

MOTHER'S DAY 2025
JOHN 2:1-5, LUKE 8:19-21, JOHN 19:25-27,
2025-05-11

I've got a confession to make to you. I hate Mothers' Day. Well, that's not really accurate at all: I love Mothers' Day but I hate preaching Mothers' Day messages. Too many times I get caught up with something that's too trite or too gushy or both—it's like getting a Hallmark card with a Bible verse in it. The other end of Mothers' Day messages is that they can tend toward everything that's wrong in society. Neither of those messages is very helpful. The thing is, everybody expects a message about motherhood and the noble character of a Mother, just like it's laid out in Proverbs 31—except, you can't do Proverbs 31 over and over. You may not remember my messages from week to week, but if I kept coming back to the well on Proverbs 31, I'm pretty sure you'd get on to it in time or in a hurry. So, no Proverbs 31 this year. But if not, then what?

Well, here's a novel thought: what would Jesus have to say or show us about Mothers? So, Jesus had a mother. And, what do we know about Jesus? Way too many answers for that, but to narrow it down, Jesus was always about grace and truth:

“From the fullness of His grace we have all received 1 blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” (John 1:17).

So, let's tie Jesus in with mothers and grace. The first point I want to make is that we honour our mothers when we show them grace. The first passage this morning is about the wedding feast in Cana in Galilee, and it's where Jesus performed His first miracle, turning the urns of water into wine. The scene has a few funny twists. First, Jesus and His mother are there together. Then, for some reason, it's Mary who tells Jesus that the hosts are out of wine. Now that's a great embarrassment. I guess she's trying to find a solution to the problem to help out the hosts, and who better to solve problems than Jesus. After all, she knows who He is. But His reaction isn't, “Sure, why didn't you tell Me this earlier. I'll get right on it.” “(Dear) woman, why do you involve Me?” Today, if we started a conversation with “woman” it might well be the end of the conversation or you might expect a “What did you just call me?” But you can relax on that; it was natural language for that time, not an insult in any way, shape or form. But more than that, Jesus doesn't want to get into the middle of this muddle—it's not His problem (even though mom thought otherwise), saying, “My time has not yet come.” Apparently, “Kairos” the right time, the perfectly appointed time had not yet arrived for Jesus to begin His formal ministry. But Mary doesn't fold. She turns to the servants and says, “Do whatever He tells you to do.” That's really good advice. We should all do whatever Jesus tells us to do. She knew that whatever Jesus did or did not do would be right. That said, she did want Jesus to do something about it—but, prior to the miracle that was to follow here, who knew what He might or could do?

Now here's the key. Who's got the final say here? Who's got the upper hand? Well, it's Jesus for sure. Remember Sunday School? Jesus is always the right answer to any question—especially the ones you don't really know the answer to. But here's the thing. Jesus acquiesces to her wishes. He honours his mother. He respects her. In this way He shows her grace. And how about the fifth commandment? Yes! Honour your father and mother, that you may live long in the land the Lord is giving you. Mary deserves honour and Jesus graces her by honouring her.

There's a funny story about George W. Bush visiting his parents in Texas. He came in, relaxed in the family room and put his feet up on the table. Barbara, his mother, came into the room and said, "Get your feet off the table." George, his dad, said, "For heaven's sake Barbara, he's the president of the United States." She said, "It doesn't matter, he shouldn't have his feet on the table." Laura, George W's wife, said even presidents obey their mothers. George W. put his feet down. He honoured his mother. How do you honour your mom?

Second, you show grace when you relate to your mom spiritually. Luke 8:19-21 is another hard to figure out Scripture. Jesus' mother and brothers came to see Him, but they couldn't get near Him because of the crowds. It says something of Mary that she didn't try to use her family position to get closer. But someone told Jesus that Mary and His brothers were standing outside, wanting to see Him. Now, I'm guessing this event never would have been recorded if Jesus had simply said, "Tell them I'll be right out" or "usher them right in," But He didn't. Instead, we get this weird answer, "My Mother and brothers are those who hear God's word & put it into practice." What's that all about?

They aren't let through. If you were Mary, how would you feel—hurt, confused, put off? Wait till Your father hears about this! But there's a whole different level of stuff going on here. In addition to honouring Mary, Jesus wants to relate to her spiritually, eternally. And, she wants Mary to relate to Him spiritually. The bonds of spirituality are even tighter than the bonds of family or any other bonds. He wants His mother and His brothers to hear the Word of God & the truth and the power in it. Hard truth moves us up. Hard truth leads us to freedom. It's how you show others grace.

Not everyone has that kind of an opportunity. I'm so grateful I had it with my mom. My mom was 1 of the most caring people I've ever known. She loved people. She laughed often and was pleased to help others however she could, whenever she could. One of her less pleasing characteristics to me though, was that she consistently sided with Sharon whenever the two of us landed on different sides of an issue!

I didn't come really to the Lord until I was thirty. My mom had been a spiritual beacon who I had mostly ignored in that area of my life. I do blame her though, that I'm doing what I'm doing today. She kept praying for me to become a pastor and telling me so. I kept saying to her: "Not in this life time, Mom." So, when I was saved, I had lots of opportunities to share with her about the wonders and grace of God. That was particularly helpful as she weakened during her battle with cancer. I might have shared this with you, but as she declined, I asked her if she wanted the church elders to come and lay hands on her and pray for her healing. We did that. Her comment was that she'd never experienced anything so beautiful in her life. She went home to the Lord the following week. Now, some may question why she wasn't healed. I can only say to you that she absolutely was healed. She went home joy-filled. The thing is, God always heals. It's only in our narrow perspective of things that we think of healing only in the physical sense. My mom was healed for all eternity. Take the opportunities you have to share spiritually with those you love. The time is precious.

Sharon had the same privilege with her Mom and this example will lead us into the third part of this message. Sharon's Mom, like most moms, couldn't do enough to help her children and grandchildren. She was always interested and engaged in what each of them were up to. She would consistently deny herself comforts so that her loved ones would be better off. So, in her last weeks Sharon and her sisters looked after every need they could. But Sharon was the one who prayed with her and over her, sang hymns to her and read Scripture to her. Nan left this world knowing she was loved and cared for—here on earth and into God's eternal home and Kingdom.

So, the third point is: think about this. Jesus is dying on the cross, taking the pain of the sins of the world upon Himself. But He's not focusing on Himself. In John 19:25-27. Again, He uses the phrase, "Dear woman". Then He adds, "Here is your son" (John) and to John, "Here is your mother". Well, we're left with questions here too. What's wrong with Jesus' own brothers. Why wouldn't He be saying this to them? We don't know for sure, but we do know that from that time on John took Mary into his home. I think you can see the continuation here of the importance Jesus attached to relating spiritually, eternally. It was also a real-life example of the church looking after the family of God after Jesus died.

So the third point is you show grace when you tangibly care for your mom. Jesus makes sure His mother is taken care of. As our moms age we commit to caring for them. Today, there is more need than ever to care for aging parents. Boomers, you know what I'm talking about!

This message is to thank you for showing grace by honouring your mother, by sharing spiritually—and conversely being nurtured yourself by your mother’s spiritual outreach to you and thirdly by committing to tangibly care for them.

Thank You, God, for mothers! To each one here today, that’s a different picture. You have placed each of us within families as you know to be best. My prayer for today is that each of us reflect on the qualities of our moms that have contributed to shaping us as we are. I’m not so naïve as to think that all mothers have been perfect. They’re not. But neither are we. Where there have been difficult times, use them to strengthen our resolve to emerge better, wiser, stronger and grow us to imitate your loving compassion and kindness so that each of us may make our mark to change the world, one person at a time by our love for You and others—loving our neighbours as ourselves. Many here, at this stage of our lives no longer have our moms around to care for. But...but, there is always some “woman”—“dear woman” near by who would benefit from our loving care. We could show grace to each of them by honouring them, by sharing spiritually with them, and by committing to tangibly care for them.

Help us to do that. Amen.