

The Old Paths

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“The Greatest Things Mother Can Do”

Jarrold Jacobs

In this country, today is celebrated as “Mother’s Day.” I heard some time ago that on this day, more long-distance phone calls are made than on any other day in the year. Yet, let us also remember that first and foremost, this is the Lord’s day. This day on which we gather to worship God has been established by divine authority long before this country was even in existence, and long before it was decided to honor mom on this day (Acts 2:42, 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2; etc.). Let us remember to keep our priorities straight (Matt. 22:37, 10:37, 6:33).

At the same time, we must never underestimate the role and privilege God has afforded mothers. Many look down on what is considered the “1950’s” model of a wife and mother. Yet, let us be reminded that God’s ideal of a godly wife and mother was explained long before the 1950’s! A description of a godly wife and mother is seen in such passages as Proverbs 31:10-31 and I Peter 3:1-6, not to mention Titus 2:3-5 and Ephesians 5:22-33. Oh, that all men were blessed with such a wife as is described on the pages of Inspiration! Though “modern” women would defame and debase such descriptions, we are finding many women who wish to simply work in the role where God has placed them, and this is refreshing to see. For truly, it is not a return to “1950’s values,” but a return to godly values that is needed. While it is true that not all women obey

God’s word concerning their role (nor do some men encourage them), we find that there are still many (young and old) who do obey God!

What are the greatest things a mother can do? What can she do that would cause her children to “*arise up, and call her blessed*”? What can she do to have the praise of her husband, who safely trusts in her (Prov. 31:28, 11)? This is something we need to answer. Notice please, that I said that “we” need to answer this question. Though this article focuses on wives/mothers, no woman can be what she needs to be if her husband or children are stumbling blocks to her! Just as it takes a good wife to make a good husband, so it takes a good husband to make a good wife. Children must love their mother if mother will be what she needs to be!

The greatest things a mother can do begins with becoming a Christian. For mother to be a faithful servant of God is outstanding. When she submits to the Lord’s plan for salvation, believing in Christ, repenting of her sins, confessing Him as the Son of God and being baptized for the remission of sins, this is a wonderful thing (Acts 2:36-38; Acts 8:35-39; etc.). It is wonderful, for her soul has been saved (Acts 22:16); but it is also wonderful because if she will then act as Christ (Matt. 28:20; I Pet. 2:21-22), her whole family will be the better for it.

How will her whole family be better? They will be better, because as a Christian, she will treat her family as she wants to be treated (and ought to receive the same in return! Matt.

7:12). She will not set her mind on things of this earth, but on “*things above*” (Col. 3:1). She will show herself as a proper example in word and deed to her husband and children (I Pet. 3:1-6; Titus 2:3-5). How embarrassing and sad it is to see children who have a mother who acts selfishly, or like the town prostitute, or who abuses them, or doesn’t care about them; rather than seeing them holding the hand and hugging a godly mother who loves and cares for them! A godly mother will be an example of loving your neighbor as yourself (Matt. 22:39). She will be interested in teaching her children God’s word (II Tim. 1:5). Remember, II Timothy 2:2 isn’t just for “strangers” and “others”! Why not start at home? (Fathers have this responsibility, too, Eph. 6:4.)

“*Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord*” (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18). Are you doing this? Are you trying in all ways to love your husband and your children (Titus 2:4)? Evidently, some in Paul’s day needed to be taught to love their husbands and children. When opening our newspaper and reading about atrocities some women have done to their husbands and children, it is evident that women today need to be taught this same lesson! “*Without natural affection*” (Rom. 1:31; II Tim. 3:3) is a description that fits them quite well, does it not? May this never be said of the godly wives and mothers here! Not only does submitting oneself to her husband as unto the Lord show her obedience to the God of Heaven, but it also shows her children how godly mothers act. Hopefully, this will encourage her girls to act like her, and her boys to find godly women to marry.

The greatest things mother can do begins with making her life right before God, and then living a godly example before her family. Ultimately, this will mean more to them than all the treasures of this world!

“Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk

“No Proselytizing”

Jarrold Jacobs

Perhaps we have heard the term “proselytizing” or “proselyte” before. During this year’s winter Olympics, the Mormons in Salt Lake City were made to promise they would not try to “proselytize” the Olympians who had come there to compete. I recently read an article in which a Hindu said “Hinduism never preaches conversion ... there’s no evangelistic zeal” (*U.S. News and World Reports*, 5/6/02, p. 49). This same article spoke of Judaism, and said “Judaism rejects proselytizing...” (p. 48). The word “proselyte” is not an uncommon word (in fact, Jesus used this word, Matt. 23:15). Let us define the words “proselytizing” and “proselyte” as are found in the dictionary. Proselyte is defined as “a person who has changed from one opinion, religious belief, sect, or the like, to another; convert” (Webster’s). “Proselytizing” is a verb describing the act of making one a proselyte (*ibid.*). In other words, what the Mormons were told was that they were not allowed to teach their doctrine to the Olympians who came to Salt Lake City. (While I am all for false doctrine not being taught, I wonder what kind of convictions people have who might agree to such a thing.) Further, the Jews and Hindus in the “U.S. News” article were saying the same thing. If one wishes to become a Hindu or a Jew, don’t worry about getting a “knock on the door”! It is just not going to happen, according to them. You have to go to them! (Kind of the reverse of “Don’t call us, we’ll call you.” In this case, it is, “You must call us, because we won’t call you!”)

This attitude is quite prevalent

in society, is it not? How many today say, “Do what you wish in religion, but don’t try to proselytize me.” In the name of “tolerance,” it is suggested we just go about our business and not worry about anyone else’s soul. In the name of so-called “unity-in-doctrinal diversity” we are told that people can “choose their own way to God.” On Saturday, our own local paper prints in great big letters, “Choose the church of your choice.” Yet, is this what the Lord taught? Did He tell us not to worry about people’s souls, and not to teach them? In fact, the opposite is true.

When we begin to read and study the New Testament, we find our Lord telling the apostles to “*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature*” (Mk. 16:15). Peter told the Jews gathered on the day of Pentecost to “*hear these words*” (Acts 2:22 — words which would later cut, or pierce them to the heart, v. 37). After being persecuted and threatened, the disciples “*went everywhere preaching the word*” (Acts 8:4). Paul, Barnabas, Silas, and others went across the world teaching and spreading the gospel to all who would listen. Their work had such an effect on the people that the Bible says, “*all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus,*” and that the word of God was “*preached to every creature which is under heaven*” (Acts 19:10; Col. 1:23). I wonder if these godly

people believed in “proselytizing”?

Why talk about this subject? Because I am afraid that many of us are acting like we have been slapped with a “no proselytizing” rule! Are we taking opportunities to teach others about Christ? Do we invite people to services, or tell them of our radio program, our website, of the bulletin we mail out, correspondence courses, and many other things? Have we offered to have a Bible study with them? The worst they could say is “No!” Is this not the LEAST we could do in an effort to save lost souls?

Perhaps we ought to consider this another way. How many gathered here are here because someone took the time to teach them the truth? That’s right, everyone! If someone loved us enough (ex: parents, spouse, preacher, friends) to take some time and teach us the truth, can we not extend that same courtesy to others? We better! Paul showed it was our obligation to not only know the gospel ourselves, but then teach it to others (I Tim. 4:16; II Tim. 2:2). Without faith, we cannot please God (Heb. 11:6). Without faith, we’ll not obey God (Rom. 10:16). Yet, this is all based upon one hearing God’s word to produce that faith (Rom. 10:17)! Who is ready to teach others that faith-producing word so that men and women might please God? Do we say, “*Here am I, send me*” (Isa. 6:8), or “*There he is, send him!*”? The “no proselytizing” rule may please men, but it does not please God! (Rom. 1:16)

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Preacher/Editor: Jarrold Jacobs

Phone: (270) 683-5386

Website address: www.southside-churchofchrist.com (Updated weekly!)

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