Called to Courage - Mother’s Day Message

## (Exodus 2:1-10)

Welcome to all of you. I am so glad that you have joined us today as we celebrate Mother’s Day, because this is such a special day. And yet honestly, there is so much that we take for granted, because all of us come to Mother’s Day from a different perspective. And so, depending on the mother we have, had, or wish we had, this day brings a lot of different emotions and feelings to our celebration.

Now, I know Mother’s Day is not a biblical tradition, but it really ought to be celebrated every day in the life of a believer because the Bible tells us,

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother"-which is the first commandment with a promise— "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth” (Ephesians 6:1-3).

And so, it is honoring your father and your mother, that paves the way for you and me, so that it may go well with us, and that we may enjoy long life on earth. In other words, until you learn how to honor somebody in their imperfection, you may never be able to truly honor yourself, because the Bible says,

“He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he who cherishes understanding prospers” (Proverbs 19:8).

And so, today we honor mothers, because to be a mother is a very important thing, mothering is a great responsibility.

In fact, mothers and those who are mothering come in many different forms. For some of you, you carried that baby for nine months before you got to hold it in your arms. But there are also other mothers, stepmothers, grandmothers, and foster mothers, who help a child develop and move from point A to point B in their lives. And then there are mentors, spiritual mothers, who have the immense privilege to help God’s children in their walk with Jesus, as the apostle Paul said,

“We were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children” (1 Thessalonians 2:7).

And so, we want to honor all mothers, birth mothers, stepmothers, foster mothers, and spiritual mothers, because who among us wouldn’t want to be on the receiving end of the promise that it will go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth?

As I was considering the Scriptures this week, there are so many illustrations of mothering that we could consider, but the one mother I want to single out today is the mother of Moses. I thank that in many ways, she has a mothering experience that most of us can relate to; not to mention the experiences of her children. And so, if you could turn in your Bibles to Exodus chapter two, I want to show you a mother that was called to courage.

Moses’ mother was courageous enough to give birth to a baby whose life was being threatened, a child that she didn’t know if she would be able to care for, protect or nurture, and she was wise enough to recognize when she had done all that she could do.

In Exodus chapter 2, we find this newly married couple named Amram and Jochebed caught in the middle of a national crisis, because Moses’ mother became pregnant with him at a time when the Pharaoh said,

“Every boy that is born you must throw into the Nile" (Exodus 1:22).

And so, this national crisis was about to become a family crisis because verse two says,

“Moses’ mother became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months. But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile” (Exodus 2:2-3).

In these two verses, we find Moses born in what seems to be the most inopportune time, but what we must understand is that you can be in the will of God and be in trouble at the same time. In other words, just because you’re born too early or too late, or maybe your situation is unhealthy, the conditions are critical and your family is in crisis, it doesn’t indicate that you’re not in the will of God. In fact, often just the opposite is true, because many times we can run away from trouble and actually forfeit the will of God in our lives.

And so, in Exodus chapter 2, we find that Moses’ mother became pregnant with Moses at a time when the Hebrew people were reproducing so rapidly that the Pharoah mandated birth control. It was during this time when many Hebrew women were giving up their babies to be killed that Moses mother was courageous enough to protect her baby boy. And what we discover in hindsight is that Moses was born right on time, and so if his mother and the midwife hadn’t had the courage to hide the birth of this baby boy from the Pharaoh the promise of God would not have been fulfilled.

You see, it was many centuries before that the Lord had said to Abraham, “Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves…” (Genesis 15:13-14). And so, God was working and reminded his people of his promise to send a deliverer through the prophet Isaiah. He said,

“In the land of Egypt. When they cry out to the Lord because of their oppressors, he will send them a savior and defender, and he will rescue them” (Isaiah 19:20).

And so, God was sending a savior, a deliverer, but first he needed a mother who was courageous enough to go into hiding, to go through the first, second, and third trimester, and was willing to do whatever she had to do to bring Moses into the world.

Moses’ mother was willing, she was courageous, she carried him in isolation, she pushed and birthed that baby when she didn’t know whether it was going to be a boy or a girl. She didn’t know that she was delivering her deliverer, and yet sometimes life is like that, you’ve got to have the courage to live by faith. You’ve got to trust God and,

“Judge nothing before the appointed time” (1 Corinthians 4:5).

Moses’ mother trusted God, she waited, and she did everything she could do to keep the baby a secret. For nine months she protected her child from the Egyptians; for nine months she trusted God, hiding her pregnancy, and protecting her child. When the time came for her to give birth,

“She saw that he was a fine child, and she hid him for three months” (Exodus 2:2).

Now, for three more months she hid him, taking care of him, trying to keep him quiet, but there came a day when she recognized she couldn’t do it anymore. She realized that she may have had the strength to push him out, she may have had the courage to bring him into the world, but she didn’t have the ability to hide him any longer.

And so, Moses’ mother was wise enough to do what was best for her child even if it wasn’t what she would have preferred to do. And the Bible says, “When she could hide him no longer,” she made preparations to make sure that he could escape from the hands of the Egyptians. She didn’t know how but,

“She got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile” (Exodus 2:3).

I think we would all have to admit that it takes a lot of courage to admit your own limitations, to acknowledge that you are part of God’s plan, but you’re not the whole plan. Moses’ mother recognized her limitations, she knew that she had done all that she could do, and she was wise enough to let Moses go.

And so, after three months she gave her baby back to God, she trusted her baby with God, and I believe we can all learn from her, because it doesn’t matter who you are, you’ve got to know when enough is enough, you’ve got to know when to let God who began a good work in you carry it on to completion” (Philippians 1:6). And it doesn’t matter whether you’re a mother or a father, a son or a daughter, you’ve got to know when to take your hands off of a situation and trust God with it.

Moses’ mother placed him among the reeds on the bank of the Nile, because sometimes you just don’t know what to do, you don’t know what’s best for your child, you don’t know who they ought to marry or where they ought to live. And so, realizing that she had done all that she could do, that she couldn’t protect him from the Egyptians any longer, she put her baby in the arms of God, and the Bible says,

“His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him” (Exodus 2:4).

Moses’ mother trusted his future to God, she turned him over to God, and in the process of letting go she handed him over to his foster mother.

The Bible says, when the Pharaoh’s daughter came down to the river to bathe, there was a handoff, a point of transition where the care and well-being of this child went from mother to mother, mother to mentor or caregiver. And so, as the Princess was walking along the riverbank,

“She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her slave girl to get it” (Exodus 2:5).

It’s important to understand that everybody’s situation or circumstances are not the same. I know there are a lot of good families here with good mothers, grandmothers, and great-grandmothers, but it’s not always easy to raise a baby, and a young mother can’t always do it by herself; sometimes you need a spiritual mother, a grandmother, a foster mother, or a stepmother to help. And so, to raise Moses to be who he was going to be, to really bring out the greatness in him, he was going to need more than a mother who was a slave.

When the Pharaoh’s daughter saw the basket among the reeds,

“She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said” (Exodus 2:6).

Now, this could have turned out really bad for Moses, because being a Hebrew baby boy at that time in Egypt wasn’t actually the best-case scenario. And so, for Moses to be the deliverer of his people, he was going to need some help. You know, something like a young girl who would find this little baby crying and feel sorry for him.

And so, this was the perfect set up, God sent Moses a mentor, a foster mother, someone who could teach him things that slaves would never be taught. This was important because Moses would need to be exposed to some things that a Hebrew boy would never be exposed to. In other words, he would need to learn how to walk with his head held high, walking through the courts of the palace, so that one day he would have the confidence to go before kings.

The Pharaoh’s daughter would give Moses opportunities that he never would have had unless somebody picked him up. He needed someone to come alongside of him and mentor him, and I want to honor those of you who are mentors, discipling and encouraging others, because some of us didn’t get everything that we needed from our mother. And so, God sent a mentor to come alongside of you, someone to fill in the blanks, someone to make up the difference.

Now, watch what God does in verse seven, the Bible says,

“Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?" "Yes, go," she answered. And the girl went and got the baby's mother” (Exodus 2:7-8).

And so, God gave this little Hebrew baby favor and Moses’ sister Miriam made the arrangements with the Pharaoh’s daughter. She brought Moses’ mother who didn’t have the means to safely raise her son, but she did have the milk for it, and so the Pharaoh’s daughter said to her,

“Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you.” So, the woman took the baby and nursed him" (Exodus 2:9).

Aren’t you thankful for mentors, foster moms like Pharaoh’s daughter who decided to go bathing? You see, it was because of the Princess and the positioning of Moses’ sister, that Moses was suckled and nursed from his impoverished situation. He was picked up when he had no hope of longevity, discovered in less than desirable circumstances, snatched up when he was resting among snakes and crocodiles.

The Pharaoh’s daughter exposed Moses to a world that he would have never experienced any other way. She was the gateway to his future, bringing him into the palace, where he was able to grow strong and healthy. Within the luxurious accommodations of the Pharaoh, Moses was exposed to education, form, function, and excellence.

The Bible says, “When the child grew older,” his mother took him to Pharaoh’s daughter and he became her son. “She named him Moses, saying, "I drew him out of the water" (Exodus 2:10).

And so, it was Moses’ mother that birthed him, his sister that watched over him, but the Princess took him up and positioned him for greatness. She said, I’m going to call him Moses, because I drew him out of the water, but it was more than just water that she drew him out of. You see, greatness has to be drawn out of you too, greatness is a secret, a mystery inside of you, and it has to be drawn out of you.

That’s why I’m so thankful for mothers, those other mothers, spiritual mothers and mentors, because maybe you can relate, but I didn’t have the ability to get where God was trying to get me to go. I was stuck among the reeds, caught up in the chaos and conflict of the world, I’ve seen those things and I know that many of you have too. You didn’t know what you had in you, but that which was hidden deep down inside of you was drawn out. Just as the Pharaoh’s daughter drew Moses out of the water, we honor our mothers and those others, because we want to acknowledge the great things that the Lord has done.

For some of you, one person birthed you, but another person raised you. One person brought you into the world, but another person finished the job. One person had the milk, and another person had the means. Just consider for a moment the privileges that you take for granted, all the things that you got to see, the places you got to go, because somebody picked you up and took you in their arms. Think for a moment of all the people that God gave you favor with, and the many blessings that you have received, all because God supplemented what you didn’t get in life.

And so, you made it in spite of the snakes, you’re here in spite of the crocodiles, in spite of being abandoned, in spite of the neglect, in spite of the limitations, because you were handed over to another. You are here because God supplemented your life. In other words, whatever your ancestry or your DNA, it was God that got you here because he had a plan for your life.

You see, the truth of the matter is that you’re his child, he knows who you are going to be, and so he used whomever he chose to get you where he was trying to get you. I know it’s Mother’s Day, but we’ve got to give God all the glory, because it is he who said,

“I have chosen you out of the world” (John 15:19).

You see, before you could even think for yourself, there was a defining moment in your life that prepared you for your destiny. For some of you, you had that moment when you decided to have that child, to take care of that child, and to do whatever you had to do for the well-being of that child. Others of you, God drew something out of you that you didn’t even know that you had in you, but today you recognize that you are better than you were, better than your situation, because you stepped into your destiny. You found your purpose and you stood up like a grown man or grown woman and at that moment God drew out of you what he had put inside of you.

You see, greatness is drawn out, and there are some of you that God is drawing things out of right now, maybe some things that you didn’t even know that you had in you. You have been called to courage and so I want to pray for you on this Mother’s Day. I want to pray for those of you whom like Moses, greatness is being drawn out of you right now. Let’s pray.

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