

Text: Ephesians 5:15-25

Title: "The Mother Ship"

Introduction: Happy Mother's Day Everyone (especially Mothers)!! Would you please stand, Moms?!? We are going to pray for you right now...

PRAY FOR MOMS!

We are in the middle of a worship series called "Ships" and it's about Relationships. The first couple of weeks we talked about our relationship with God as Lord (Lordship). Then we had a week where we talked about "Friendship" and how God would like us to be in those relationships. Last week, Lynn Schreck was here from Wauzeka/Eastman and we had a little commercial break...

Quick, back aboard the "SHIP"! This week, obviously, we are going to take time to talk about MOMS! We are going to talk about the relationships that MOMS have with their Children and how to be the best MOMS you can be...

How many of you MOMS would, if you could do it all over again, still have children?!? How many of you would like to, if you could do it all over again, have DIFFERENT children?!? Okay, just joking there...

So, today we are going to talk about what God wants from MOMS. We are going to try to answer the question, "What does a Godly Mother look like, act like, and live like?"

Now, I'm a little biased, but I think that MY MOM embodied what we are going to talk about today. My wife Sarah is a great MOM also, but I never experienced her as MY MOM ... so, I'm going to talk a little about MY MOM.

I am the youngest of five (5) children ... I have two older brothers and two older sisters and then me. My oldest brother is nine (9) years older than me. One of our favorite things to do as kids was to embarrass our MOM... seriously, it was like a game. (I do not remember my MOM without silver hair and she earned every one!).

One thing we liked to do was started by one of my older brothers while we lived in La Farge. As my Mom did dishes at the kitchen sink, he used to pop up in the window and yell, "BOO!" She would jump and scream and scold him... He also started the family tradition of yelling at the top of our lungs (outside the kitchen window), "MY MOM IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL MOM IN THE WHOLE WORLD!" What started at the kitchen window, turned into a game to find the most public place that we could embarrass Mom with a rousing, "MY MOM IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL MOM IN THE WHOLE WORLD!"

Okay, if you haven't already, please take the insert out of your program. On the inside you will see a brief outline of where we are going today complete with fill-in-the-blanks ... fill them in! All the answers are going up on the screen to fill those in, but I also invite you to write down whatever else you think will help you in your faith journey. For those of you who are listening on line or IPODing this, take time to download the outline off of our website so that you too can fill-in-the-blanks.

Our Scripture for today is from Ephesians, and it might not sound much like a Mother's Day Scripture. Bear with me, please. We are going to use this same Scripture in

a few weeks as we talk about “MarriageShip”. But, today, we have to look at this Scripture because I feel like it gives Mom’s some freedom to really be Moms!

We are in the Book of Ephesians and Paul is writing to one of the churches that he planted in a town called Ephesus. Paul writes this section to help the people of Ephesus to understand better how to live life. Before we start, I want us to remember that God created us as human beings in God’s image. And if that’s the case (God as Creator and we are in God’s image), then God knows more about us than we know about ourselves, I would hope that we wouldn’t argue too much with God about what is said here. It would be like me walking into one of the farmer’s fields around here (many generations of farmers) and start telling them how I think he should be farming... got it!?!?

So, let’s listen in to God’s Word as revealed by Paul: Ephesians 5, starting with verse 15...

I. **These Evil Days** (15-16)

- A. The truth is, our culture is in a state of moral & spiritual decline ... and whether you agree with decisions I’m about to mention or not is not the point; the point is, there seems to be some major confusion going on in our world today; here’s some examples:
- B. A court in Janesville, Wisconsin, sentenced a man to 12 years in prison for killing five cats ‘to relieve stress’; two days after that man began serving his time, a Delaware court sentenced a woman to only 30 months in prison for killing her newborn infant... We have a problem!
- C. It should be clear that our society—as a whole—no longer believes humans are made in the image of God—no different than animals; if you’re not convinced yet, let me share with you a major influence that’s been busy shaping our society for several years...
- D. Ingrid Newkirk, founder of PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) says, “There is no rational basis for saying that a human being has special rights. When it comes to a central nervous system, and the ability to feel pain, hunger, and thirst, a rat is a pig is a dog is a boy.” Newkirk sees no difference between the atrocities of WWII and killing animals for food.
- E. She goes on to say: “Six million Jews died in concentration camps, but six *billion* broiler chickens will die this year in slaughterhouses.” Now, *I love my dog, but he’s not in the same league as my daughters!* This is the influence that is shaping our culture and our society and the world that our children and grandchildren are going to live in!
- F. These are EVIL DAYS ... Get it?!? An ancient Chinese proverb says, “One generation plants the trees and the next get the shade.”
 1. I know that my upbringing offers me shade from many of the un-Godly things of this world.
 2. The question is: Am I planting Spiritual shade trees for my kids and grandkids? These are Evil Days...
 3. We have to be careful how we live ... not like fools, but as those who are wise. Our children and other people’s children are depending on you and me to live wisely and “make the most of every opportunity” to serve God’s Kingdom and teach God’s Kingdom TODAY!

4. Why? Because these are Evil Days!
5. How? How are we going to do that? Listen as we go on...

II. **Know God** (17-20)

- A. How? Know God. Love People. Serve the World. In order to be Moms like God wants you to be Moms, we have to KNOW GOD!
- B. I know that we have some single Moms here or you know some single Moms (by the way; bring all your single friends next week ... we are talking about “COURTSHIP”! and I want to really encourage those of you who are not married...). *I also know that some of you married Moms feel like you might as well be single when it comes to parenting.* Anyway, Single Moms and/or married Moms; this is the key!
- C. All of our relationships in this life will be greatly influenced by our relationship with God.
 1. If you believe that God sent His only Son, Jesus to die on a cross to take away whatever sins stand between you and God so that you can live with JOY in this life and have a promise of eternity in God’s Paradise; it will affect the way you are a MOM!
 2. If you do not believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God who makes a way for you to have hope to live forever in a promised Paradise; that will affect the way you are a MOM!
- D. Sometimes we forget that we are created by God in God’s image and that God knows the best way for us to function as human beings in relationship with each other, BUT, if we believe that, and listen to how God says we are to live in relationships—our relationships will all get better!
- E. Speaking of relationships, for you Moms that are married, there is a relationship that has to come ahead of your relationship with your children. Listen as Paul continues...

III. **Submit to Your Husband** (21-25)

- A. Who was the most powerful person who ever lived on this earth? Which person has changed the world more than any other single human being? Jesus!
- B. But, who would have thought that a carpenter’s son from Nazareth who was constantly serving other people could be the most powerful?!? He never claimed power. Jesus never demanded His own way. He only demanded God’s way of doing things ... it was NEVER about HIM!
- C. My Mom lived this out. My Mom moved from North Carolina in a V6 Chevy and a camper trailer with a 5 week old baby to Wisconsin to be in ministry with my Dad. My Mom was a servant to my Dad and to us kids. Do you know what the result was?
 1. I’m the youngest of 5 kids. Every one of us has served and continues to serve God’s Kingdom.

2. My two sisters have worked as unpaid servants in churches for years and they are advancing the Kingdom of God.
 3. My oldest brother has served as a camp/retreat director for almost 30 years in the Wisconsin Conference of the United Methodist Church.
 4. My other older brother is an ordained pastor at the United Methodist Church in Dodgeville and his son is pastoring up in Ithaca.
- D. My wife lives this out. My wife agreed when we got married to move wherever God moved me for the ministry of God's Kingdom (she was 20 years old!).
1. She is from just outside of Cincinnati on the Kentucky side. She grew up in the city. She had one home from birth to high school graduation.
 2. Since she married me, she has lived in 5 different places.
 3. Boscobel is the place that she and I have lived the longest.
- E. Those are servant hearts and they hold more power in children's and even teenager's lives than we will ever quite understand.
- F. You want to be a powerful Mom?!? Paul teaches us that it is in our relationships: first, with God, then with our spouse that we become more Godly in our parenting!
- G. Now, I understand that some of you are thinking ... "Submit to that _____? No way! How can I submit to that lazy, no good, blah, blah, blah?!?" Great Question! In a couple of weeks, we are going to talk about that ... be back for MarriageShip!
- H. Take note that the part where the HUSBAND is to SUBMIT is longer than for the wife ... see you in a couple of weeks!

IV. Caught, Not Taught

- A. As we raise Lily, our fourth daughter, Sarah and I keep thinking that we should be better at this... But, we realize again as we have with our other three daughters, most of what they learn is Caught, Not Taught!
1. We teach Lily, as with the other three, to use her manners ... please and thank you.
 2. We teach her how to act in public.
 3. We attempt to teach her how to share with other kids.
 4. We teach her how to be polite to adults, etc.
- B. She is learning those things, but she picks way more up from what we DO than what we SAY TO DO!
1. Lily knows that she needs to ask one of her parents before she does certain things ... like, go outside in the back yard to play on the swings or trampoline.
 2. And there are times in the past that Lily has not liked our answer ("NO") and so she asks again. We reply with "Lily, the answer is NO!"

3. So, now she will ask if she can do something she wants to do and before we can answer, she says: “The answer is: ‘Yes!’” We never taught her that. She picked up on it from the way we spoke to her.
- C. If we understand that what children learn most is “CAUGHT, NOT TAUGHT”; guess what the greatest teaching tool is for MOTHERS?
1. We have to teach children how to be in relationships.
 2. Children learn way more about a relationship with Jesus when it is modeled; not just talked about.
 3. How do children see your relationship with God? By the way we are in relationship with God’s Kids (people).
 4. The main relationship your children are watching is your relationship with your husband! Are you showing them I Corinthians 13 ... *“Love is patient and kind. It’s not jealous, conceited or proud. It does not keep a record of wrongs”,* etc.
 5. If you don’t have a husband ... then your children are watching how you conduct yourselves in relationship to your parents, siblings, dates, etc.
 6. Your children know what you believe; not by your words, but by how you live out your love and compassion for other people!
- D. If you want to be a great Mom, have a servant heart like Jesus. Remember, He was the most powerful man that ever lived!

Next Week: The S.O.P. of the A.D.S. and other important letters as we talk about the dating life and “COURTSHIP”. Be here and bring all your dating friends!

Let’s Pray!