

Moms, You Need Jesus

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After a lifetime observing what moms do, I've come to some important conclusions. Motherhood is difficult, tiring, rewarding and fulfilling all at the same time, and as much as I appreciate my mom and now my wife, I don't want the job.



Moms, we love you. A lot.

Motherhood is a magnificent mosaic of bright, triumphant mornings and dark, tempestuous nights. The joys of children growing and walking in obedience to their parents and to God, and the agonies of them rejecting, rebelling, and acting foolishly all get rolled up into one woman's heart. You moms experience tragedy and joy in a unique way, storing them both with supreme empathy, carrying a weight that surely seems unbearable at times.

There is no getting around the gravity of your task, and although there are many things you must do, the greatest requirement of motherhood is love. This means that your daily labor will consistently reveal your own need for Jesus.

Motherly love is patient

When Paul teaches us what love is in 1 Cor 13, he is not giving us a list of mere characteristics, but is personifying the person "love" and showing us how that person acts. The first act of love in verse 4 is patience. Motherhood requires long-suffering forbearance in the face of injustice. This is not mainly the need to wait on a slow child while they get dressed, but rather the necessity to suffer wrong and not retaliate.

Your husband sometimes wrongs you, your church friends don't quite understand the situation you're in and make wrong judgments, and your kids bring you emotional pain with their sin. The easy out is to store up and blow up, to lash out, to attack others in your mind, and give them what they deserve.

In your blow-up moment the crucified Savior reminds you of his own patience toward you, the way he suffered long with you and your sin as you mistreated him and disbelieved. It is the same patience that he has toward you now when you fail to love those entrusted to you like he did.

Motherly love is self-sacrificing

In verse 5 Paul says that love "does not insist on its own way." The loving mother is not on a demanding search to secure her own benefit in or outside the home. You have been called to serve and to die. Following Jesus means that you have accepted a

life of cross-bearing that is oriented toward the good of others. This is your model for mothering.

However, there are days when you have been home alone with the kids all day and your flesh begins to cry, "This isn't fair!" You've been at work and are exhausted, and you come home to children who need you engaged until they go to sleep, and all you want is a hot bath and some me-time. You have to die yourself.

When you are prone to self-serve, remember that the servant's place is where to find Jesus. He came to give his life for you. "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many," (Mark 10:45). When you're tempted to keep your life, there he remains, having given up his life for you.

Motherly love is forgiving

Paul goes on in verse 5 and says that love is not resentful. Motherhood requires you to stop counting up wrongs and storing them in the diary of your mind—because that sort of accounting always leads to resentment. Forgiveness is crucial if a mom is going to love her family because the only other option is a growing bitterness toward them, which renders you incapable of love.

A resentful mother can poison the whole family. The kids pick up on it and are unwilling to forgive each other, and the husband is always defensive because he knows that she remembers and holds against him all the wrongs he's done.

Resentment happens when forgiveness is forgotten. Your own wrongs have been piling up since birth like a mound of unwashed socks so old it's started to ferment, and the stench that emanates from a resentful mother is worse than dirty laundry. Jesus has plenty of reason to resent you, but he forgave instead and decided not to treat you according to your sins. Here is where you'll find all of your resentment, hanging on the cross, moving you to forgive as you have been forgiven.

Mom, you need Jesus. You need a long-suffering, others-oriented, forgiving Savior to come along with you and help you in your task. Your family needs a caring, empathetic, nurturing, patiently helping, and forgiving kind of love—the same kind that Jesus already gave to you.