

A Lasting Impact

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[0 : 0 0] Turn to 1 Samuel chapter 1, 1 Samuel chapter 1. Today is a day that we celebrate precious gifts from the Lord. We celebrate mothers and we celebrate those other mothers as well.

Those ladies that invest in the lives of those that are not their own children but make such a world of difference. Ladies, I just want you to know you're a blessing. You have a delicate way about you that we don't understand.

You have a special touch that we fail to have. You have a way that we can't describe your blessing. Now, don't let me confuse you.

We don't understand you. We may not always get it. We don't know exactly where you're aiming or why, but we thank God for you.

Case in point, some elementary school kids were asked a series of questions about mothers and their responses are telling. One question was, why did God make mothers?

[1 : 0 6] One kid said, to help us get out of there when we're getting born. Ask another question. How did God make mothers? A child said, magic plus superpowers and a lot of stirring.

And another child said, God made my mom just like he made me. He just used bigger parts. Another question. What ingredients are mothers made of? One child said, God makes mothers out of clouds, angel hair, and everything nice in the world.

And one dab of mean. Why did God give you your mother and not some other mother? And one child said, God knew she likes me a lot more than other people's mamas do.

And the other one said he did because we're related. So, own it. And I'm telling you, if they asked men that, it'd probably sound about the same thing. So, there's a lot we don't understand, but a whole lot that we like.

And today, I want to make sure that we celebrate you ladies. But it's also a day for more than that. Billy Graham's mother was asked one time, or she said, she said, I don't believe Christian women want Mother's Day to be a day of self-congratulations.

[2 : 2 6] Rather, a day of soul-searching. That they might gain a new awareness of the vital role God has given them in the home, in the lives of their children, and in the life of their nation as a whole.

Amen? Or, oh, me. Either way, regardless, I believe that it should be that way. Ladies, you're a gift from God to us. Not a possession, but a treasure that is shared.

And you can't spend your time on earth any better than being godly, quite honestly. It makes you a better person. It strengthens those around you. And the impact of a godly woman's life is absolutely tremendous.

I heard about an elderly lady that came into a local country church, and she was being helped up the stairs by an usher. And he asked, where would you like to sit?

She said, I'd like to sit on the front row, please. And he said, you really don't want to do that because the pastor's really boring. And she asked him, she said, do you know who I am?

[3 : 35] And he said, no. And she said, I'm the pastor's mother. And the usher said, do you know who I am? And she said, no. And he said, good. Good. So.

And considering the cohorts that are in the foyer and on the sidewalk before the service, that scares me to death, quite honestly. Ladies, your impact is tremendous.

I've learned more and more in ministry that it's not just mothers that have a tremendous impact. There are so many ladies, some blessed with their own children, some not, some not yet.

But so many who have such an impact on the children of the church. My own daughters have benefited greatly from many who have invested in them and still invest in them.

God has entrusted the children of this church, entrusted us with these children. And the ministry opportunities that we have with these children are led by good, godly ladies that guide and correct and love and nurture.

[4 : 41] It was said years ago and in a book that it said it takes a village to raise a child. I don't believe that. Have you ever seen the village people? I got news for you.

I don't want them raising my child. No, folks, it takes church. It takes a church. And if you don't know who those people are, that's fine. Just thank God you don't.

But anyway, and you can take them off the screen. I don't know what you're going to put up there, but take them off. But anyway, I don't want to look at them. Our children need good, godly, nurturing ladies who are continuing to grow in their faith.

So how can mothers in the home and ladies in the church make the greatest amount of difference? I believe the mother of Samuel, her name was Hannah, gives us a great example.

Hannah was distressed about something that distresses many women and many families in some of the most difficult times people experience, and that's infertility.

[5 : 46] If you've suffered with this or are close to someone who has, you've seen and felt the pain. It's horrible. And in the day in which Hannah lived, it was even worse because there was no way of even imagining what the problem was, and it was thought to have been a curse.

It was something that women harassed other women about, something that society would shame. It was, and it is painful. However, I want you to notice where Hannah takes her pain.

In 1 Samuel 1, verse 10, it says, She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly. She wept bitterly.

God blessed her. She had a child and noticed. And notice what, notice how she responded to that. In 1 Samuel 1, verse 27 and 28, a focal passage for us today.

For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my petition that I made to him. Therefore, I have lent him to the Lord. As long as he lives, he is lent to the Lord.

[6 : 57] And the man who heard her worshipped there with her. Ladies, do you want to make an impact? In fact, I believe the life of Hannah gives us great ways to make an impact on those who God's entrusted to us.

It may seem counterproductive, but quite honestly, ladies, the way to make the greatest impact is to pray. Is to pray.

Why pray when you can do something about it? Well, the reality is prayer comes when you realize that there's nothing you can do outside of the counsel of God.

Outside the will of God. Prayer is surrendering your will to his. And in verse 10 that I read a few moments ago, it tells us that she was deeply in distress.

She wept bitterly. And giving all that she had, she gave that in prayer. There are going to be times like that in your life. There's going to be times when you want a child.

[8 : 02] There's going to be times when you have a child. There's going to be times when you raise a child. Every step of the way, there's going to be times of difficulty. But give that matter to the Lord. Pray every step of the way.

Pray anywhere. Pray anytime. Pray alone. Pray with others. Pray quietly. Pray ecstatically.

Pray again. Pray fervently. You are approaching the throne of a holy God. Pray sincerely. God knows your heart anyway. Pray.

Be honest with him. Pray faithfully. Regularly and with faith that God will answer when you pray. Pray purely. Keep your heart right.

Keep it without a hindrance to step in the way. Pray thankfully. Don't forget what he's already done. Sometimes in the midst of our circumstances and the weight of it, we forget what God's already done in our past.

[9 : 08] Pray expectantly. Give it to him. Rest it with him. Leave it with him. Pray persistently. Pray persistently. Christ told us to ask and then to seek and then to knock.

Pray that his will will be done. Surrender your will to his. Pray in Jesus' name. You can only come to the throne because of Christ. So let your prayers. And this is what it means to pray in Jesus' name.

Not only to say it, but to mean it. And that is to pray with your prayers marked by his character. His. Your prayers marked by his ways. The reality is the busyness of our days and the lack of focus of our minds and the loud volume of the world in which we live will distract the most powerful time that we can invest with our family.

And the reality is a lot of that time will be away from family. Praying. Alone. Before the Lord. Now I'll be honest with you. Prayer is not easy.

And there's a reason for that. There's power in prayer. And so all demonic forces of hell want to keep you from praying.

[10 : 22] Because prayer is where the power is. Prayer is where the growth comes. Prayer is what God chooses to use. And it takes time. Which we don't feel like we have much.

It takes surrender. Which is not easy. And it takes trust. But it's more than that. It's worth it.

So pray. Pray that children will know the Lord early. Pray that they will live for Jesus entirely.

Pray for their deliverance from danger. Pray for their deliverance from evil. Pray for their teaching that they hear. Pray for their wisdom. Pray for discernment.

Pray that God will snatch them from the fire of dumb decisions. Pray for their purity. Pray for their spouse.

[11 : 17] Early on. When they're young. Pray for their present. Pray for their future. You never know this side of eternity.

The impact of your prayers. Denzel Washington said one time. He said I walked in the house of my mother one day. Fully full of myself. I was a movie star.

And I said to mother. Did you ever think. This was going to happen. And she said to him. Please. First of all. Go wash the windows for me.

Do you have any idea. How many people have been praying for you. While you were being a knucklehead. And the reality is folks. God bless Denzel. But things going on behind the scenes.

Affected. How it happened. And so it is with your family. Do you realize that the reason why. Sometimes. The blessings that we experience. As individuals.

[12 : 15] Is because of prayers. Of people who have been in heaven. For years. That prayed for us. A long time ago. And God answered those prayers in his time.

And those prayers just continue to echo. Through the halls of glory. Pray. Don't underestimate that. It's very easy to listen to that.

And say. Well what else can I do. Well. Don't do anything else until you do that. Another way to have a great impact. The greatest impact. Is to love.

Let your life. Be marked. By love. Number one. Love the Lord. Hannah's prayer. In first. Samuel 2.

Which is a beautiful prayer. Shows her love for the Lord. Just a part of it. Says enough. In first Samuel 2. Verse 1. It says. And Hannah prayed. And.

[13 : 11] And said. My heart exalts in the Lord. My horn is exalted in the Lord. My mouth derides my enemies. Because I rejoice in your salvation.

There is none holy like the Lord. For there is none besides you. There is no rock like our God. When a mother realizes.

Her child is on loan from God. Gives you a different perspective. A real perspective. That he's entrusted you. And he's enabled you.

And he's left that child to you. So what do you do with that? You love the Lord enough. And that child enough. To give him or her back.

To the Lord. And that's not a one time process. You have to keep giving her. Back to the Lord. Through each and every stage.

[14 : 08] Of that child's. Life. A group of tourists. We're visiting a beautiful village. And walking by. There was an old man sitting on a gate.

And there was a tourist. That was kind of bored with the whole tour. Didn't think there was much to this little town. Kind of scoffing. He looked over at the man. Patronizing way.

And said. Were any great men born in this village? And the old man said. Nope. Only babies. You know how men and women become great.

Because of the influences on their life. Primarily the influence of the Lord. It's often backed by a mother. Who dedicated her child to the Lord.

At an early stage in life. Or. By ladies of the church. That surrounded. Or the community. That surrounded that child. And helped raise that child.

[15 : 11] When maybe a mama wasn't looking. Make an impact ladies. Pray. For your family. Love your family.

And the last way to make an impact. That I want to mention about Hannah's life. Is to live. To live. Live a life. Before Christ. Before your family.

For this. For this. I go back to what. Marked believing homes. In the days of Hannah. And her son Samuel. I go back to it often. When I talk about the family.

Because I believe it serves. As a model for us. As did the Hebrew families. Of that day. Deuteronomy chapter 6. Verse 4 through 7. Is simply called the Shema.

Based on the Hebrew word for here. And it says. Hear. O Israel. The Lord our God. The Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God. With all your heart. With all your soul. And with all your might.

[16 : 09] And these words that I command you. They shall be upon your heart. And I want you to focus on verse 7. You shall teach them diligently. To your children. You shall talk of them.

When you sit in your house. When you walk by the way. When you lie down. And when you rise. This passage begins. With a powerful theological statement.

The Lord our God. The Lord is one. It's followed by instruction. And that is to love the Lord your God. With everything that you are. And then that is followed.

By very plain application. Because we serve one Lord. And because he is the love of our lives. May we live this faith out.

Before our families. When? When we sit at home. Let me be clear about something. Don't be afraid to sit at the house. Our urgency today.

[17 : 05] Is always to be moving. To be busy. Working. Entertaining. Pursuing. And all of those things. Can often become a distraction. That robs us.

Of real quality time. As a family. So make time to sit down. Make time to talk. Talk about your day. Talk about your plans. Talk about your feelings. Talk about the Lord.

Lord. Sit at home. Don't be afraid of it. It ain't gonna hurt you. It'll help you. When you walk along the way. If Moses.

Would have had a minivan. Or an SUV. He'd have said as you ride. If you're gonna be in a car. Don't waste all of it. Complaining about traffic. Listening to music.

Scrolling on phones. Especially if you're the one driving. Please don't. Talk. And in that talk. Bring up the Lord. Great opportunities for that.

[18 : 02] When you lie down. Don't miss the last moments. Of the day. Sometimes the greatest reflection. Or the accumulation of thoughts.

From the day. Are resting on young minds. As they go to bed. So pray over them. If. Their teens. Stay up and wait on them. Make eye contact with them.

Parents. You need to make eye contact with them. When they come in. They need to know you are. And talk to them. And listen to them. Sometimes I don't have an answer.

When I listen to them. And I just simply say. Let's just pray about this. We're just going to pray about this. When you rise.

I often tell Millie. As she goes out the door. I want you to know. I prayed for you. To have a blessed day today. When I'd take her to school. Before she got out of the car. I'd tell her.

[19 : 06] Now I want you to know something. You've been prayed for today. And if there was something specific. Going on. I'd tell her exactly. What specifically I'd prayed for. The other morning early. I read my Bible.

And I got ready to pray. And I journaled as I pray. And the phone rang. And it was Abby. And she called me. And she's very concerned.

About things that were going to happen that day. She was. As she said. Freaking out. And I just listened.

There wasn't a thing I could do to fix that. And I. Make it my job to try to. Fix things for my family. And I can't work on anything. So. I tried my best to make it happen.

And it was nothing I could do. I just listened. Nothing I could fix. As much as I'd love to accommodate them. When we hung up.

[20 : 04] I knew specifically how to pray for her that day. And I did. And. And then later on. In the day I checked on her. And she said. Oh boy. It was wonderful.

I didn't have nothing to be concerned about. And I said. See. You got all wound up. And she said. Yeah. But. But. If I freak out beforehand. It will go smooth. If I don't freak out. It will not go smooth.

It will go. I said. I said. Wow. What a way to look at things. Praise the Lord. He watched over her. And took care of her. Ladies.

You're a blessing. I so appreciate the impact that you make. And I encourage you to make an impact. In whatever way that God has entrusted to you.

For those that God has placed in your life. Pray for them. Love the Lord. And share that love with them. And then live it out before them.

[21 : 00] Whether it's your kids. Or whether it's some classroom kids. That you are entirely tired of now. Teachers. You're about to get rid of them.

Thank God. Maybe it's grandkids. Grandkids. Maybe it's so snotty nose. Church kids. Whoever it is.

Don't be discouraged by the pace. Pray. Love. Live it out before them. That kind of thing changes things.

And allows you to make a real impact over time. And sometimes that time is doggedly slow. But I've come to tell you this morning.

Don't give up. You pray. You love. You live it out.

[22 : 03] In the end. Living for the Lord. Before your children. That God has entrusted your care. Is a precious gift of God.

To those that you influence. And I am thankful for what you do. And I will pray. For those matters.

That you're burdened about. And that you struggle with. Thank you for what you do. May we do it more. And do it better.

Till Jesus comes. The reality is. It all starts with a relationship with the Lord. It all starts with knowing him personally.

And if you're here this morning. And there's never been a time in your life. When you've accepted the Lord Jesus. And asked him to come into your heart. I want you to know. We're about to give an invitation. And when we do. It's your opportunity to come. We'd love to guide you in that process.

[23 : 05] Maybe you're here this morning. And you've done that. Privately. But you've never done it publicly. You've never followed the Lord. In that decision. When baptism. It's never happened.

We'd love to guide you in that process. I won't throw that on you. I'd love to just start that conversation. Maybe you're here this morning. And the reality is. God's drawing you to this church.

You're a believer. And you know that. God's led you to be a part of this church. I encourage you to come. Maybe you're here this morning.

And there's just a burden on your heart. You just need to lay that before the Lord. You can do that where you are. Or you can do it at this altar. Or I'll pray with you. Whatever you'd like to do. I just encourage you this morning.

To obey the Lord. Trust him. Trust him. Trust his timing. Trust how he works. Just do what he tells you to do. Let's pray together.

[24 : 02] Lord Jesus I love you. And I thank you Lord. For the love that you have for us. And oh God today. I ask that you'll work. And you'll move in our midst. Help us simply respond to you in obedience.

As you speak to our hearts and lives. In Jesus precious name. Amen.