

Building up the Temple ■ A Mother's Influence

by Aaron Hurst

This sermon celebrates and honors mothers, reflecting on the impact of godly mothers through personal stories and biblical examples. It emphasizes the significant influence mothers have in shaping their children's worldview and eternal values, highlighting the sacrificial love and faith that mothers exhibit. The message encourages mothers to see themselves as builders of temples for the living God in their children's lives, inspiring them to persevere faithfully and trust in God's plan for their children.

Scripture: Exodus 2:1, Hebrews 11:23, 2 Timothy 1:5, Proverbs 22:6, Psalm 127:3, Ephesians 6:1, Titus 2:3, Isaiah 66:13, Proverbs 31:26, Galatians 6:9

Topics: "The Influence of Godly Mothers", "Building a Legacy of Faith"

Description

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Transcript

Happy Mother's Day to all the mothers today. I am grateful that our nation does recognize and honor motherhood and set a special day of remembering and thinking about our mothers. Today we give honor to the mothers.

As I was here in the church house this morning and just thinking about all the mothers of this congregation, my heart was just overwhelmed with gratitude and thankfulness for the faithful godly mothers of this congregation. Mothers, when I think of my dear mother, I believe right now you should be seeing a picture of my mother. You know, when I think of my mother, she was so full of energy and service and love to her family.

She was cheerful, she was faithful, she was caring. I don't know that I can remember ever hearing my mother complain. She was thankful.

She blessed my life immensely, more than I could ever tell. So I give honor to my mother today, though she is not with me for 20 plus years. She's gone to be with the Lord.

The next picture that I'd like you to take a look at is with my mother and my grandmother. And my grandmother, Minnie Snyder. Oh, she was something.

She just was so glad to see her grandchildren. And I guess maybe we were extra special because my siblings and I were her only grandchildren. She had only one daughter that married.

She had another daughter, my aunt Mabel, that never married. They also had some sorrows in her life growing up and her marriage. They had some stillborn children and they had a fine young boy about the age of one and a half or so who died of appendicitis because back then in the early 1900s that could be fatal.

But my grandma Snyder, oh Minnie, she was so full of joy and love. I just loved going to her house. And as a little guy, my mom, Grandma Snyder, and Mabel and some others, maybe some of my older sisters would be sitting around the quilting and I would love to go under the quilt in that living room.

And it was just such a spot of sort of, I don't know, it just felt really special being under the quilt and hearing them talking and quilting. Oh, Minnie Snyder, born in 1900. Wow, and I got to spend a lot of time with my grandma.

Sometimes we'd go up there and just be with her because, yeah, she was just very special to us. And she also took much care of my older brother Lester who was born crippled and never walked in his life. So we just had a real sweet spot for Grandma Snyder.

Minnie, sweet grandma. Let's see here. I believe the next picture we'll put up there is of the home where I grew up in.

And now there would be my Aunt Mabel Snyder and Minnie Snyder and my mom at the farm where I grew up over on Brethren Church Road. Many precious memories of my dear mom, working out in the garden with her, working in the kitchen with her. Because you see, I was the youngest of the children.

And when dad didn't have work for me, he'd say, now today you can help mom. So I had a lot of special times with mom. I think the next picture we want to pull up is my dad-in-law, mom-in-law, Grandma Weaver.

And she, Grandma Weaver, she was also very energetic and very fun-loving. And she was just full of joy and, oh, laughter and maybe sometimes even a little bit of a temper. And she just loved to have some humorous times with us.

And I remember one day that I thought, I'm going to see if I can get one on Grandma Weaver. Her name's Alta. And as you know, we named our youngest daughter after her, Grandma Weaver, Alta.

And anyway, when our first child was to be born, that was 1980, I teased her a couple days before the birth of our first child. I said, you know, I'm going to give you a call on April 1st and pretend like we had our baby, you know, and see if I can, you know, trick you. And she just laughed so good-naturedly.

But you know what happened? April 1st, our first child was born, Andrea Jean, and here I was in the hospital with my wife and the baby was just born, and it was April 1st. So I called from the phone at the hospital, you know, we didn't have cell phones in those days, that was pre-cell phones. Anyway, I called my mother-in-law and I said, I said, we've, we had our baby.

And she said, oh yeah, I guess, I, yeah, I hear you, you know. And that's all I could say. I got choked up with emotion.

And then she heard Andrea crying in the background. And I handed the phone to Janice and then she knew it was for real. Yeah, Grandma Weaver, Alta, lots of precious memories.

And she's also gone to be with the Lord. She's no longer with us. Well, when I think of mothers, here's the sweetest, most treasured mother of all.

This is my beloved wife, and she's holding one of our grandchildren, Arlen's little Adeline. And I am so honored and blessed that the Lord God chose to give to me, Janice, to be the mother of my children, of our children. I thank the Lord for a self-sacrificing, loving, caring mother to all of our children.

Thank you, Janice. I love you. God bless you.

Now we turn the clock back to about 1986, maybe. And that's a picture of my beloved wife and I, and our little children in front of our old station wagon, loaded down. And I think we were ready to head up to New York State to see my brother and sister up there.

Oh, yes. Those were the busy days, Janice, when we were just really getting into the family, young children, and just a lot of, a lot of blessing, a lot of joy, and a lot of work also, yes. But I praise God for my beloved wife, faithful wife, who poured out her life for our children and for me also.

Happy Mother's Day, Janice. Happy Mother's Day to all you mothers. And thank you, children.

I thought that was so special. Thank you, Kevin, for having the children share about what they love and appreciate about mom. Oh, I just love it.

My mom, she's so sweet to me. She's kind and gentle. I love it when she holds me.

She's very considerate. She snuggles with me. She cuddles me.

Mom is my best friend. I am able to tell her everything. Praise God.

I like it when my mom takes me to grandma's house. I'm so glad, mom, you make meals for us. Thank you, mom, for making my favorite breakfast, grits and eggs.

Oh, my mom was that way too. She knew what we liked, and she would often make her meals around what her children enjoyed. She does so much work for us.

Oh, yes. She buys me things. Mom adds a lot of fun in our home.

She helps me when I'm trying to learn a song on the piano, and I'm getting stuck and have a difficult time. You know, that reminds me of when I was about 10 to 12 years old, and my dad or brother acquired an old cheap banjo, and I was determined to learn this thing. And, of course, you know, when somebody's just starting to learn an instrument.

After a while, my parents said, Aaron, upstairs, into the bedroom, and shut the door. Because, you know, I try to get that picking figured out, and he was just doing the same thing over and over. Yes, thank you, mom and dad, for being patient with me.

But, you know, there was a problem with me being upstairs in the bedroom making that loud banjo music or noise, because when they would call for me, I couldn't hear them, because I was making lots of noise, and the door was shut. So, they figured out a way to get my attention without having to come up the steps. They'd throw a shoe up the hall, up the steps, and it would hit right up against the door.

Oh, lots of fun times with my dear mother and daddy. Yes, yes. A bit more on the serious side.

My mom, she prays for me when I'm struggling. Thank you for sharing that. A mom who believes in me and believes in prayer.

I'll be forever grateful for all your prayers. Mom seeks me out to talk to me, to hear me out, listen to my views, even the more wacky ones. Mom's interested in the things I'm interested in.

She helps me when I get hurt. She plays games with me. She loves to read stories to me.

You know, I remember that as well. Some of my early recollections of my mother are sitting on the sofa and snuggling up beside my mom while she would read Bible stories to me. My mom, she's an amazing teacher.

No mom like her. Yes, that's good. Every child should feel that way about their mother.

My mom's the best. There's no mom like her. She's an amazing teacher.

She is so wonderful. She is so inspiring to all of us. Praise God.

Well, I think the children preached the message for us today, didn't they? That's so encouraging. I want to give honor to the mothers. You know, I thought today about a mother's influence.

The word influence has the meaning of the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone. Influence, to impress upon, to mold and to form, to shape a worldview. How our children see the world, what they think, what they believe, what is proper, what is improper, what is right, what is wrong, what is good.

Children are so impressionable in their first years. I have two quotes, one from a Russian revolutionary, Lenin, who led the country in 1917 in a revolution and was the leader after that. And Lenin said this, give me four years to teach the children and the seed I have sown will never be uprooted.

Another quote, this one's very familiar, we've heard this one quite often, the hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world. This is from William Ross Wallace. And he is extolling motherhood as the preeminent force of change in the world.

This poem was first published in 1865. We want to look briefly at mothers in the Bible as examples who were a tremendous influence upon their children. And as I thought of this message, I always struggle with titles.

What do you what do you title the message? Well, we could just say a mother's influence. But then I thought of this, I thought of the mother's influence who influenced their sons and their daughters for God, for eternal good. And I thought of this, you know, mothers, it's easy to get lost in the everyday demands upon your life with the little children.

And I thought of this, we are, mothers are building up the temple. Mothers are building up the temple. Now we sing that little song, building up the temple.

But what I'm thinking about is mothers who are training their children and nurturing their children, they are building up the temple of God. Why do I say that? Mothers are building a magnificent temple because ye are the temple of God. Ye are the temple of the living God.

We, individually, collectively are the temple of God. For the habitation of the spirit of God, this is amazing. And this is quoted quite often in the New Testament and is quoted in the Old Testament.

Ye are the temple of the living God. I will dwell in them, says God. I will be their God, and they shall be my sons and my daughters.

Wow. So think about it, mom. You're building a temple.

You're not merely saying, oh, don't do that. Rather, come here, let me show you. Do this.

Influence, to win over. A mother's love and influence melts resistance. Resistance.

I have seen it. I have felt it. When there was a resistance in my heart and a defense, mother's love, mother's example, melts that resistance, breaks down those defenses.

A powerful influence. Think of mothers holding your children, giving birth, of course, and then holding the child in infancy for how many hours? For hours and hours, cuddling, bonding, nurturing that child, sometimes even at night, when maybe she'd rather be asleep and needs her sleep. Holding that infant, talking, singing, laughing, smiling, and oh, the joy when that little baby smiles at you, and when the little baby begins to cue and laugh.

Feeding, bathing, clothing, that little baby, that precious gift from God, oh, the value of your child. Jesus spoke of the value of children. He said, their angels do always behold the face of their father in heaven.

He said, don't offend them. Don't be careful. Be careful not to offend them.

Said some awful strong words. It'd be better for a millstone to be hung about the neck of one who offends one of these little ones. Children, precious, precious to us, special, because they're precious to God.

Jesus took up those little children in his arms and blessed them. You know, in the first year of a child's life, that infancy, mother's there 24-7. You know, dad's got to go to work, but mother, she's there 24-7.

That's 8,760 hours with mom that first year. Oh, praise God. And the child begins to crawl, begins to walk, and they're in that toddler stage.

And who's there for the greater part of the day? It's mom. It's mom. Very early formative years of a child is tremendously influenced by you, mom.

Thank you, mom. Thank you, mothers. Thank you, godly mothers.

Thank you for giving up careers. Thank you for giving up everything else, fashion, whatever else. It pales.

It's like trash compared to a child who loves God. And it's a temple of the living God. No greater joy than that my children walk in the Lord, in the ways of the Lord.

Oh, praise God. Mothers, it's worth every minute, every sacrifice. And you know, you might think, wow, this sounds like it's such a hard, almost impossible job.

You know, I'm not here today to try to give you more list of to-dos, but I want to encourage you just being who you are in God's new creation in you. That's all you need to do. It's to just walk in the love of Christ.

Be faithful. And remember when you're changing a diaper, when you're cleaning a dirty nose, when you're putting on a band-aid of a wound, you're building up a temple. You're building up a temple for the Lord.

Moses. I look a little bit at Moses. The background of Moses' birth, the time frame, the Israelites were in slavery.

The Hebrews were in slavery at that time. Pharaoh had made a decree that all the baby boys need to be killed. Don't let them live.

He told the midwives, when it's a baby boy, you kill the baby. That's the time frame into which Moses was born. Tells us that Amram took unto him Jehovah his father's sister to wife.

That's in Exodus 6:20. Tells us in Numbers 26:59 that Jehovah bear Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. Let's turn to Exodus chapter 2 for some scriptures.

Exodus chapter 2. There ran a man from the house of Levi and took a wife, a daughter of Levi, and a woman conceived and bear a son. And when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him for three months. And when she could no longer hide him, she took him for an ark of bulrushes and daubed it with slime and with pitch and put the child therein.

And she laid it in the flags by the river bank. And his sister stood afar off to wit what would be done to him. And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river.

And her maidens walked along the river's side. And when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened it, she saw the child.

And behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him and said, this is one of the Hebrew's children. Then said her sister to Pharaoh's daughter, shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women that she may nurse a child for thee? And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, go.

And the maid went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, take this child away and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child and nursed it.

And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses, and she said, because I drew him out of the water. This is quite a testimony.

Jehobit took her own son and nursed him. And it says in verse 10, and the child grew. Then it continues to say that she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son.

I don't know how long Jehobit had with little Moses. There are some thoughts of the age at which a child was weaned, the age at which a child was considered to be able to be leaving from their mother in a situation like this, and to be placed into another's care, would have maybe been around six, seven years old, maybe up to 10. Do you have any word on that, Brother Daniel? Would that be, have you ever studied that out? Yeah, it apparently was for the early formative years, quite a few years.

When we think of today in nursing and weaning, it's quite young. But I believe this definitely was quite a few years, because we then consider the testimony of Moses. And we will look at Hebrews 11, verse 23.

Turn with me to Hebrews 11, 23. I have a timer here, and I started it, but I delayed to start it right away, so I'm not sure where I had all my time. Hebrews 11, verse 23.

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw that he was a proper child, and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. This tells us that Jehobit and Amram were a man and a woman, parents of faith. They had such a faith in God that they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

When their son was born, they knew that God had a plan for their son. My dear brother, sister, today, dear mothers here today, God has a plan for your son. He has a call for your son to be the temple of the living God, dwelling in him.

Wow. Eternal purpose. They were not afraid of the king's command.

By faith Jehobit took that little boy when she could no longer hide him at three months, and made a basket, and dubbed it with mortar and pitch, and made it watertight, and put her precious little son in that basket, and put that basket out by some rushes in the Nile River. Does anybody else know what lived in the Nile River at that time? Crocodiles, you're right. Crocodiles were in that river.

That mother had faith in Almighty God, who is the sovereign Lord and master over everything, including the crocodiles. I can put my baby in that basket, in that crocodile-infested river, and he will be safe, because God is watching over my son. And God is going to use that to order his life and his circumstances into his plan.

You talk about by faith? Yes. Well, read verse 24. By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

How did Jehovah do this, that she instilled such an eternal value into her son, that he could go from her house into the palace, the lavish palace of Pharaoh, and be taught by those teachers in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and yet be unfazed and unmoved, be exposed to all that sin, all of that pomp and show, all that pride, all that money, all that prestige. But he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. His worldview, his eternal perspective, was so stamped on his heart, that what mom put into him in those first formative years, all of the teaching, and all of the lavish pleasures, and lustful lifestyle, and money, and everything, Pharaoh couldn't wash it out.

I want to encourage you mom today, you live your life of faith before your children, and you walk your life of faith with God before your children, doing the ordinary mediocre tasks as they might seem, and invest your life into your children, because you are building up a temple for God to inhabit, for your son and your daughter to be used of the Lord, to be a faithful servant of God. It's amazing, all of the wisdom of Egypt did not wash out the mother's influence and teaching. Yes, Aram had something to do with it too, but remember it was primarily Jehovah.

Why do I say that? Because there was heavy slavery upon the Hebrews, and they kept increasing their demands, and lessening their supplies. So they had to work longer and harder. So Aram was out there with the slaves from morning till night, very likely from crack of dawn till dark.

He had very little time to invest in his son, but oh Jehovah, how do you think she prayed for him? How do you think she nurtured him, and taught him about the Almighty God, and the eternal values that Moses rejected the pleasures and the treasures of Egypt? And by faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. Mothers, you are the primary influence in the early formative years of your children. The Lord bless you.

I'll put up one last image. These little boys, my three little sons. This was back in about probably mid-80s as well.

God's purpose for your sons and your daughters is that they shall be temples, temples of the living God. You know, I just want to pray a blessing over you. We could look at Timothy.

We could look at his mom and how she raised him up. Timothy's father was a Greek. He was not a believer, but his mother was a believer, and the Bible tells us in Timothy she was full of faith.

She was faithful, and Timothy had a grandmom who was faithful. God bless you, dear mothers. I just want to pray a blessing upon you.

Father, Father, I come in Jesus' name. Lord, my heart is just thrilled and just overwhelmed with gratitude when I think about my mom and when I think about my grandmom and, Lord, when I think about my wife and when I think about all the dear mothers of this congregation, faithful mothers, loving unconditionally, sacrificing for their children. Oh, God, I pray you will encourage every mother.

I pray, Father, you will strengthen every mother. I pray you will inspire her to see the temple that she's building. No, I'm not just soothing over wounds and scrapes and cuts, and I'm not just settling disputes between the children, and I'm not just trying to keep them clean and changing divers and cooking meals, but I'm building a temple.

I'm building a temple for the living God to occupy. Yes, Lord, inspire every mother. Bless every mother.

Oh, God, strengthen them. Give them courage and hope and faith to persevere faithfully, leaning upon the arm of Jesus. Lord, just being full of the Holy Ghost who fills our hearts with joy and gladness, and our families are blessed.

Our children are so grateful. They say, Mom, you're the best mom in the world, and we moms, we know we fail. We dads, we know we fail, but, oh, God, you are so good, and you are the all-sufficient God, and there's nothing too hard for you, and you are the God who helpeth us.

So, Lord, we thank you. We thank you for motherhood. Bless the moms.

Bless the children. May they rise up and call their mother blessed. May they honor their mother that it may be well with them, and they may indeed be those temples of the living God all their days.

This we ask in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Well, thank you for letting me share that Mother's Day message with you today.

God bless you, each one, and for some of those of you who long to have children, but God never opened your womb, many of you are mothers indeed. You minister to many others. You reach out, and you serve, and you bless others.

So, don't feel today like this message has no place in my heart because God never gave me children. Many of you have shown by your life's example that you indeed are a mother, and the barren have more children than she that had children. So, God bless each of you, and comfort your hearts, and just cause you to triumph in Jesus' name.

Hallelujah.

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