

GOD'S IDEAL WOMAN

by

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MOTHERHOOD

UPON YOU MOTHERS rests the greatest responsibility in the world. Your job is that of molding lives and shaping character. There is dignity, honor, privilege and responsibility in your position as a mother. God expects you to raise your children for Him. How any mother can live in sin and not be a Christian is more than I can understand.

Once during a conversation a woman asked, "How soon should a young mother start praying for her child?" An old family physician happened to be in the group, and he replied, "Twenty years before it is born." The young mother's prayer in the poem by Fay Inchfawn is very touching.

MOTHER, I'M COMING

I heard you, Sweet! And I'll prepare,
So lovingly, your dainty wear.
Oh, I will dream and scheme each day;
And planning, put the pence away.
Then, too, not only will I make
Soft woolly comforts for your sake;
But I will fashion if I can,
Fine raiment for your inner man.
I will not think on evil things,
Lest I should clip my darling's wings.
I'll set my heart to understand
The great Salvation God has planned.
Yes, every atom of my being,
All feeling, tasting, hearing, seeing,
He shall refine, and garnish, too.
'Til be God's woman through and through.
Lord, take me; and if this may be,
Possess my little child through me!

I heard the story once about a mother who went to a circus, and while standing by a bear pit, feeding the bears, her little baby wiggled out of her arms and fell into the midst of the hungry bears. The baby's body was quickly torn to shreds.

The child was lost because she neglected her responsibility and was careless in holding her child. If you mothers are not careful, your boys and girls will fall into the pit of sin, and their immortal souls will be lost. My earnest prayer is that every mother who reads this message will realize fully her great responsibility.

My mother died when I was ten years old; but before she died she taught me to say my little prayers, and she told me of Jesus and His love. I am sure that her earnest prayers led to my conversion when I was sixteen and to my surrender to preach the gospel two years later. "Oh, memories of mother — sweet music of the past!"

Among the treasured pictures
That I've hung on memory's wall,
There's one that's clearer than the rest
And sweeter jar than all:
'Tis a picture of my mother
When I, a little chap,
Was folded in her loving arms,
To slumber on her lap;
I felt her hands caress my head,
I heard her softly say:
"Dear Jesus, take this little life
And use it every day."

There must have been a mighty weight
Behind that simple prayer,
For through the seasons, year on year,
The picture lingers there,
And whether I'm on hill or plain
Or on the deep blue sea.
The memory of that sacred scene
Forever comforts me:
Among the treasured pictures
That I've hung on memory's wall,
My mother's supplication
Is the sweetest one of all.

Someone has said that God couldn't be everywhere at the same time so He has given us mothers. Of course, we know that God is everywhere; He is omnipresent, but that is a beautiful tribute to motherhood.

Two people very dear to Jesus were standing at the foot of the cross: Mary, His mother, and John, the beloved disciple. In that great and awful hour Jesus was not unmindful of His mother. He committed her to the care of John. In the hour of His greatest conflict He thought of His mother's service and love and made provision for her necessities. If we will follow the example of Jesus we will never forget mother.

It is impossible to find fitting words to describe a good mother.

If I could write with diamond pen,
Use ink of flowing gold,
The love I have for my mother dear
Could then not half be told.

Her sympathy has been my stay
Her love my guiding light,
Her gentle hand hath soothed my ills.
She's ever guided right.

A precious friend has mother been,
Stood by me all the way,
No sacrifice has been too great,
Such love one can't repay.

So wonderful has mother been,
So gentle, kind and good.
That I have learned to reverence
That sweet word, "Motherhood."

The word "Mother" is one of the most beautiful words in our language. It is one of the first words that we learn to say. There is power in this dear word. I once read the story of a burglar who returned a stolen watch to the owner because he could not stand to see on the back of the watch the words, "To Son, from Mother, on his birthday."

No painter's brush or poet's pen,
In justice to her fame,
Has ever reached half high enough
To write my mother's name.
Make ink of tears and golden gems
And sunbeams mixed together,
With holy hand and golden pen,
Go write the name of mother.

In every humble tenant house,
In every cottage home,
In marble courts and gilded halls
And on every palace dome:

On mountains high; in valleys low,
In every land and clime,
On every throbbing human heart,
That blessed name enshrine.

Take childhood's light and manhood's age,
Celestial canvas given,
In beauty trace her name and face
And go hang it up in heaven.

Thrice upward to the Heavenly Home,
And midst music soft and sweet,
Thank Jesus for your Mother's name,
And write it at His feet.

Thank God for what consecrated, praying, Christian mothers have meant to the world. The most influential person on earth is a mother. After a young man accepted Christ and joined the church, his pastor asked him what part of his message made him want to live a Christian life. The young man answered, "Nothing that you said, but the way my mother lived in our home." It was not preaching but practicing that won him.

There was once a young man in a penitentiary who refused to take his mother's picture when it was offered him. He replied, "I don't want her picture. I am in this place today because of her influence. She taught me to play cards in our home, and I became a gambler and committed the crime that put me here for life."

Susanna Wesley was the mother of nineteen children. "I raised my children to be Christians by getting hold of their hearts when they were young and never losing my grip," said Mrs. Wesley.

The following statement was made by John Randolph in the House of Representatives: "Today I would be an infidel if it had not been for my godly Mother." No truer statement was ever uttered than the statement, "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world."

A mother in west Florida told me the story of how she went into her garden to work one day, and when she looked around she saw her little girl taking long steps. She said, "Nell, what are you doing?" The little girl replied, "I am stepping in your tracks, Mother, and I know if I step in your tracks, I won't get thorns in my feet." This mother said that she prayed right there that God would help her to be a true Christian so her boys and girls could follow her to heaven.

A dying boy said to his mother, "I am going home now to see Jesus, Mother, and I am going to tell Jesus that you told me how to live for Him." Mothers, are you living a true, consistent, Christian life every day? Are you pointing your children to Heaven?

THE BRAVERY OF MOTHER

A good mother is the bravest person on earth. She forgets her own welfare when her children are in danger. She will sacrifice her very life if needs be for her children. It takes bravery to fight the battles of life that mother fights.

The bravest battle that was ever fought,
Shall I tell you where and when?
On the maps of the world you'll find it not—
'Twas fought by the mothers of men.

Nay, not with cannon or battle shot,
With sword or noble pen,
Nay, not with eloquent word or thought,
From the mouths of wonderful men.

But deep in the walled-up woman's heart—
Of women who would not yield,
But bravely, silently bore their part—
Lo, there is the battlefield.

No marshaling troops, no patriotic song.
No banner to gleam and wave;
But oh, those battles they last so long—
From babyhood to the grave.

THE MUSIC OF MOTHER

The best music in the world is the music that a Christian mother makes as she sings from her heart of love the old hymns. Here is the song that my mother loved to sing:

'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to take Him at His Word;
Just to rest upon His promise,
Just to know, "Thus saith the Lord."

I'm so glad I learned to trust Thee,
Precious Jesus, Saviour, Friend;
And I know that Thou art with me,
Wilt be with me to the end.

In a northern city there were three gamblers who had spent most of the night in sin, when suddenly their conversation turned toward religion.

"No one has true religion," said one of the men.

"You're right," said another. The other man looked over the card table and said, "Fellows, don't say that; I know we don't have any religion, but some folks have."

"Who is it?" asked the other gamblers. He replied, "My wife has genuine religion, and if you don't believe it follow me and I'll prove it to you."

He led the way to a humble house on a back street. When he knocked at the door a sad but sweet-faced woman opened it. It was his wife. With rough language he commanded her to cook them something to eat at that late hour. The men renewed their game of cards as she prepared supper for them. After a few minutes they heard music from the kitchen. She was singing that old hymn:

Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No, there's a cross for everyone,
And there's a cross for me.

One of the gamblers dropped his cards on the table, but before he had time to speak another verse came floating out,

The consecrated cross I'll bear,
Till death shall set me free,
And then go home my crown to wear,
For there's a crown for me.

The man who dropped his cards fell on his knees saying, "If that woman has something in her heart that can make her sing like that under these circumstances, she has in her heart what I want in mine." The other men were under conviction, too; so they called this singing mother into the room to pray for them, and they were all converted that night.

THE KISS OF MOTHER

There is courage, hope, ambition and inspiration in the kiss of a Christian mother. Benjamin West became a painter because of the encouraging kiss of his mother. Many boys and girls have accomplished great things for God and humanity because mother kissed them as children and said, "I believe in you and I know you can do it."

Years ago in an eastern city, according to the testimony of a physician, a little boy's life was saved because his mother, who had been separated from him a long time, kissed him. He started to recover immediately after his mother planted a loving kiss upon his fevered brow.

THE PRAYERS OF MOTHER

Every one hundred per cent Christian home has a family altar. At a convenient time each day the entire family should read the Bible and pray together. My wife and I make it a point to have our devotions in the early morning. The family altar will draw the family closer together and will help to draw each member of the family closer to Christ. Many children are led to Christ around the family altar.

I thank God that my parents had a family altar in our humble home in south Alabama. I learned to love the blessed Bible by hearing my father read it around the fireside at night. We children were taught to pray by our mother when we were very young.

“Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep”
Was my childhood’s early prayer
Taught by my mother’s love and care.

Many years since then have fled;
Mother slumbers with the dead;
Yet methinks I see her now,
With lovely eye and holy brow,

As, kneeling by her side to pray,
She gently taught me how to say,
“Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep!”

I have met the Lord at the throne of grace in many lands. I have prayed while at work and at play. I have talked to my Father in wagons, bullock carts, buses, automobiles, trains, ships, and airplanes; but I agree with the poet when he said that the best place in the world to pray is at mother’s knee.

I have worshipped in churches and chapels.
I have prayed in the busy street.
I have sought my God and have found Him
Where the waves of the ocean beat.
I have knelt in the silent forest.
In the shade of some ancient tree;
But the dearest of all my altars,
Was raised at my mother’s knee.

I have listened to God in His temple;
I have caught His voice in the crowd:
I have heard Him speak when the breakers
Were booming long and loud;
Where the winds play soft in the tree-tops
My Father has talked to me:
But I never have heard Him clearer
Than I did at my mother’s knee.

God make me the man of her vision
And purge me of selfishness!
God keep me true to her standards
And help me to live to bless!
God hallow the holy impress
Of the days that used to be.
And keep me a pilgrim forever

To the shrine at my mother's knee.

THE LOVE OF MOTHER

There is no earthly love like the comforting love of mother. I once heard the story of an angel who left heaven and came to this earth in search of the three most beautiful things that could be found. The angel started back to heaven with a beautiful flower, the smile of a little girl and a mother's love. The flower and smile soon faded and had to be cast aside. The angel swept through the pearly gates of heaven, shouting that the mother's love was the only thing found on earth that would retain its beauty from earth to heaven.

O mother, sweet mother,
There cannot be another
Whose love is as true
And as constant as thine.

In pleasure or trouble
Your love seems to double
God bless you, dear mother,
Sweet mother of mine.

Your love 'tis a mother's
And is different from others,
It seems like a love
That is truly divine.

Your hugs and caressing
Bring down divine blessing.
God bless you, dear mother,
Sweet mother of mine.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST

I thank God for the power, influence and beauty of a Christian mother's love. Jesus only has a love greater than mother's love. Christ died for us, and if we will trust Him, some sweet day by and by, He will take us home to glory where we can live with our Christian relatives and friends throughout eternity.

Are you saved? Do you have the assurance that you have been born again?

“Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

“Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3).

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23).

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31).

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (John 1:12).

“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:9-10).

If you have never been saved, will you immediately make the following decision?

“Being convinced that I am lost, and believing that Jesus Christ died on the cross to save me from sin, I now accept Him as my personal Saviour, and with His help I intend to live the Christian life and confess Him before others.”

If you have been converted, but realize that you have grown cold and indifferent, or have not made a complete surrender to Christ, will you make this decision?

“I now yield my all to Jesus Christ and with His help I intend to live a consistent, consecrated, Christian life.”

Some time ago I stood by my mother’s grave in south Alabama. As the evening shadows were falling I fell on my knees and whispered this prayer to Jesus:

Tell mother I’ll be there,
In answer to her prayer;
This message, blessed Saviour, to her bear!
Tell mother I’ll be there,
Heaven’s joys with her to share.
Yes, tell my darling mother,
I’ll be there.

~ end of chapter 5 ~

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