

We See You, Mom

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[0 : 00] in Jesus. 1 Thessalonians chapter number 2. If you weren't able to find it earlier when we were in it, it's towards the end of the New Testament, all the letter T's being put together. Your Bible may just automatically go to the book of Luke on Sunday mornings because we've been there for so long. But we were going to go to this passage on Mother's Day and we'll be back in Luke next Sunday. And we'll be on Luke probably on Father's Day because as we know, we just don't matter near as much, all right? We'll see what happens on Father's Day. Before I read to you, we'll jump back into the passage. I'm just going to tell one story about my grandmother.

I honestly wouldn't have to prepare the day to take 30 minutes to talk about Mother's Day because I have such great examples in my life. And of all the difficulties that I had growing up, I wouldn't have traded any of those disadvantages for the great advantage I had in life, which was to have a godly mother and a godly grandmother. It outweighed all the difficulties by far. But I won't fill up the morning telling stories about my mom and grandmother, and I would hope that you would be able to as well because you wouldn't enjoy that and also wouldn't be preaching. And I don't want to do that. But I do have one story I'd like to tell you about my grandmother. In her living room, she had a big photo album. And she was always getting clippings. Or any time her kids or grandkids did something, either in the newspaper or whatever it was, she would add it to the photo album. So on Sunday afternoons, I'd like to flip through the photo album. And she would take out it and she would take out the newspaper clipping and say, this is when your uncle did this, or this is when your cousin did this. And she took such pride in this growing photo album. It helped that we were in a small town to make the newspaper, okay? And when you have a family as big as I did in a small town, you get to be in the newspaper more. But she would tell those stories and she saw something about herself in every one of those stories. Even if she wasn't there when my cousin was holding up a trophy at the science fair, she knew somehow she was part of that story. She was proud of the growth of her grandkids. But as a believer, there was no great growth or change in a life that was greater than what the gospel would bring. That's what really brought her joy, was to see her kids and grandkids being transformed by the gospel, to know Jesus more and more.

The verses leading up to 7, 8, and 9 where we see the example from mothers, we have a story about the apostle Paul and what an example of a life radically changed by the gospel. You may forget that. We were looking at Colossians today and as you read about the things that God used Paul to write and you read his story, you forget where he had come from and how much the gospel had changed him and how nothing but the gospel would have changed this man. I want you to remember that for later because the real change needed in this world isn't going to come in any other way except for the gospel of Jesus. And you may have heard it said before or asked before, can you imagine Paul walking in the heaven to the chairs of those who he had martyred? And that's how the gospel works.

The gospel radically changed this man. It says in chapter 1 verse 5 and 6, it says, For our gospel was not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance, as you know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And you become followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost.

The gospel not only came to people when the apostle Paul arrived to town in word, but in power and in demonstration and assurance because they knew the manner of life in which he lived. Where before he had persecuted the church, now when he comes he is a living demonstration of the gospel. And he's got to answer some accusations that are given. In the passage we don't know, we don't have the accusations that are made, but because of his response we can know what the accusations were against him.

[4 : 01] Parents, you ever have that with your kids? There's one of our kids that are louder than other kids, and so if they're down in the basement, I can hear one kid saying, no, this isn't true, no, this isn't right. And it makes me know what the other one is saying about them. All right, my poor kids always get looked at when I say that. And maybe you have that. You can hear your kids arguing in another room and you don't know what one of them is saying, but you can tell by the response what they're saying. Same thing happens in this passage. The things that the apostle Paul are addressing, you know, were things that were said against him at that time. And he said in verse 1, for yourselves, brother, know our entrance in unto you. As a teenager, there was a saying real popular that would say, you don't know me, right? Any of you ever say that? You don't know me. Maybe you said that to your parents one time, mad. You don't know me. Apostle Paul says the opposite here.

He says, you do know me. And you know that what you're saying is not proven by the character and the integrity in which I'm living. So the first thing that he responds to is they're saying that Paul was teaching error, that he was teaching false things, that he was leading people astray, that he was preaching in a way that wasn't concerned about them, but it was just to please other people. Look at verse number 4. Paul states that he is tested and approved by God to carry this message. But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak not as pleasing men, but God which trieth our hearts. Many people can know what you do, but only God knows who you are completely.

And he knows your heart. And he says, God is my witness. I did not do this as pleasing to the men, but God knows and he tries my heart and I just serve for his honor and his glory. Then they say that Paul has impure motives. They accuse them of being selfish. They've been impure in his motives, delusional, he's deceiving people. Verse 2 and 3. But even after that we had suffered before and were shamefully entreated. As you know, at Philippi we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention. For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor uncleanness, nor in guile.

When Paul arrives at Thessalonica, the marks and wounds on his body from Philippi would probably would have still been fresh upon his body. No matter what the cost was, Paul was ready to preach the truth. Even if there was contention, even if there was opposition, Paul was somebody that was going to do this, not in a deceitful manner, but he had pure motives. And he did so with truth and integrity. So not only do they say they had impure motives, but they said the way that he went about it were impure. Verse 5. For neither at any time use the weak flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak of covetousness. God is witness. That I didn't do this for fame. I didn't do this for fortune.

You're accusing me of going about this in a sinful method. That is not the case. God is my witness. I did what I did in the most purest of motives, with the most pure methods unto you. Not doing it for my own selfish gain, but because I just really care about you. That's why I'm doing this. And then verse 6. Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been a burdensome as the apostles of Christ. Saying that Paul wasn't carrying his own way, that maybe he was being lazy, that he did it for profit. In that time and in this time, there's many people that say that they're religious, but they're just doing it for their own personal gain. That they're trying to teach people. They're trying to make disciples so that their life could be more comfortable and more cushioned as they were taking for people, but not giving. And Paul says, my ministry in these six verses here, they're not like that at all. And then he says, but we were gentle among you. That he wasn't harsh. He wasn't a bully, but his way of living was gentle. And his argument wasn't just the bait of words, but he says, you have seen me. You have known me. I've been among you. I've been in your home. I have stand here in my integrity today. And I say that the gospel has changed me.

[8 : 05] And because of that, these accusations are not true. And he lived a life that was pleasing to our father. And I would assume is one that would have been pleasing to his mother as well. Last week with Sam Rotman, he told a story at lunch with the Mises and he told just a wonderful story. He would go and play in the nursing care facility that his mom was in. Can you imagine having a concert pianist come to the nursing home to visit? And he would bring his, they would bring his mom in in a wheelchair and she, he would bring her real close up to the piano where she could see him play. And he would play for a long time. And as he would play, more people would come in to hear him play. And so as he's done and he finishes, and he has that way of finishing, right? Remember last week when he finished, he was real powerful and he would stand up and his mom who's sitting there right on the front room that is bound in the wheelchair, she said, stand up, stand up, stand up for my son. And she wanted him to have a standing ovation, but she couldn't stand up being in the wheelchair and none of the other people in the room could. And I said, did anybody stand up? He said, no, that would have been horrible. It would have been quite awkward if people would have stood up. But you just picture this mom so proud of her son saying, stand up, stand up. And that is just at the heart of mothers, right? Just that, that pride of saying, this is my child. This is what they've done. Stand up and do that. But more so the apostle Paul, not just making a mother prayer, but the God of heaven being proud of the way that the gospel had been transforming his life. And so the apostle Paul, he gives an answer and he gives a defense in his life. So maybe you're wondering in here, how is this sermon about the example that Paul is on Mother's Day? Moms are saying, I don't feel very seen right now, right? Paul's a Paul scene scene, but I don't feel very seen right now. But as we look to Paul's example, he points to the example of mothers. As we look at his example being changed by the gospel, he looks to being the example of a mother. The gospel changes a person. It gives our lives meaning. It's not in vain. Apostle Paul lives a life that's not meaningless and not empty, but it has purpose in serving one another, being transformed by the gospel, the freedom that the gospel now has to give us to live for something that is greater than ourselves. The gospel gives us freedom to live for something that is eternal. And it makes us people of integrity, where he would say that you can see my life and it has been changed. Sure, once before in the past, you could have said,

I persecuted the church, but you can't say that about me anymore. I love the church. I love the people of the church. I give my life to these people, these new disciples in Christ, everything that is there. And we see that it changes us from the inside out. It made him a gentle person, 2-7. But we were gentle among you. But let me pause here. So the apostle Paul, a violent man, that when Stephen, they bring before him the coats and they lay it there, he's watching people being martyred. He is no doubt looking at maps like he does later in his ministry, but trying to identify where the pockets of Christians are. He is seeing people being killed. Gentle is not the word for the apostle Paul. But now he says, but we were gentle among you. The gospel had changed him.

And then when he says, I am gentle among you, by the Holy Spirit, he thinks, what is the greatest example of being gentle and being caring, of not being a bully, not being selfish? And he says, even as a nurse cherishes her children, even as a mother would care for her small children, that's how we did ministry to you. Moms, great example that the apostle Paul could give of how to lead ministry and to be gentle and to be caring for other people. He looks to you. He looks to the godly mothers as an example. And he changes our affections. The gospel does. God does. Verse 8, so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because you were dear unto us. So here Paul raises the expectation of all of us. And he raises it to the standard of a mom and the model that is set there. A godly mother is the embodiment of all the opposite of all the charges that were brought against Paul.

He's selfish, but a godly mother's not. He has impure motives. A godly mother doesn't. Has impure methods. That's not true about a godly mother. And he says, I'm not like what you're saying, but I want my ministry to be like that, of a godly mother, nurturing, caring, self-sacrificing. They're in the bond of an affection between Paul and this church is like the relationship between a mother and a child.

Any vocation he could have used. He could have used a soldier, a warrior, or a boxer, which we see him do in other scriptures. He could have done, they could have used any animal. He could have used an eagle, or a bear, or a narwhal. Didn't see that one coming, did you? How many of you know what a narwhal is in here? All right, see, they did not exist when I was a kid, because I know this. I have proof on this, okay, because on the way to school, girls had trapper keepers that either had unicorns on them, they loved unicorns, or they had dolphins on them. You're either a unicorn trapper keeper, or you're a dolphin trapper keeper. But if they would have known, if there were narwhals back then, there would have been many narwhal trapper keepers, because a narwhal is a dolphin unicorn, all right? And so, and so he could have used any example of any animal that he wanted to, or any example of any vocation that he wanted to, but he doesn't. The Holy Spirit guides him to say, like a mother cares for a child, that's how I want you to care for the church. That's the example that

[14 : 03] I want you to sit that will be lived out among the congregation. So godly mothers, first of all, and the three things that I want to show you here, is first of all, godly mothers are an example of gentle spiritual leadership. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children, so being effectually desirous of you. She was gentle, the contrast of what was said about Paul, but gentle, and a nurse cherish her children. This means here literally means to warm with body heat, the opposite of harsh or indifferent, but tenderly nurturing, an affection so deep and compelling that it's unsurpassed. The boy daughters, Addie said, about the hug, right? Or was it Karis that said, I love my mom's hugs? And then I didn't know what she said at the end, and I asked Stephanie, and I don't know if it's true, but I'm preaching, so I'm just going to run with it, okay? But she said, what was it? And said that they were warm, right? That the mom's hug, that a mom gives a hug that's not like any other kind of hug, and there's a warmth to it that is given from a mother's hug that is there.

And that's the kind of imagery that he is drawing for us, the warmth from one to another. And being effectually desirous of you, one measure of our likeness to Christ is our sensitivity to the suffering of other people. One of the ways in our likeness to Christ, the measure of likeness to Christ, is our sensitivity to the suffering of others. A man named Don Tack, he wanted to know what it was like to be homeless, and so that's pretty easy to pretend to be homeless, you know, just walk out of your house. And then so he walks out of his home, and he's in an inner city area, and as he goes around, he wants to see what is available to him. And he said that he found people that were giving food, and they were giving different things, and he went to a place, and a man preached the message, and then afterwards he walks up to the man to speak to him, and the man doesn't have any time for him, and walks past him. And he said, I was able to find all kinds of services for the homeless, but I wasn't able to find any kind of warmth, or any kind of friendship, or any kind of caring.

And so he started an organization called Servants Center, but it was to say that we might provide all these services for somebody, but nobody's taking them and shaking their hand and looking them in the eye.

There's no warmth, and everybody lives. We need that. We need that compassion, and we need that care. Because it's Mother's Day, I'm going to read to you two poems, okay? First one here.

What wisdom lies in gentleness, what force true meekness holds, as truth combines with Christ-like love, a tale of good unfolds. The truth and the loving care that's seen in a mother can absolutely radically change somebody's life. And that's what we see is a gentle guidance from a mom.

[16 : 58] Secondly here, godly mothers are an example of sacrificial love. We were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because we were dear unto us. This word souls, everything in their entirety, not just their body, not just their life, but their soul was given out. They were willing to impart, to give what is of them to somebody else, but also in keeping in themselves. They have it. They enjoy the gospel. They celebrate the gospel, and imparting that into other people. And it says that their lives would be a witness of 210. You are witnesses, and God also, that the God of heaven has seen the way that they live, holily and justly and unblameably. We behave ourselves among you that believe. A life fully given to the Lord is the greatest thing that you would ever give a kid, is that you, before you would ever give anything to them, that everyday moms, dads, every man, woman, child in here, the greatest thing that you'll ever give to anybody into this world is the first give yourself to the Lord. On Thursday, we said there was three things, three patterns in raising children, prayer and example and precept. Prayer, example, and precept.

Many of the theological words that I know and I understand come from not just definitions that I learned in school, but by examples that were lived out from my mom. She didn't just give me a lesson. She gave me a life. She gave me an ability to see. So that's what the word forgiveness means.

That's what the word redemption will do. That's what grace looks like. That's what mercy looks like. And it was a great gift because she didn't just give the gospel, which is the greatest in word, but she gave in her entire life, her own soul, her inner being, everything about her. Nothing was kept off limits. Life was poured out. Philippians chapter number two gives us just another great picture.

And it says this in chapter two, verse 17. Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and the service of your faith, I enjoy and rejoice with you all. What an incredible picture here. It's the sacrifice of their faith. What is it that the God of heaven would want? He wants the faith of people from every nation and tribe in every part of this world. That's what he wants. And the apostle Paul says, the faith of these people that came to know Christ is offered up as a sacrifice unto you, Lord. This is pleasing to you, Lord. I want you to have this. I want you to worship of the people that I have invested, but not just in their faith and not in just in that sacrifice, but I joy and rejoice in that in myself also being offered up. And this is a picture of a drink sacrifice that would have been poured out unto them. So Paul says, here is these people that have been saved and they give their lives to you, but not just them, but I pour my life out also unto you. Mom, sit here.

And many of you in this room and on this stage have had a baby dedication and you'd said, I give this child to the Lord, that I want him to, I want to raise him or her for the honor and the glory of the Lord. And I want you to receive praise from their life. And what it's called upon is not just your children, but your life being poured out also. That you're not just pouring your life out unto your children for their good, but you're pouring your life out to the Lord as an example, as a sacrifice in worship to him. So when nobody's noticing, when you think nothing of yourself, when you pour yourself out for the training of your kids and you say, they don't really appreciate this. I don't even know if it's making that much of a difference. It's worship to the God of heaven who says you deserve everything. And moms in here, it's not your responsibility to fill the cup of your kid.

[20 : 44] You'll never be able to do that. Only Jesus can do that. You will never be everything that your kid needs in this world because they were made with a deficit that will only be supplied by Jesus Christ.

But what we are given in here to do is a responsibility to pour our cup out completely to him. Think about that story of David and those men that went and got the water for him and they hazarded their lives and they bring it back to him. And it just sounds like a military story, but it probably was one that was very emotional because David says, all this belongs unto the Lord and he pours it out. Moms, all that you're doing for the kids, it's not for your legacy. It's not just for their good, but just pour it out completely to God. All my effort, all my energy, a babe in Christ grow strong and true is help to know God's will to do. And when we, when we extend a loving hand and kindly love without demand, when you kindly love your children without demand, you are making much of God's will for your life. And lastly, number three, godly mothers are an example of ministry motivated by love. We were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls because we were dear unto us. Dear unto us is what he says and how he describes them.

Why does he do? Why do we do all this? Why was I willing to take this affliction and why am I willing to be persecuted? He says, you guys are dear to me. I love you. So many stories in this room I could think of and so many that I would pass. But I remember at the Christmas concert with Tinsley, Tinsley had left her bassoon at the school and, and she wasn't going to be able to play in the Christmas concert. And when Stephanie realized this about her, she went into a mold that only moms have. And I know you mothers have it as well. And she says, I have to get a bassoon for my daughter. And I'm like, Tinsley, you lost your, you left your bassoon. Not a big deal. Let's move on.

No, no, that is no, there is no chill factor in a mom when their kid's about to miss out on something, right? And they're going to move mountains for whatever is needed. And before the end of that night, we had two bassoons being brought to us. A janitor was opening up a school, one school.

Another person was opening up another school in the county. And we were getting bassoons. And bassoons aren't easy to find, okay? And make sure that her daughter did not miss that opportunity. And I'm watching, I'm thinking, why are you doing this? It wasn't an impure motive. It wasn't pleasing men.

[23 : 12] It wasn't that you just guys had to hear the bassoon. It wasn't all those things. It's that she loved her daughter. And so because she loved her daughter, it motivated a sacrifice that would not have been seen for somebody else that did not have the same love, like her dad, all right?

It was not seen. Different aspects of love. Same love, different sides of the coin, okay? Work around the clock with no concern for pay. Work around the clock with no concern for pay.

Night and day, but we would not be chargeable unto any of you. Love not only brings sacrifice, but it desires the best for others. And a mom's ultimate mission in life is to preach the gospel.

For we remember, brethren, our labor and travail for laboring night and day because we would not be chargeable unto any of you. We preached unto you the gospel of God. We have passed the nurse that was caring for a child. And now we're moving on to what the Apostle Paul says.

I like it, mother. I care for you. And this is what I am going to be doing. The gospel changes lives. It lets nothing stop you from sharing it with every generation that God allows you to help raise, to preach the gospel of Christ. Mothers, yes, you should pass down your grandmother's recipe, but do not let that be all that you pass down. Hold your children and your grandchildren tight in your arms and tell them about David who killed Goliath and that without Jesus, we would all be scared little Israelites hiding in tents today. Tell them about the story of the Passover lamb and sing to them, when I see the blood and I will make sure and make sure they know the lyrics.

[24 : 46] I can hear my grandmother saying, Christ, our Redeemer, who died on the cross, died for the sinner, paid all is due. Sprinkle your soul with the blood of the lamb and I will pass, will pass over you.

I not only could hear my grandmother singing that song, but I know what that song is about because she made sure that in giving her life, she also gave the gospel and we should be grateful.

Mothers, you have the same mission in life, which is to preach the gospel. We have the same one and you have the responsibility and the privilege of being an example to me and everybody else in this building today of being a gentle guide to show sacrificial service and living a life that is compelled by love to do the ministry. And because of this, I say thank you. Christian women are needed as spiritual mothers. God appointed pastors and teachers in the church to teach sound doctrine.

Titus 1.9, Paul appoints elders in Crete and he says, holding fast the faithful word as he had been taught that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. So people in the church that are supposed to rightly teach doctrine, but then it goes on and it points godly older women to help speak truth and teach this into the lives of other women. And that is also a very high calling.

It's specified how to do this intimately. Titus 2.1, to speak those things which become sound doctrine to young women is the older women in the church. Verse 3, the aged women likewise that they be in behavior has become holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things. Spiritual mothers were needed to model to godly mothers, other women in their time and their culture, and the same is needed today. A responsibility in the church to teach sound doctrine is given.

[26 : 40] But every woman in here has a responsibility to help take that same sound doctrine and to simulate and to teach it to the next generation. And every one of you in here have that responsibility.

Ladies to teach the younger and the men to teach the younger generation. And so in giving your life, but also in giving the gospel, Paul says, I didn't just give the gospel, but I gave my life.

Well, it isn't good for you to say, I'm just going to give my life and not give the gospel because you've been given that responsibility for it to be passed down. As you know, I'm really big in the research into cactuses in Arizona. No, not at all. All right. But I read the story about this cactus that was dying off in Arizona, and no matter how many of them they would plant, they would continue to not grow. But what they realized is that because of the loss of these certain plants and certain mesquite trees, that these cactuses could not survive because they needed this mesquite tree to provide warmth in the winter and to provide protection in the summer. And without this certain type of mesquite tree, then this certain kind of cactus would not grow.

What I would like for you to consider in here is that there may be some prickly kind of cactus people in here today, and they are in some desperate need of some mesquite trees to help provide warmth and protection in their life. Every woman in here, regardless if you're a mother in one way, have a very real and not a less responsibility in being a spiritual mother unto ladies. Young believers, like in the story here in 1 Thessalonians, they need older women to provide warmth and protection from them. And without them, they're just out there all alone. And as a church, we need to provide that for new believers. And where do we look to as an example in that? We don't look to the narwhal.

We don't look to the warrior, but we look to mothers in here as that example for us of that warmth and protection in ministry. So in closing, the church needs spiritual mothers to provide this example of gentle and sacrificial care for one another. On May the 9th, 1914, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the second Sunday in May is Mother's Day as a public expression of love and reverence for the mothers of our country. And today on May the 8th, 2022, I proclaim the second Sunday in May is Mother's Day as a proclamation of love and reverence for the role of mothers in our church and the example you provide for us and how to care for one another. And you get to have the rest of the day off. All right? But I thank you for the example that you provide for our church. I am to look to you as the example of gentle, kind, sacrificial love for other people. And as a church in here, we should know, we should be blessed by that. People say, we just have that. Jacob Mass was preparing something for tomorrow, and he just said, this church is just so loving and so caring, and people care for me. And I just say, that's not just true here. That's true among all God's churches, because the gospel changes the apostle Paul and the people that would care for one another. But the fact that it is true in this church is a testimony, the example that you mothers have set in here, that you ladies have shown with us, of how to lovingly care sacrificially for others. So in conclusion, four things to consider. First of all, it's that we thank God for the example of dedicated love that has been shown from the mothers in our lives. Second, we should consider if we have any relationships in life where we are caring for others, where we can apply this. The apostle Paul said, I look to moms as an example, but I know I can live this out among you new believers in this church. I would ask you in here, it's the question about discipleship, but that example that's given to you by mothers, are you able to live that out?

[30 : 34] Are there anybody, is there anybody in your life that you're caring for, that you're nurturing, that you're looking after, that you're not just giving the gospel to, but you're just giving your entire life. Maybe it's in your home, or maybe it's outside of your home, but there needs to be people in your life where you can live this Bible application out from. And Paul speaks about discipleship, the new believers, in more serious terms than we might normally think of it.

He tells us to care for others as moms care for their kids. And could there be any higher standard of how we are to care for one another? And then mothers, there's nothing you do for your kids or grandkids that will ever be of greater value than sharing with them the gospel. It was the gospel that was responsible for the changed life of the apostle Paul, and it's going to be responsible for any changed life. They got to get them the gospel. You have to give your kids and grandkids and every generation that God allows you to have come into your home and into your life and to crawl into your arms.

Your first priority is to teach them the gospel of Jesus and do it in a loving way, in a sacrificial way, but make sure that you do it. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, I thank you for your word, Lord. I thank you for the conviction that is brought in my life, Lord. I want to live in the same manner towards those that you have called for me to care for and to look after. And Father, I pray right now that the Holy Spirit would work in the lives of people here. And if there's one in here today that is not yours, that is not a child of God, that has never put their faith and trust in you, I'm praying that today would be the day of their salvation. And so, Lord, I pray for them as I will speak to them now, that you would work in their heart, that they would yield.