

To The Unknown Mom

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Introduction: (Scripture Reading: Proverbs 31:25-31)

- A. Illustration about mothers.
- B. Throughout the Bible we find the lives of moms who lived by faith and patiently fulfilled God's will
 - a. Some of these moms are well known to us and often get our praise and attention... women like Mary, Hannah, Sarah, Jochebed, Boaz, Lois, Eunice, and more.
 - b. But there are also many mothers who are unknown to us. They are unknown because we don't talk about them as often and because their names are not recorded for us in the Bible. Yet these moms teach us great lessons and leave us valuable examples of faith to follow.
 - c. The Unknown Soldier – Today we are going to talk about some “unknown mothers.” That describes many of you. No, you are known by your family and friends, but as far as society and history are concerned, you aren't a person of prominence and prestige. You may be unknown to the world, but you are making a real difference because you are leading your family or have led your family by faith and godliness.

VALUABLE EXAMPLES FROM NAMELESS MOTHERS:

A. The Hospitable Mother:

- 1. This mother also had a strong appreciation for using her home for hospitality (2 Kings 4:8-11)
 - a. Here is a mother who was observant of the needs of others and cared enough to get involved... She opened her home for hospitality to Elisha so he wouldn't have to worry about a place to stay. Hospitality isn't easy... it takes time, money, energy, and inconveniences... She cared!
 - b. She didn't just open up her home, but she did it in a thoughtful manner – Notice what she is providing him... A place for rest, a place for study, and a place for privacy.
 - c. This mother understand the importance of simple things. Notice that it says she was a wealthy woman. She could have gone overboard, providing Elisha with everything he could imagine, but she stuck with the simple. Though wealthy, she wasn't materialistic and worldly. She didn't try to flaunt and parade her status and impress Elisha with who she was.
 - d. By practicing hospitality, the Shunemite woman made her home a place of service. Anyone in her home would learn the importance of loving others and putting others ahead of yourself.
- 2. She also appreciated spiritual people and surrounded her home with such people (verse 9)
 - a. During those days there were many opportunities for hospitality, especially in providing a place to spend the night. She could have filled her home with princes, with business leaders, with social leaders, or with other men and women of fame and stature. But she picks out Elisha.
 - b. Why Elisha? Because she recognized that he was a holy man. Not because of miracles, though she'd experience that later, but because of holiness. She knew Elisha was a man of God!
 - c. Imagine the blessing she brought into her home – She surrounded her family with someone who'd leave a great example to follow, she brought in someone who would spiritually influence them in serving God, she brought in someone who would teach them about God, and she brought in someone who loved God and would share that love for God with them!
- 3. As a result of this mother's spiritual interest and hospitality, her home was blessed by God. On two occasions God rewarded her through Elisha with the blessing of life when it seemed hopeless! (vs. 11-37)

- a. The text never says she was barren, unable to have children, but there almost certainly was some kind of problem. It does say her husband is old, so perhaps that is it. Whatever the case is, she is childless. Naturally that would've made her sad, but in her day it was also shameful.
 - b. So Elisha wants to reward her somehow. He basically gives her a "blank check" saying, "Ask whatever you want" and in her humility she doesn't feel like she needs anything. Finally Gehazi, Elisha's servant speaks up and says, "She needs a son!" so Elisha promises one to her
 - c. She is shocked, but one year later, just as Elisha promised, this woman finally has a child.
 - d. One day, as the child is a bit older, he is working in the fields and gets headaches. He goes home to his mother and dies. Sounds like an aneurism of some kind. Elisha gets word and goes to her house and raises her son from the dead. One again giving the gift of life to this family.
 - e. What if she was too busy to open her home for hospitality? What if she filled her family's life with people who were influential in sports, education, and fame instead of spirituality? Her love for God blessed her family in more ways than she probably ever imagined!
4. We should be thankful for mothers like this one. We need to learn from mothers like one. Godly and faithful mothers are to be praised because their homes are places for hospitality and they fill their home with spiritual influences **(Hebrews 6:10; 1 Tim 5:10)**

B. The Sacrificial Mother:

- 1. David had died and Solomon had become king over Israel. He understood the difficulty of his job and when given the opportunity to ask God for anything, he prayed for wisdom **(1 Kings 4:29-34)**
 - a. This request showed incredible humility and, ironically enough, wisdom. God appreciated his attitude and not only blessed him with wisdom, but with everything else he didn't ask for!
 - b. There was no one on earth who had more wisdom and understanding than Solomon. Because of his wisdom, he taught others and people came from all over to hear him speak.
 - c. Sounds great, right? He's rich and wise! Want to trade places? Imagine how not only did everyone come to you to hear your great wisdom and knowledge but everyone also came to you to solve all of their problems. Now do you want trade places?
 - d. Solomon had a dream in which God granted him wisdom. He woke up to find himself the wisest man on earth. The next verse says, "Then..." – Immediately the problems start coming!
- 2. Here we encounter a mother who was in a difficult and despondent situation **(1 Kings 3:16-23)**
 - a. It's easy to get distracted by this mother's moral state. The Bible says that she is a prostitute. Certainly her profession is one of ungodliness... but take time to notice the pain she is in.
 - b. Here's a woman who has a new born son. She is bonding with her new child and life is going on as normal. One morning she wakes up and the child is dead. She's devastated. Suddenly she realizes something is off... something is wrong. The child is not hers. Where's her child? She looks across the room and sees the other mom holding her son. She confronts the mother and the mother says, "I don't know what you're talking about, this is my son!"
 - c. There's no DNA tests... there's no birth records... there's no way to prove whose child it is. It was her word against the other woman's word. There's no Maury Provich Show to go to!
 - d. She is heart broken. She is angry. She feels helpless and hopeless. She has no one to defend her.
- 3. This mother is a great example of the sacrificial love mothers should have for their children **(vs. 24-28)**
 - a. We look back at this story and see the incredible wisdom of Solomon... Solomon never planned on cutting this baby in half. But imagine what was going through the minds of these women at this moment... "Is he really going to do it? He's serious. He's going to chop up this baby!"

- b. Notice the attitude of the fraudulent mother – She doesn't seem to have any emotional tie to the infant. It's shocking that she is actually accepting of Solomon's offer. The only thing this mother is concerned about is herself. She is selfish. She wants the kid, but not out of love!
 - c. Now see the attitude of the real mother – She is obviously disturbed by Solomon's idea.
 - d. Solomon had no doubt who the real mother was. Why? The real mother was the only one who was willing to sacrifice everything for the well being of the child. She was even willing to sacrifice her relationship. She was willing to give up the child so the child could live!
4. Like this mother, godly and faithful mothers are to be honored because of the sacrifices they make for their children's physical, but most importantly spiritual, welfare (**Luke 9:23; Phil. 2:3-4**)

C. The Faithful Mother:

1. Here is another mother who has found herself in a very difficult and painful situation... She has a daughter who is possessed by a demon (**Matthew 15:21-22**)
 - a. We aren't told what this demon did to the girl... but we know the wreck some demons made of people's lives. Remember the man living among the tombs, ran around naked, cut himself?
 - b. Certainly her daughter wasn't herself. She was "severely oppressed" – She saw her daughter hurting and without control of her life and there was nothing this mother could do about it.
 - c. There was nothing she could do about it... but she knew someone who could make things better. She had heard of Jesus and believed He had the power to heal her. Jesus was the answer!
2. When this mother finds Jesus, she pursues him with a very persistent faith (**Matthew 15:23-28**)
 - a. See her persistence in the disciples' reaction... They just wanted her to go away because she was following them around crying out. They saw her as a distraction, but she wouldn't stop.
 - b. She still persisted even though Jesus tested her – Jesus made a statement that would have been incendiary to many. It could have come across as, "I didn't come for you. You're a Gentile. I only came for the Jews! I came for the children and you are part of the dogs" - Still, the mother won't give up. She knows Jesus is the answer!
 - c. She responded to Jesus with great faith – Her response is filled with humility & grace. I appreciate the witty nature of her answer. Again, she won't give up on Jesus.
 - d. As a result, Jesus grants her request. Her daughter is healed immediately of the demon possession.
3. This mother's faith caused her to step out of her comfort zone and cross social boundaries:
 - a. The text points out for us that she was a woman, that she was a Gentile, and she was a Canaanite.
 - b. Many would have thought, "I have no chance" and given up before they ever got started. Many would have left discouraged when they met opposition from the disciples and heard Jesus.
 - c. She won't give up. This isn't normal behavior, but she is a mother whose daughter was hurting.
4. This world needs more mothers like this one... mothers who are persistent in seeking Jesus by faith... mothers who understand that Jesus is the answer to their family's needs! (**Col. 3:1; Heb. 11:11**)