationship with God.

Let's pray. Thank you, God. Thank you for my mom. Thank you for my wife. Thank you, God, for the parents, the grandparents, the family that we have here at Maranatha.

God, help us. We can't do this. Thank you for the many blessings, the many successes, the many good stories. And may we be thankful for them and celebrate them.

And God, we also have many failures. Much brokenness because of our sin. Because of the brokenness of the world. Because of so many reasons. But Lord, you are good.

[46:16] And you are God. And these things are all good gifts from you. Help us to see the world through biblical viewpoints. Help us to see mothers as the blessing that they are.

As the challenge that it is to do that. And may we help them be successful. And Lord, strengthen moms. May they find their joy in you. And serve you well.

Thank you, Lord, for Mother's Day. Pray you give us good times around the table. May what we talked about come to mind. And may we take advantage of the opportunity to share what we're thankful for about our mothers.

And bless them. And encourage them. Help us as we go from here to enjoy the day with our moms. And then not forget this tomorrow and next week. But to continue to build these relationships.

And point each other to you, the giver of every good gift. In Jesus' name, amen. Thank you for coming. You're dismissed. Amen. Thank you.