

Mothers Emerging Through Faithful Prayer

How many times have we witnessed strong, buffed-up athletes on television and during the interview we see them wave and say, 'Hi Mom! I love you!?' No matter how old we are or what station in life we find ourselves, mothers always hold a special place in our hearts. It's been said that a mother carries a child inside her body for nine months, in her arms for three years, and in her heart for eternity. For many of us, our mothers remain in our hearts for eternity as well.

Tributes to mothers and the significant role they play in our lives do not negate or diminish the critical role fathers play in the lives of their children. However, in May, we celebrate Mother's Day and those ***mothers emerging through faithful prayer***.

Mothers' Day is just one day out of the year set aside to honor and pay tribute to mothers and surrogate moms who have loved us when we were unlovable, punished us when we deserved it (or didn't), and taken care of us—sometimes with nothing but 'a hymn and a prayer'. There are moms who stayed up all night worrying about us, fretting over us when we were sick or disobedient, and supporting, encouraging and wiping away our tears when others ignored our needs and desires.

I understand that Mother's Day is not a happy or celebratory time for everyone. There are those among us who have never had the good fortune and blessing of knowing a loving and faithful mother—for various reasons. To those individuals, days like Mother's Day can be a heartbreaking and painful reminder of a significant life experience that went lacking. And, there are some among us who grieve mothers who have passed away. To those individuals, the reminder of that void remains painful and causes sadness. However, there are also those among us that can always look to and honor women—who are not biological mothers that stepped in and stepped up—grandmothers, aunts, sisters, cousins and sometimes strangers—to fulfill the role of mother; women who supported, encouraged and prayed for us.

Most of us don't have to read the bible to learn about the faithfulness of mothers. We all know the stories of Hannah, Mary (Jesus' mother) and a host of other courageous, faithful and praying mothers in the Bible. Many of us—*myself included*—know first-hand that were it not for the prayers and faithfulness of our God-fearing mothers, we would not be where we are today. We have been blessed to know and experience the unconditional love, sacrifice, wisdom and, yes, even discipline of loving, faithful mothers.

Growing up in church, there were the 'church mothers' who were not shy about shushing us, swatting us if the situation called for it, or giving us stern looks of disapproval. Some of us regarded these icons dressed in white as mean and unapproachable, but the role they played in our churches was significant. For many of us, they were our 'village'. They demanded and received respect. They were shrewd women who weren't shy about sharing their wisdom—whether you wanted to hear it or not. While sometimes their faith was more rooted in tradition than Scripture, most of

them had at least one thing in common—they loved the Lord. They had faith and they were strong, fearless and determined women who knew how to ‘get a prayer through.’

Times have changed, and while change can be good or bad, one thing for sure is that it is inevitable—*except for the love of a mother*. The love most mothers feel for their children never changes. Their love is immediate, unconditional, powerful, eternal and unshakeable. There is nothing that can stop, hinder or take precedent over a mother’s love for her children. We have all heard stories of how mothers have lifted cars or other objects—twice their weight and armed with nothing but love and adrenalin—to save a child’s life. We’ve heard stories about mothers giving up their last morsel of food to feed their children. And, we have seen—and some of us have experienced—mothers working two and three jobs to provide shelter, food and clothing for their children. A Mother’s love is infinite.

This month, as we celebrate mothers emerging through faithful prayer, let us reflect on some the characteristics of faithful and praying mothers.

Faithful mothers pass their faith on to their children

Not only do praying mothers possess a sincere faith, but they also desire to hand off that faith to their children. Genuine faith is contagious. It’s been said that our children do what *they* see, not what *we* say. When children see their mothers standing on God’s promises, when they see and hear her prayers, they emulate that. In the Bible, we read of Timothy’s faith that is traced back through his mother to his grandmother. We see the Lord in them, and it was their faith that attracted Timothy to the Lord (2 Timothy 1:5 and 3:14-17).

A praying mother displays sincere faith

Paul wrote to Timothy, “*I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.*” (2 Timothy 1:5) The sincere faith Timothy experienced was a result of being raised by a godly mother and a godly grandmother. While extended families of yesteryear aren’t as prevalent today, the sincere faith of our mothers, grandmothers, godmothers and other women is a wonderful legacy that continues to be passed on to our children.

Faithful mothers have influence over their children

Faithful mothers—those that rear and train their children to become honorable men and women—are invaluable to our community. There are many faithful mothers that have taught their children to recite the “Lord’s Prayer,” ingrained Psalm 23 in their children’s hearts, and taught them the books of the Bible. These are acts of love that, even as a child grows older, he or she always remembers.

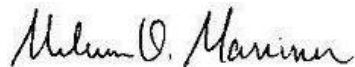
Faithful mothers honor God and train their children to do so

Children will grow up to love and serve God by being exposed to and learning His Word. God's Word of truth is powerful to save (James 1:18) and to sanctify (John 17:17). One of the best thing mothers can do for their children is to instill in them—from an early age—the importance of reading, studying, memorizing, and obeying God's Word. One of the best ways to do this, is to model reading and studying God's Word to them. Countless mothers have witnessed the fruits of their labor, as the Bible predicts in Proverbs 22:6, "*Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.*"

Moms offer unparalleled strength, wisdom, kindness and truth, even in the midst of busy and chaotic lives at work and at home. Moreover, many of us know what true love and strength looks like because of the example our mothers set for us. We also understand the power of prayer because we have seen our mothers emerge victoriously through their faithful prayers.

Happy Mother's Day!

Peace and power,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melvin O. Marriner".

Dr. Melvin O. Marriner
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