

5-9-21 Mother's Day

Sermon: A Mother's Love

Scripture: 1 John 5:1-6, CTW Psalm 98

Hymns: 20, 600, 776

Theme: There is no doubt that Jesus is our leader and teacher. But it is also just as clear that God sends people to lead and teach us as well. In that category, God made mothers and today as we honor them, we will reflect on how all this works for the kingdom.

I. Introduction:

A. In honor of Mother's Day, Today I want us to look at God's intention for those He chooses to be mothers.

Rumor has it, one day, an angel was helping God create this thing called Mother.

At one point, the Angel inquired of God why there was a delay in the production.

The Lord turned & said, "Have you read the specs on this model? She is supposed to be completely washable, but not plastic. She is to have 180 moving parts, all of them replaceable.

She is to have a kiss that will heal everything from a broken leg to a broken heart. She is to have a lap that will disappear whenever she stands up. She is to be able to function on black coffee & leftovers. And she is supposed to have six pairs of hands."

"Six pairs of hands," said the angel, "that's impossible." "It's not the six pairs of hands that bother me." said the Lord, "It's the three pairs of eyes. She is supposed to have one pair that sees through closed doors so that whenever she says, 'What are you

kids doing in there?' she already knows what they're doing in there."

"She has another pair in the back of her head to see all the things she is not supposed to see but must see. And then she has one pair right in front that can look at a child that just goofed & communicate love & understanding without saying a word."

"That's too much." said the angel, "You can't put that much in one model. Why don't you rest for a while & resume your creating tomorrow?"

"No, I can't," said the Lord. "I'm close to creating someone very much like myself. I've already come up with a model who can heal herself when she is sick - who can feed a family of six with one pound of hamburger - and who can persuade a nine year old to take a shower."

Then the angel looked at the model of motherhood a little more closely & said, "She's too soft." "Oh, but she is tough," said the Lord. "You'd be surprised at how much this mother can do."

"Can she think?" asked the angel. "Not only can she think," said the Lord, "but she can reason and compromise and persuade."

Then the angel reached over & touched her cheek. "This one has a leak," he said. "I told you that you couldn't put that much in one model." "That's not a leak," said the Lord. "That's a tear."

"What's a tear for?" asked the angel. "Well it's for joy, for sadness, for sorrow, for disappointment, for pride." You see, a mother is supposed to be a "SURVIVOR"

God intends Mothers to be survivors!

II. What does it really mean to be a survivor? In our world today we talk about all kinds of survivors.... abuse, cancer and

the list goes on. It's a great thing to be a survivor but-I want to do more than just survive, I want to overcome.

A. Perhaps you've heard of the TV series called Survivor. This program aired HUNDREDS OF episodes in over 20 seasons. They supposedly aired their last show in 2020, but the rumor is they are coming back soon. It is hard to keep that show down!

Over 50 million people watch it.

The show is about a group of people who volunteer to be marooned on an island---the island is apparently a really tough place to survive and the last person who is voted off the island wins \$1 million.

So, what does it really mean to be a survivor? Mother's Day put me in mind of what a definition should be! In our world today we talk about all kinds of survivors... Survivors of abuse, cancer survivors-and the list goes on. It's a great thing to be a survivor but let me tell you something-I want to do more than just survive.

B. The Bible actually never uses the word survivor but it uses a word I like much more— overcomer. And the word in the Greek is NIKAO.

In case that word looks familiar to you it is where we get our word **Nike**. It means to **overpower, to win, to be victorious;** to get the victory. And all of that is much better than surviving. So, you need to picture your Mom in Nike Sneakers, 24/7!

What John does here in the final chapter of his first letter is that he shows us exactly how to get the victory, how to survive and overcome and he does so by answering several questions.

The first question is this... what is it we must overcome? In **1 John 5: 1-4** John tells us here that the world is our enemy, and that God gave us **Commandments of right behavior** that would **guide us in our journey**.

Now be careful here and realize what the world is. We're not talking about people of course, were not talking about the planet Earth---it's not our enemy---in fact the Bible teaches us to take care of it.

III. What John is talking about here that our mother's help us to overcome, falls into three areas described earlier in 1 John 2:16

- A. The lust of the flesh.
- B. The lust of the eyes.
- C. The pride of life. So let's look briefly at each one.

A. The lust of the flesh refers to passion. We are all to be passionate about something but John warns us that this is an area where all of us have to be careful. We tend to think immediately that John is referring to a desire that is sexual in nature.

I'm not saying that it is not-I just want us to understand **that** is not the only reference here. What John is telling us is this... when you start becoming passionate about something in life, be sure it lines up with God's purposes for your life. Those are the things we should be passionate about. The lust of the flesh refers to passion. Moms are to guide us in that struggle, when as kids we start getting passions for life.

B. The lust of the eyes refers to possession. When we see things and we immediately think, I have to have that. I have to have that now. I can't wait another day. And the lust of the eyes can be very dangerous to your bank account.

Especially if you have a credit card in your hand when you see this particular thing. Jesus reminds us not to lay up, set aside

treasures for ourselves but we sure do it. Jesus said to focus on things that will last-for eternity. The lust of the flesh refers to passion. The lust of the eyes refers to possession.

How many times as a child did we stomp our feet and shout NOW! Moms are to set an example for us in that regard and help us learn to temper our passions.

C. The pride of life refers to position. Our position in life. This is who comes first and guess what: it is almost always **us** who comes first.

At Christmas we often describe joy as being Jesus first, Others second. Yourself last. Then we sit down and write out our Christmas list. Our want list comes first because we usually put ourselves first. John would tell us to rethink our position in life, don't be so full of pride so full of ourselves.

Step down a notch or two and lift Jesus up a notch or two. Jesus said to be of good cheer because he has already overcome the world. The good news is we too can be overcomers. What is it we must overcome? The world.

So, is this how can we become Overcomers? Let me remind you that in this life we will face powerful opposition. We will face powerful spiritual warfare. We will face tribulation. Jesus promised it. Moms are to become and remain our anchor in times of tribulation.

This is what Helen Keller said: "the marvelous richness of human experience would lose something of rewarding joy if there were not limitations to overcome. The hilltop hour would not be half as wonderful if there were no dark valleys to traverse."

The truth is that it is the difficulties in life that give us the opportunity to experience and understand what victory really means.

It should be no surprise when these trials come, but God gave us Moms to help guide us through rough waters.

IV. Actually in today's passage, John says we have three resources—all three are necessary if we want to be overcomers. I believe that the fourth resource we are given is MOM.

A. First, John tells us it requires a new birth. Verse four. We must be born of God, as Jesus told Nicodemus as John reminds us here, we must be born again.

Born of water. Physical birth. Born of blood. Spiritual birth. There is not a single lost person who can say that they live a victorious life today if they lack this ingredient.

John is not saying that just knowing Christ will automatically fill your life with joy but he is saying it is the starting point. Without Christ our lives are running on empty. Also, we need to know that God will put people in your path along the way to guide you in the right direction.

My mom was the one who introduced my sister and I to Christ and the benefit of being born again in His love. For my Mom and her family, Christ and His church were the core, around which all other things revolved. While that did not mean as much to me back then, I am very thankful for it now.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Ardmore, Pa., is where it all began for us. I recently was given the honor of preaching Mom's sister Shirley's funeral in the same pulpit in front of which I learned about Jesus all those years ago. For me, being there validated the concept of my life's purpose. Thanks, Mom!

B. Second John tells us it requires a belief. Verses 4-5. You do not become an overcomer by trying. You become an overcomer by trusting. By exercising faith. It is...

- What Abraham did when he went to the mountain to sacrifice his son

- What Peter did when he stepped out onto the water
- What Joshua did we placed his foot into the flooded Jordan River
- What Mary did when she agreed to bear God's son.

None of these decisions were easy and the decisions you and I are called upon to make are also not easy. If these life decisions were easy we would not need that thing called faith.

Mom's teach us to trust, to have faith, and to believe.

C. Third, John tells us it requires the blood of Jesus. Verse 6

Verse six tells us that if we want to overcome sin; if we want to defeat death, there is only one way-it is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The Bible says there is no forgiveness of sin without the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

Fortunately these are not three different requirements. They are actually one. New birth, belief, the blood all take place at the same time. We are born again because of our belief in the powerful blood of Jesus Christ.

These are not three separate things that we must do! They are all part of the decision we must make. We are born again when we by faith accept the payment that Jesus made through his blood. Mom's are a vital part in guiding us through the process we must go through to make that decision.

John tells us in **Revelation 12:11**, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death."

Moms are to insure that we are exposed to that word and find guidance to get through the process of decision-making. Now you may be thinking at this point, "Where are the fathers in all this?" We will talk about that next month...trust me!

V. We can overcome the obstacles that we face in this life through the strength that we receive in the Lord. And that strength is meant to filter down to us through both of our parents and mothers seem to be given a primary role here.

The believer is reminded in **1 John 4:4**, "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" If you have been born again, you have already been made an overcomer in Him.

A. We have already been given the victory through the blood of Jesus Christ. Our challenge now is to live in the light of the victory that has already been won. You can see where mothers help in that regard.

A mother decided to play a trick on the men in her family one day. All the guys came over to watch the Dallas Cowboys play football. In this particular game the Cowboys were behind the entire game but not by much. As the game was drawing to a close, she told the guys that she was still confident that her Cowboys were going to win. Even down to the last minute.

And to their amazement the Cowboys did win. They asked her, how can you be so confident? She replied that they were watching a recording, not the actual game.

So she had already seen the final score! Mom's have been known to do things like that from time to time to keep us humble!

If you have read the last page in the Bible you know that we win. It is already a fact. Mothers seem to have a sixth sense about that kind of stuff.

Mom's understand there are obstacles we are all called to overcome, and they know that because of the shed blood of Jesus Christ, we can indeed overcome them, sooner or later.

Amen? Let us pray...