A Tale Of Two Mothers

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday May 13th, 2018

Text: Mark 6:17-28; II Tim. 1:5

# **Intro**

1. Each Lord’s Day we gather together to remember the death of Jesus, the greatest sacrifice of all, and learn how we can be better fathers, mothers and children and how better to serve Him!
2. As it is Mother’s Day, let us look at mothers in light of how they responded to God’s word and their influence on their families!
3. There are examples both good and bad in the Scriptures – Mothers are no different!
4. A tale of two NT mothers whose approaches to motherhood differed tremendously, thus the influence on their children also radically differed!
5. **Wicked Herodias**
6. Herodias had a daughter by the name of Salome. Consider what Herodias taught her – Mark 6:17-28:
   1. Marital fidelity is not important (v. 17-18)
      1. Hebrews 13:4: “Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”
      2. Many people place no value on keeping vows (true to their word) or commitment!
   2. Evil conspiracies are alright (v. 19, 21)
      1. Mark 7:21-23: Evil actions spring forth from evil thoughts!
   3. To pervert the wholesome natural attraction between males and females (v. 22)
      1. Prov. 6:24-26; 7:7-10: Dressing as a “harlot” for the sake of sensuality to perhaps get what one wants is not how God designed the male/female relationship!
      2. Titus 2:3-5: “The older women likewise (should know better), that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things--that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.” **Not qualities seen in Herodias!**
   4. Immodesty and sensuality are acceptable (v. 22-24)
      1. Gal. 5:19: “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness…”
      2. Prov. 7:10: One’s dress (attire) can display the desires of the flesh!
      3. Herodias taught her daughter Salome to get what she wants through immodesty and sensuality!
   5. Manipulation gets you what you want (v. 24-28)
      1. Prov. 6:18: From v. 16 there are seven abominations to God, and two of those are: A heart that devises wicked plans & Feet that run rapidly to evil!
7. Herodias taught her daughter it is OK to use her body to get what she wants, including murder!

### **Godly Eunice**

1. Eunice had a son named Timothy. Consider what she taught him – II Tim. 1:5:
   1. Eunice and Timothy’s grandmother Lois (possibly Eunice’s mother) instilled in him a “sincere faith.”
      1. Acts 16:1: Eunice was a Jewish believer from Lystra and was married to a Greek, making Timothy Half Jew, Half Gentile, thus to the Jews, all Gentile!
      2. Paul was stoned and left for dead in Lystra *(Acts 14:6-19)*, but returned to strengthen the brethren there *(Acts 14:20-21),* and then again on his 2nd Journey (Acts 16:1).
      3. Despite seeing the rough treatment of Paul and Barnabas in Lystra, Eunice was a convert and taught her son to have a “sincere faith,” a faith that caused Paul to want to take him with him (Acts 16:1-3)!
   2. We can see in Eunice a desire for her husband over social norms and scare tactics of her people! – Acts 16:1
      1. Mt. 19:4-6: Jesus said from the beginning a man and woman become husband and wife and become “one flesh” *(Gen. 2:24).*
      2. Despite the fact Jews were not to intermarry, and that even eating with a Gentile was not allowed *(Acts 11:1-3),* Eunice married a Greek, and sometime later obeyed the gospel!
      3. We see in the marriage of Eunice (a Jew) and Timothy’s father (a Greek) the picture of the saving grace of the gospel (Eph. 2:11-16) – reconciliation from the enmity between the two groups of people! *(One flesh – Mt. 19:5; One body – Eph. 2:16)*
   3. In Timothy we can see Eunice was a teacher of “good things” – Titus 2:3-5
      1. Just as young women need their mothers and older women to teach them, so do young sons (all children) need their mothers to teach them!
      2. Prov. 22:6: While fathers are specifically to teach their children God’s word (Eph. 6:4), in a family with an unbelieving father, or even a new convert, Eunice stands as example of Prov. 22:6: “Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it.”
   4. The scriptures are important, even in childhood – II Timothy 3:14-17
      1. I Tim. 4:6: Timothy learned these things early on and held fast to them!
      2. Prov. 1:7-9: Parents are both to teach their children! The most important thing to teach them is the “fear of the Lord!” It will be their children’s safeguard!
   5. Godly children bring delight to the soul – Acts 16:1-2
      1. Prov. 29:17: “Correct your son, and he will give you rest; Yes, he will give delight to your soul.”
      2. Less than ideal circumstances can be overcome! (Acts 16:1, 3)
      3. Despite not being circumcised prior to Paul’s arrival, he was well spoken of by the brethren there in Lystra and Iconium, and his family was well known among the Jews.
2. Eunice taught her son from his youth up the “fear of the Lord” and a “sincere faith!”

### **Godly Mothers Are Special**

1. *Prov. 31* describes the ideal wife and mother – “An excellent (NKJ: “virtuous”) wife, who can find?” (31:10)
2. *Prov. 31:10-31:* These 22 verses are written as an acrostic; that means each beginning letter of each verse is a letter of the Hebrew alphabet (loses that when translated into English).
   1. Thus it is often called The ABC’s of the Ideal Woman!
   2. She is the woman most (if not all) godly men (even some unbelievers) want to have!
   3. She is the woman most (if not all) godly women want to be like!
   4. Some ask, what is the ideal kind of wife or mother like?
3. God describes the “excellent” (“virtuous”) wife and mother for us:
   1. She never leaves her first love – Prov. 31:11
   2. Wedding vows actually do mean something – Prov. 31:12, 23, 25
   3. She is a help meet for her husband – Prov. 31:12-18
   4. She submits to her husband – Prov. 31:23, 28-29
   5. Her husband trusts in her; she is a great example to the children – Prov. 31:11, 28
   6. She cherishes all there is to being a mom – Prov. 31:15, 18-19, 21-22, 27
   7. She trains her children in the laws of God – Prov. 31:26; Prov. 1:8
   8. As a result her children honor her – Prov. 31:28
4. The virtuous wife and mother of Proverbs 31 is the ideal that godly women ought to strive for, and what godly men ought to search for!

# **Conclusion**

1. In Herodias and Eunice we have two different mothers with two different influences!
   1. The value of an “excellent (virtuous) wife” and mother can be seen in contrast to a “contentious wife” :
      1. Prov. 19:13: “…the contentions of a wife are a constant dripping.” (Annoying!)
      2. Prov. 25:24: “It is better to live in a corner of the roof than in a house shared with a contentious woman.”
      3. Not all women are alike, and not all make “an excellent” wife or mother (as seen in Herodias).
      4. That rarity *(an excellent wife)* makes her special, valuable, and one must look for her!
   2. A godly mother is a great example for her children and husband.
      1. Prov. 31:28-29: Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband also, and he praises her, saying: “Many daughters have done nobly, But you excel them all.” (“You’re the best!”) – **Read *The Meanest Mother* by Bobbie Pingaro (1967)**
2. The example of the “Excellent Wife/Mother”:
   1. Prov. 31:30: “Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.”
   2. Wives/Mothers, are you living out the virtuous attributes of a godly Wife and Mother?
   3. Husbands, are you honoring God by honoring and praising your wife? *(I Pet. 3:7)*
   4. Children, do you honor, obey, love, and praise your mothers?
   5. Women, do you strive to be godly and practice the attributes that make for an “excellent wife?”
3. To all of you virtuous Mothers out there, thank you for your love, devotion, loyalty, and service to God, to your husband, and your children!
4. May we all learn and become better Christians by your wonderful example!
5. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent and be baptized!
6. If a Christian in error, repent and be renewed!
7. Whatever your requests may be, come forward ***NOW***and let them be known while we stand and sing!

The Meanest Mother by Bobbie Pingaro (1967)

I had the meanest mother in the whole world. While other kids ate candy for breakfast, I had to have cereal, eggs or toast. When others had cokes and candy for lunch, I had to eat a sandwich. As you can guess, my supper was different than the other kids' also.

But at least, I wasn't alone in my sufferings. My sister and two brothers had the same mean mother as I did.

My mother insisted upon knowing where we were at all times. You'd think we were on a chain gang. She had to know who our friends were and where we were going. She insisted if we said we'd be gone an hour, that we be gone one hour or less--not one hour and one minute. I am nearly ashamed to admit it, but she actually struck us. Not once, but each time we had a mind of our own and did as we pleased. That poor belt was used more on our seats than it was to hold up Daddy's pants. Can you imagine someone actually hitting a child just because he disobeyed? Now you can begin to see how mean she really was.

We had to wear clean clothes and take a bath. The other kids always wore their clothes for days. We reached the height of insults because she made our clothes herself, just to save money. Why, oh why, did we have to have a mother who made us feel different from our friends?

The worst is yet to come. We had to be in bed by nine each night and up at eight the next morning. We couldn't sleep till noon like our friends. So while they slept-my mother actually had the nerve to break the child-labor law. 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 at night thinking up mean things to do to us.

She always insisted upon us telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, even if it killed us- and it nearly did.

By the time we were teenagers, she was much wiser, and our life became even more unbearable. None of this tooting the horn of a car for us to come running. She embarrassed us to no end by making our dates and friends come to the door to get us. If I spent the night with a girlfriend, can you imagine she checked on me to see if I were really there. I never had the chance to elope to Mexico. That is if I'd had a boyfriend to elope with. I forgot to mention, while my friends were dating at the mature age of 12 and 13, my old fashioned mother refused to let me date until the age of 15 and 16. Fifteen, that is, if you dated only to go to a school function. And that was maybe twice a year.

Through the years, things didn't improve a bit. We could not lie in bed, “sick” like our friends did, and miss school. If our friends had a toe ache, a hang nail or serious ailment, they could stay home from school. Our marks in school had to be up to par. Our friends' report cards had beautiful colors on them, black for passing, red for failing. My mother being as different as she was, would settle for nothing less than ugly black marks.

As the years rolled by, first one and then the other of us was put to shame. We were graduated from high school. With our mother behind us, talking, hitting and demanding respect, none of us was allowed the pleasure of being a drop-out.

My mother was a complete failure as a mother. Out of four children, a couple of us attained some higher education. None of us have ever been arrested, divorced or beaten his mate. Each of my brothers served his time in the service of this country. And whom do we have to blame for the terrible way we turned out? You're right, our mean mother. Look at the things we missed. We never got to march in a protest parade, nor to take part in a riot, burn draft cards, and a million and one other things that our friends did. She forced us to grow up into God-fearing, educated, honest adults.

Using this as a background, I am trying to raise my three children. I stand a little taller and I am filled with pride when my children call me mean. Because, you see, I thank God, He gave me the meanest mother in the whole world.