

Introduction:

1. Springtime brings many wonderful things. It is a favorite time of the year. Tax time is behind us, summer is ahead of us. The month of May brings thoughts of blue skies and sunshine.
 - a. I was raised in Indianapolis. The month of May is really special there. The whole month is lived in anticipation of the Indy 500—"The Greatest Spectacle In Racing."
 - b. As exciting as the month of May was there was something more important than the race. The second Sunday in May was a special day—Mother's Day. My brothers and I had to temper our enthusiasm for speed with a need to remember mom.
 - c. If you are an adult, maybe you can think back on your childhood and how you remembered your mom. It is an important holiday in America.
2. Mother's Day actually had its beginning in England and was known as "Mothering Sunday."
 - a. In America, Julia Ward Howe (author of *Battle Hymn of the Republic*), in 1872, first suggested that it be a national holiday in our country.
 - b. It wasn't until 1914 that the United States Congress passed a resolution making the second Sunday of May a special day. In 1915, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed Mother's Day a yearly national observance. Since then, it has continued to grow in importance.
 - c. Though Mother's Day isn't a biblical holiday, it stands on biblical principles.

The Lesson:

I. Why we remember our moms.

- A. There might be several reasons why we honor mom, but here are five.
 1. Because God told us to honor her, Ephesians 6:2.
 2. Because we owe her our very lives, John 16:21.
 3. Because she was our first teacher, 2 Timothy 3:15a.
 4. Because she was faithful and loyal. If there was one person (especially when we were young) who was loyal to us, it was mom. The story of motherhood is a story of loyalty. A good example is seen in Mary, Jesus' mother, John 19:25-27.
 5. Because, more than anyone else, it was usually mom who made the family work. Maybe dad was the primary breadwinner, but mom manages and makes the home, Titus 2:5.
- B. If you were raised in a reasonably well-adjusted, happy, functioning home it is probably because mom made it work. Would you agree with that?
 1. The value of mom's role in creating a happy home cannot be overstated.
 2. If you have pleasant memories of your childhood, you probably have a mom to thank.

II. We remember mom's place in the home.

- A. As we think about mom's place, we need to remember where the home came from.
 1. Get on the internet and try to find something about the origin of the home and family. You will find all sorts of theories, but almost no mention of the home originating with God.
 2. Marriage, home and family began with God, Genesis 1:27-28; 2:23-24.
 3. Since it began with God, it must be regulated and governed by God. When we, as a people, finally realize that God knows more about the family than anyone else, and that His way is right and best, then we will have happier homes in America. Do you realize it?
 4. The American people may be too far away from God and the Bible to recognize that now, but you and your family can recognize it and be better off for it.
 5. Our modern world is all about promoting self-interest and self-satisfaction. It promotes the individual over the group. "It's not about *family*. It's all about *me*." There may be no greater threat to family life than people being selfish and self-centered.
- B. As we remember mom's place in the home, consider these words from God.
 1. Mom's place in the home is a place of love from her husband, Ephesians 5:25, 28. A dad is to love his kids' mom. Just before the Bible said "honor your...mother" (Ephesians 6:2), it told husbands to love their wives—the kids' mom. He is to give her special attention, tenderness, understanding and reassurance; that is what 1 Peter 3:7 is all about. (These things belong to the wife in the home; they belong to no one else.) Mom's place in the home is a place of love from her husband.

2. Mom's place in the home is a place of respect for her husband, Ephesians 5:33. She contributes so much to family happiness by assisting her husband in fulfilling his role. This is what God intended in Genesis 2:18. He is the leader, but he cannot do it by himself. He needs her encouragement and cooperation. He needs her voice of support, not just to him, but to the kids. She needs not only to give respect but to speak respect before friends, family and church. Her place in the home is a place of respect for her husband.
 3. Mom's place in the home is a place of training for children, Proverbs 22:6. This injunction is given to both parents, but it is often the case that more of this responsibility falls on mom because she typically spends more time with the kids. Children cannot be happy (nor can mom) unless they are trained, taught and disciplined, Proverbs 29:15.
 4. Mom's place in the home is a place of obedience from her children, Ephesians 6:1. We live in a lawless world, a world where almost anything goes. But, not in this home. Children are commanded to obey their mothers, Proverbs 1:8-10ff. Obedience to mom is one of those things that can keep you out of so much trouble! Is your mom mean? Read the piece below about the world's meanest mother.
- C. Three critical factors as you remember mom.
1. Remember mom consistently, throughout the year, not just the second Sunday of May. Love your mother and love her every day. Let her know you love her, for the day is coming when you will neither be able to tell her nor to show her.
 2. Remember mom regardless of her age. Young mothers who wrestle with babies ought to be remembered as well as elderly moms who struggle just get through the day.
 3. Remember mom with your material goods. That's what Jesus taught. He said it was part of honoring mother and father, Mark 7:9-13; 1 Timothy 5:4.

Conclusion:

1. Honor your mother, not because she is perfect and never made mistakes. Honor her because she is your mother. For many of us—out of all the people we have known—our mothers have been the best and most positive force for good in our lives.
3. Do you honor your mother? Do you honor the God who gave you that mother?

THE WORLD'S MEANEST MOTHER

I had the meanest mother in the world. While other kids ate whatever they wanted, I had to eat cereal or eggs and toast for breakfast. When other kids ate cookies for lunch, I had to eat a sandwich, and my supper was different from other kids too.

My sister and two brothers had the same mean mother as I did. She demanded that she know where we were at all times. You would think we were on a chain gang. She had to know who our friends were and what we were doing. She insisted that if we said that we'd be gone for one hour, that it was not going to be one hour and one minute. I am ashamed to admit it, but she actually spanked us, not once, but each time we demanded our own way. Can you imagine a mother actually spanking a child just because he disobeys her? Now you begin to see just how mean she really was.

When we were young we had to be in bed by nine o'clock each night—and up early the next morning. We never got to sleep till noon like our friends. And, while they slept, my mother actually had the nerve to break the child labor laws. She made us work. We had to wash dishes, make beds, learn to cook, and all sorts of cruel things. I believe she laid awake nights just thinking up mean things to do to us. She always insisted upon our telling the truth, even if it killed us—and it nearly did!

By the time we were teenagers, she made life even more unbearable. She wouldn't let our friends honk the horn in front of the house for us to come running. She embarrassed us to no end by actually making them come to the door to get us. She urged us to drag our friends off to Bible class with us. And she insisted that we do our Bible lessons with the same urgency and importance as our school assignments. Can you imagine such a mother!

I forgot to mention that while our friends were dating at age 12 or 13, my old-fashioned mother wouldn't let us date until we were 16! Sixteen, that is, only if we dated to go to school functions like a ball game and other chaperoned events.

A complete failure--that's how I judged my mom. We are all adults now and none of us kids has ever been arrested or beaten his mate. My brothers and sisters love God and love our country, too. And who is responsible for the way we turned out. You are right—our mean mother. Look at all the things we missed. We never got to march in a protest, never took part in a riot, never got drunk on alcohol or high on marijuana; we never wore short shorts. None of us ever dropped out of school; we never moved in with somebody who was not our mate; none of us ever parented a child out of wedlock. We just didn't get to do the things that other kids did. She nearly forced us to grow into God-fearing, educated, hard-working, honest adults.

Now I have three kids. I am trying to raise them the best way I know how. I stand a little taller these days and am even filled with pride when they call me "mean." You see, I can thank God that He gave me "the world's meanest mother."

--author unknown