

The Influence of a Godly Mother

2 Ki 4:1-7

1 Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the LORD: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen. 2 And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil. 3 Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, *even* empty vessels; borrow not a few. 4 And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full. 5 So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought *the vessels* to her; and she poured out. 6 And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, *There is* not a vessel more. And the oil stayed. 7 Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.

Introduction:

1. A woman, renewing her driver's license at the County Clerk 's office, was asked by the woman recorder to state her occupation. She hesitated, uncertain how to classify herself. 'What I mean is,' explained the recorder, 'do you have a job or are you just a .?'' 'Of course I have a job,' snapped the woman. 'I'm a Mom.' 'We don't list 'Mom' as an occupation, 'housewife' covers it,' Said the recorder emphatically.

I forgot all about her story until one day I found myself in the same situation, this time at our own Town Hall. The Clerk was obviously a career woman, poised, efficient, and possessed of a high sounding title

like, 'Official Interrogator' or 'Town Registrar.' 'What is your occupation?' she probed. What made me say it? I do not know. The words simply popped out. 'I'm a Research Associate in the field of Child Development and Human Relations.' The clerk paused, ball-point pen frozen in midair and looked up as though she had not heard right. I repeated the title slowly emphasizing the most significant words. Then I stared with wonder as my pronouncement was written, in bold, black ink on the official questionnaire. 'Might I ask,' said the clerk with new interest, 'just what you do in your field?' Coolly, without any trace of fluster in my voice, I heard myself reply, 'I have a continuing program of research, (what mother doesn't) in the laboratory and in the field, (normally I would have said indoors and out.) I'm working for my Masters, (first the Lord and then the whole family) and already have four credits (all daughters). Of course, the job is one of the most demanding in the humanities, (any mother care to disagree?) and I often work 14 hours a day, (24 is more like it). But the job is more challenging than most run-of-the-mill careers and the rewards are more of a satisfaction rather than just money.' There was an increasing note of respect in the clerk's voice as she completed the form, stood up, and personally ushered me to the door. As I drove into our driveway, buoyed up by my glamorous new career, I was greeted by my lab assistants -- ages 13, 7, and 3. Upstairs I could hear our new experimental model, (a 6 month old baby) in the child development program, testing out a new vocal pattern. I felt I had scored a beat on bureaucracy! And I had gone on the official records as someone more distinguished and indispensable to mankind than 'just another Mom.'

Motherhood! What a glorious career! Especially when there's a title on the door.

2. The value of a godly mother can never be expressed.

Pr 31:10 Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.

3. If you have been blessed with a godly mother and a godly wife you are blessed beyond measure.
4. Our society desperately needs the influence and molding of godly mothers who are settled in Christ, strong in the faith, and loyal to the family.
5. Our passage of Scripture reveals such a woman
 - a. She had compassion and commitment that is worth reflecting upon.
 - b. This morning we will notice the characteristics of this mother.

I. A MOTHER'S ALLEGIANCE - VS 1

1 Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the LORD: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen.

- This woman had been married to one of the sons of the prophets
- Her husband had been a man of God
- But he died leaving her with debt and two sons to raise on her own
- At one time life was good but now her life was filled with uncertainty
- Her predicament was not of her own making
- She could have thrown up her hands and said, “What’s the use, God has forsaken me!”
- Instead she remained loyal; her allegiance was strong. Her allegiance was twofold:

A. Her Faith

1. Her husband had been a man of God and she knew the ways of the Lord
2. He had lived a life of service to the Lord but God called him home

3. Some would become bitter toward God
 - a) *“Lord, why did you take my husband? Why have you let this happen to me?”*
 - b) *“At a time when I needed him the most, you’ve take him from me!”*
 - c) *“Lord, I don’t deserve this.”*
 - d) *“We were doing our best to live for you.”*
4. But this woman is not bitter toward the Lord
 - a) *Instead she turned toward God*
 - b) *She found Elisha and laid out her predicament*
5. A mother of influence will remain truth to her faith
 - a) *She may experience times of heartache and pain but I thank God for those mothers who remain committed to the Lord*
 - b) *Our children need to see that steadfastness in our lives*
 - c) *They need mothers who will turn to God in difficult times.*

B. Her Family

1. Not only did this mother remain loyal to her faith in the Lord, but she also remained loyal to her family
2. It was the custom of the day that when a debt was owed one’s children could be taken as slaves to “workout” the debt.
3. She didn’t have the money to pay the debt and she was probably struggling to even keep food on the table.
4. This mother refused to give up her children.
5. She didn’t know how, but there had to be a way to keep her sons from bondage.
6. We need mothers who are concerned about the bondage of their children to sin.
7. We need to hold our children up to God that they might be saved.

A Mother’s Allegiance...

II. A MOTHER'S SUBSTANCE - VS 2

2 And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil.

1. This mother was desperate so she went to Elisha
2. He asked her two important questions: what did she need and what did she have?
 - a) *What did she have forced this mother to acknowledge her problem and her inability*
 - b) *Help or answers cannot come until a person recognizes what is needed*
3. She didn't have much, just a little pot of oil. Barely enough to cook with or light the house
4. Maybe she didn't have much, but she had God!
 - a) *She didn't have the wealth and riches of this world*
 - b) *But she had a Lord who knew her situation and was well able to meet her need.*
5. More than the wealth and substance of this world our families need the Lord
6. She had a love for her family that was greater than the debt they owed.

A Mother's Substance....

III. A MOTHER'S OBEDIENCE - VS 3-5

3 Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, *even* empty vessels; borrow not a few. 4 And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full. 5 So she went from him,

and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought *the vessels* to her; and she poured out.

1. Elisha instructed her to gather all the containers she could find and pour the oil into them.
2. We know she had faith because she sought the Lord's guidance, but now it was time to act upon that faith.
3. I wonder if she was a bit apprehensive at first
 - a) *“Why do I need all these containers?”*
 - b) *Imagine how she must've felt as she filled the first container and began to pour into the second one?*
 - c) *That little pot of oil had filled a larger pot and now was filling another one!*
 - d) *Imagine the joy as the pots continued to fill and yet there was still oil remaining in the little pot.*
 - e) *This would never would have been possible had she not been obedient to the Lord.*
4. Would you agree with me that we need those who will be obedient unto the Lord?
5. He may be ready to fill some pots at your house if you'll only trust Him and act in faith!
6. My Medicaid approval

A Mother's Obedience....

IV. A MOTHER'S ABUNDANCE - VS 6

6 And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, *There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.*

1. Notice what a difference a little faith made in the life of a family that was about to be torn apart.

- a) *They had filled every container they could find.*
 - b) *A day that started out with gloom and despair had ended in abundance and rejoicing!*
 - c) *A mother who was loyal to her family, gave what she had in obedience to God and that resulted in a great abundance.*
2. Mothers, you may feel at times that your life has been of little significance, but nothing could be further from the truth.
 3. You have a wonderful opportunity to enrich the lives of those within your family.
 4. A godly mother of influence will fill many lives with love and joy.
 5. The love that a mother gives is certainly an abundant blessing that God has allowed you to share with others!

A Mother's Abundance....

v. A MOTHER'S REMEMBRANCE - VS 7

7 Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.

1. She sold enough of the oil to pay the debt and there remained enough to sustain the family.
 - a) *Those two sons may have forgotten much about their childhood, but I guarantee that they never forgot the day they poured the oil.*
 - b) *On that day, she allowed her sons to see her faith in the Lord.*
 - c) *A caring mother made a lasting impact on the lives of two young men.*
2. Your labor and loving care may go unrecognized and without gratitude at times, but it is never forgotten.
 - a) *We could all share about the love our mothers have given to us.*
 - b) *I am still blessed to have my mother, but I will never forget what she has done for me.*

3. Let me encourage you to live for the Lord in front of your children.
4. Make sure you know Him as your Savior.
5. Death causes a brief separation, but for the saved, there will be a great reunion day.

Conclusion:

1. The influence of one godly mother made an immediate and lasting impact on her family.
 - a. They likely had heard her speak of faith, and now they had witnessed her faith.
 - b. She had placed her faith and trust in the Lord.
2. Our society needs those who will live out their faith before others.
3. Christ loved us enough to bear our sin on the cross and He is more than able to meet our needs.
4. If you are unsaved, He stands ready to save.
5. If you are struggling or discouraged, He stands ready to help. Seek Him today as He leads.
6. "Can I see my baby?" the happy new mother asked. When the bundle was nestled in her arms and she moved the fold of cloth to look upon his tiny face, she gasped. The doctor turned quickly and looked out the tall hospital window.

The baby had been born without ears. Time proved that the baby's hearing was perfect. It was only his appearance that was marred. When he rushed home from school one day and flung himself into his mother's arms, she sighed, knowing that his life was to be a succession of heartbreaks.

He blurted out the tragedy. "A boy, a big boy...called me a freak."

He grew up, handsome for his misfortune. A favorite with his fellow students, he might have been class president, but for that. He developed a

gift, a talent for literature and music. "You might mingle with other young people," his mother reproved him, but felt a tenderness in her heart.

The boy's father had a session with the family physician. Could nothing be done? "I believe I could graft on a pair of outer ears, if they could be procured" the doctor decided. Whereupon the search began for a person who would make such a sacrifice for a young man.

Two years went by. Then, "You are going to the hospital, son. Mother and I have someone who will donate the ears you need. But it's a secret" said the father.

The operation was a brilliant success, and a new person emerged. His talents blossomed into genius, and school and college became a series of triumphs.

Later he married and entered the diplomatic service. "But I must know!" he urged his father. "Who gave so much for me? I could never do enough for him."

"I do not believe you could," said the father, "but the agreement was that you are not to know...not yet."

The years kept their profound secret, but the day did come...one of the darkest days that ever pass through a son. He stood with his father over his mother's casket. Slowly, tenderly, the father stretched forth a hand and raised the thick hair to reveal...that the mother had no outer ears.

"Mother said she was glad she never let her hair be cut," he whispered gently, "and nobody ever thought mother less beautiful, did they?"