

Mother's Day

May 26, 2024

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ online ministry. This week's message is titled Mother's Day. The scripture reading is Proverbs 31 19 to 31. Thank you to Glynnis, Jon, Toluwani and Don for being part of the video and to several of our GL students for leading Hymn of Heaven.

An update on Ed: He is now home following a successful procedure, and he sends thanks for all the calls, notes and prayers. We wish a happy anniversary this week to Barb and Don.

Welcome, Announcements, Prayer

Well good morning. What a great buzz we've got going on this morning. It's wonderful to see everybody and I do want to begin by wishing a happy Mother's Day to all of you who are mothers. And it's a glorious day outside. I actually walked to church. I know. Thank you. It's quite an accomplishment. I've been away in England and in Italy and walked and walked and walked and got over some of my issues with walking. So I'm really pleased with that. And I do want to wish some happy birthdays to Paul and Dianne. That's exciting and a happy anniversary to Jenny and Stephen.

If you have any medical assistive devices, Barbara would be very grateful for that. And we ask that you continue to pray for John from Tintern who's recovering at home after his hospital stay and has been dealing with a kidney infection. And our dear Ed has been suffering some chest pain of late and is in the hospital now to have it checked out. So our prayers definitely for all those people. Let's have a quick word of prayer.

Dearest Lord God, thank you so much for being the one that we can come to with all of our cares and concerns. God, knowing that you love each one of these people far more than we do and that you have designs already set in motion to work out everything for your good. God, we love you so much. We're so grateful that today we get to celebrate Mother's Day and celebrate the goodness that comes from the very beginning of time when you made man and woman in your image. And that we get to celebrate the image that you give us of teacher and nurturer that are all of our mothers. God, we love you. We ask your blessing on our worship this morning. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Communion

Genesis chapter one talks about the creation. God made everything and said, this is good.

The part that I want to talk about this morning for a few minutes is in verse 26, says let us make humankind in our image according to our likeness and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created humankind in his image. In the image of God, he created them. Male and female, he created them.

Thought about this one night, a couple weeks ago. I thought, what a wonderful thing to see. I remember a guy came to our door one time and we got talking and I kept going back to Jesus, back

to Jesus, he said, who is this Jesus you keep talking about? Great question, I love that question, best of all. Anyways, we began. Jesus was in the beginning with God. He was God himself. I'd like to read over in John.

This again was one of my favorite passages that I learned in my lifetime. In the beginning, which we just talked to, God made everything in the beginning. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him, not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. He was in the world, verse 10. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own people, and they did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born not of blood or of the will of man, but the will of God. Jesus made us. In fact, in Psalms 100, verse three, it says, "The Lord is God, he made us." Isn't it amazing, we love Jesus.

We have to understand that he was in the beginning. Nothing has been done in this world without him. And you could write it down to a whole lot of other scriptures, before Abraham was, I am. And Jesus constantly proclaims to be our Messiah, our Lord, our Savior. And being God, he knows all about us. Yet he was willing to give up. Well, that relationship with God up wasn't something for him to grasp, but he turned around and gave it up. And guess what? Mary became a mother because of Jesus. He came into her womb through the Holy Spirit, and he was born of flesh. And then he gave us all that we have. We know the story. He was born, he lived, he taught, he went to the cross, and he rose again.

That's why he said at the Last Supper, "Do this in remembrance of me," where he took the loaf. Said, "This is my body given for you. "Take my blood, which continues to cleanse you." Because he loved us so much. He gave up the glory of heaven, he came to this earth, which is just terrible compared to what he had, but he did that, sacrificed for you and for me. Let's go to God in a word of prayer.

Father, we thank you so much for Jesus. He is our life, he's our creator. He's coming again. Help us, Father, today to remember him and what he paid for our sins, and to live a life worthy of that name until he comes again. We just thank you for him and for the cup and for the loaf. We pray in his name, amen.

Scripture Reading

Happy Mother's Day to all the mothers. The Bible reading is taken from Proverbs 31 verses 19 through 31.

In her hand she holds the distaff
and grasps the spindle with her fingers.

She opens her arms to the poor
and extends her hands to the needy.

When it snows, she has no fear for her household;
for all of them are clothed in scarlet.

She makes coverings for her bed;
she is clothed in fine linen and purple.
Her husband is respected at the city gate,
where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.

She makes linen garments and sells them,
and supplies the merchants with sashes.
She is clothed with strength and dignity;
she can laugh at the days to come.

She speaks with wisdom,
and faithful instruction is on her tongue.
She watches over the affairs of her household
and does not eat the bread of idleness.

Her children arise and call her blessed;
her husband also, and he praises her:
"Many women do noble things,
but you surpass them all."

Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting;
but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.
Honor her for all that her hands have done,
and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

Thank you.

Sermon

Happy Mother's Day.

Some of you may remember the best-selling author, Robert Fulghum, his well-known book, "All I Really Needed to Know I Learned in Kindergarten." Fulghum was a pulpit minister in Washington, and here's what he said, "For 25 years of my life, "the second Sunday of May was trouble. "I was obliged in some way to address the subject "of Mother's Day for the entire congregation. "They gave me free reign, "but I was told by one of the women in the congregation, "'I'm bringing mother to church on Mother's Day, "'and you can talk about anything you want, "'but it had better include mother, "'and it better be good.'" (Audience Chuckling) No pressure there.

Jason Steckl, some of you may remember him, is the Minister for Families and Youth at Rochester College. For his Mother's Day, reflections on the death of my mother. In the nine years since my mother's death, I've often had moments where I wanted to talk to her. Whether it was seeking advice, wanting to share a special moment, or simply the desire to just say, "Hi." There are times when I just wish my mom was still here. And for many of us, we say the same thing again. But again, I am reminded that we live in a broken world where death is inevitable, and no one is immune from pain and suffering, and I live with the knowledge that I will see her again as Jesus promised.

So it's kind of dangerous for me to say these things now, because I'm afraid that I'm gonna miss someone. But over the many years that I've been preaching here in Beamsville, I think of all these wonderful, wonderful women whom we have and some who have passed. Some of these names you'll remember, some you may have forgotten. Mothers who have passed. Mildred Juniper. Ruth Huntsman. Norma Middlemas. The apocryphal Erie Huff loved her. Virginia Broadus. Irma Daniels. Dora Hunter. Velma Whitfield. Olwen Belton. The lovely Hazel Quigley. Ruby Jacobs. Audrey Meneer. Brenda Meneer. Nellie Pauls. Elizabeth Raymer. Clara Pauls. Linda Lamothe. Florence Lumley. Olive Parker. Nedra Mowat. Barb Hickton. Linda Grbowski. Val Fleming. Elsie House. And others. We remember them very, very well. And for many of us, we remember our own mothers. My mother died at a very young age. And yet, I still feel her presence, and I know that we will see each other again. I came across some interesting articles that I wanted to share with you.

There was a lovely lady by the name of Margaret Wilde. She wrote this in 1921. It's about mothers, but it's called *The Watcher*. She always leaned to watch for us. Anxious if we were late, in winter by the window, in summer by the gate. And though we mocked her tenderly, who had such foolish care, the long way home would seem more safe, because mother waited there. Her thoughts were all so full of us. She could never forget. And so I think that where she is today, she's watching yet. Waiting till we come home to her. Anxious if we are late. Watching from heaven's window. Leaning from heaven's gate.

In the mid-1700s, there lived an old saintly woman, who everyone called Mama Newton. She was a lady that all the children in the neighborhood wanted as their mom. She had hair, a halo of silver, hands that were worn with calluses, and cheeks that were stained by tears. Every day and every night, you could find Mama Newton crying, and praying over her washtub in a room of poverty for her son, John. You see, John had run away from home as a rebellious teenager to become a sailor. John had become ungodly. A wicked man who was disowned by his father, and everyone who knew him because he was so wicked. Yet, day and night, Mama Newton kept praying, that God would save and use her wayward boy. She believed in two things only, the power of prayer, and the conversion of her son. God one day answered the prayer of Mama Newton by routing a miracle in the heart of her son, John Newton. And as a result, John Newton, the drunken sailor, became John Newton, the sailor preacher, who at the age of 54, penned the Christian National Anthem, *Amazing Grace*. God greatly used John Newton to reach thousands, including a man by the name of Thomas Scott, who with his voice and pen, used to God thousands of people coming to Christ because of his beautiful words and singing. He wrote, "There is a fountain filled with blood," which has brought thousands to the one at Calvary who've died. All this because of a believing, godly, moral, believing, godly mother and her washed-tub prayers. Someone said that Abraham Lincoln said, "Behind every great man is a great mother."

So to all of you wonderful moms, "Why are you crying?" He asked his mom. "Because I'm a woman," she told him. "I don't understand," he said. His mom just hugged him and said, "Yeah, and you never will." Later, the little boy asked his father, "Why does mom seem to cry for no reason?" "All women cry for no reason," was all his dad could say. The little boy grew up, became a man, still wondering why women cry. Finally, he put in a call to God. And when God got to the phone, the man said, "God, why do women cry so easily?" God said, "When I made women, she had to be special. "I made her shoulders strong enough "to carry the weight of the world, "yet gentle enough to give comfort. "I gave her an inner strength to endure childbirth, "and the rejection

that many times comes from her children. "I gave her a hardness that allow her "to keep going when everyone else gives up, "to take care of the family through sickness and fatigue "without complaining. "I gave her the sensitivity to love her children "under any and all circumstances, "even when her child has hurt her very badly. "The same sensitivity helps her to make a child's "scrapes feel better, and shares in her teenagers "anxieties and fears. "I gave her strength to carry her husband "through his faults, and fashioned her from his rib "to protect his heart. "I gave her wisdom to know that a good husband "should never hurt his wife, "and sometimes test her strength and her resolve "to stand beside him unflinching. "I gave her a tear to shed. "It's hers, exclusively, to use whenever it's needed. "It's not a weakness, it's a tear for all of humankind."

And I came across this written back in the 1920s. I'm not sure why I have it, but I have it. And it's called "Somebody's Mother." I love it. The woman was old, and ragged, and gray, and bent, but the chill of a winter's day. The streets were wet with icy snow, and the woman's feet were aged and slow. She stood at the crossing and waited long, alone, uncared for, amid the throng of human beings who passed her by, nor needed the glance of her anxious eye. Then came the children with school let out, hailing the snow piled white and deep past the woman, so old and gray hastened the children on their way, nor offered a helping hand to her, so weak, so timid, afraid to stir, lest the carriage wheels or horse's feet should knock her down on this slippery street. At last came one of the married troupe, the happy lady, all of the group. He paused beside her and whispered low, "I'll help you across the street if you wish to go." His strong young hand on her aged arm, he placed and so without hurt or harm. He guided the trembling feet along, glad that his own were firm and strong, that back to his friends, he went again, his young heart happy and well content. She's somebody's mother, boys, you know, and for all, she's weak, maybe old and slow. I hope somebody will lend a hand to help my mother, you understand. If ever she's weak and old and gray, and her own dear boy is far away. And somebody's mother bowed low her head in her home that night, and the prayer she said was, "God, be kind to that noble boy, who's somebody's son and pride and joy."

The young mother set her foot on the path of life. "Is the way long?" she asked. And her guide said, "Yes, and the way is hard. "You will be old before you reach the end of it, "but the end will be better than the beginning." But the young mother was happy, and she could not believe that anything could be better than these years. She couldn't believe. So she played with her children, and nurtured and cared for and protected the son, and made sure the son upon them, and life was good. And yet the young mother cried, "Nothing will be lovelier than this." The night came, and the storm, and the path was dark, and the children shook with fear and cold, and the mother drew them close and covered them with her mantle. And the children said, "Oh, Mother, "we are not afraid, because you are near, "and no harm can come." And the mother said, "This is better than the brightest day, "for I have taught my children courage." Then morning came, and there was a hill ahead, and the children climbed and grew weary, and the mother was weary. But at all times, she said to her children, "It's just a little bit further, "a little patience, and we'll get there." So the children climbed, and when they reached the top, they said, "We could not have done it without you, Mother." And the mother said, "This is a better day than the last, "for my children have learned fortitude "in the face of hardness. "Yesterday, I gave them courage. "Today, I've given them strength." The next day brought strange clouds that darkened the earth, clouds of war and hate and evil, and children groped and stumbled, and the mother said, "Look up. "Lift up your eyes to

the light." The children looked up and saw above the clouds an everlasting glory and guided them and brought them beyond the darkness. That night, the mother said, "This is the best day for all. "I have shown my children God." And the days went on, and the weeks, and the months, and the years, and the mother grew old, and she was little and bent, but her children were tall and strong and walked with courage. And on the way, they realized it was hard, so they lifted her, for she was light as a feather. At last, they came to a hill and beyond the hill, they could see a shining road and golden gates flung open wide, and the mother said, "I have reached the end of my journey, "and I know that the end is better than the beginning, "for my children could walk alone, "and their children after them." And the children said, "You will always walk with us, mother, "even when you have gone through those pearly gates." And they stood and watched her as she went on alone, and the gates closed after her, and they said, "We cannot see her, "but she is still with us." A mother like ours is more than a memory, she is a living presence. From Mother's Day to all of you, what a wonderful title, we're so proud of you.

A few months ago, when I was picking up the children at school, another mother I knew rushed in. Emily was fuming with indignation. "Do you know what you and I are?" she demanded. Before I could answer, I didn't really have one handy. She blurted out the reason for her question. It seemed, it seemed, she had just returned from renewing her driver's license at the county clerk's office. Asked by the woman recorder to start, to state, rather, to state her occupation, Emily hesitated, uncertain how to classify herself. "What I mean," explained the recorder, "Do you have a job, or are you just, ah, be careful?" "Of course I have a job," snapped Emily. "I'm a mother." The recorder said, "Well, we don't list mother as an occupation." "Housewife covers it," said the recorder emphatically. Dangerous territory. I forgot all about her story one day. I found myself in the same situation, this time at our town hall. The clerk was obviously a career person, poised, efficient, and possessed of a high sounding title like official interrogator or town register. "What is your occupation?" was asked. What made me say it, I don't know, the words simply popped out. "I am a research associate in the field of child development and human relations." The clerk paused, pen frozen in midair, and looked up as though she had not heard correctly. I repeated the title slowly, emphasizing the most significant words. Then I stared with wonder as my pronouncement was written in bold black ink on the official questionnaire. "Might I ask," said the clerk with new interest, "Just what do you do in your field?" "Coolie," without any trace of fluster in my voice, I heard myself reply, "I have a continuing program of research," what mother doesn't, "in the laboratory and in the field. I'm working for my masters," the whole family, "and already have four credits," all daughters. "Of course, the job is one of the most demanding in the humanities." Any mother care to disagree? And I often work 14 hours a day, 24 is more like it, but the job is more challenging than almost any run of the wheel careers, and rewards is wonderful. There was an increasing note of respect in the clerk's voice as she completed the form, stood up, and personally ushered me to the door. As I drove into our driveway, buoyed by my glamorous new career, I was greeted by my lab assistants, ages 13, seven, and three. Upstairs, I could hear our new experimental model, six months in child development program, testing out a new vocal pattern. I felt triumphant. I had scored a beat against bureaucracy. I had gone off these official records that someone more distinguished and dispensable to mankind than just mother. Motherhood, what a glorious career, especially when there's the title on the door. Send this to another mother you know, whether a stay-at-home mom or career mom, we should carry all this

title. Does this make grandmothers, senior research associates in the field of child development and human relation, and great grandmothers, executive senior research associates? I think so.

Nothing could stay or turn him aside while his mother's word lingered in his ear. No harm could fall on head made sacred by her blessing, and no evil enter a heart filled with such a holy love from mothers. It was a very important moment in First Thessalonians. As apostles of Christ, we could have been a burden to you, but we were gentle among you like a mother caring for her children.

And maybe, maybe a little bit of humor. Here's what my mother taught me. My mother taught me to appreciate a job well done. I just finished cleaning, so if your kids are gonna kill each other, do it outside. My mother taught me religion. You better pray that juice stain comes out of the carpet. My mother taught me logic. Why? Because I said so, that's why. How many times have we heard that growing up? My mother taught me irony. You keep laughing and I'll give you something to cry about. My mother taught me about the science of osmosis. Shut your mouth and eat your supper. My mother taught me about contortionism. Will you look at that dirt on the back of your neck? My mother taught me about stamina. You'll sit there until all that spinach is finished. Now that's just cruel. My mother taught me about weather. It looks as if a tornado swept through your room. My mother taught me how to solve physics problems. If I yelled because I saw a meteor coming towards you, would you listen then? My mother taught me about hypocrisy. If I told you once, I told you a million times, don't exaggerate. My mother taught me about behavior modification. Stop acting like your father. (Audience Laughing) And then my mother taught me about envy. There are millions of less fortunate children in this world who don't have a wonderful mother like you do. Some mothers have already gone to heaven. We look forward to seeing them again.

Just by raise of hands, how many remember Dr. Eleanor Robinson? Anybody remember her? She was a marvelous, marvelous physician. I read this many, many times. It's precious. My wife Barb and Dr. Robinson were very good friends. And she left these words. "I'm standing upon the seashore. "A ship at my side spreads through white sails "to the morning breeze and starts for the blue ocean. "She's an object of beauty and strength. "And I stand and watch her until at length "she hangs like a speck of white cloud. "Just where the sea and the sky "come down to mingle with each other, "then someone at my side says, there, she's gone. "Gone where?" I ask. "Gone from my sight? "That is all. "She's just as large in the mast and hull "as she was when she left my side. "And she's just able to bear her load of living freight "to the place of destination. "Her diminished size is in me, not in her. "And just at that moment, what someone at my side says, "there, she's gone. "There are other eyes watching her coming, "and other voices ready to take up the glad shout. "Here she comes."

Happy Mother's Day.

Closing

Don, thank you so much for that wonderful message of honor for all of us who have the privilege to be mothers and some of us senior executives. And some of us are even senior executives. Thank you so much for that, Don.

We do have the privilege of all sharing not only our Father in Heaven, but we all share being the son or daughter of a mother. And so we really are united in that experience of being raised, some

of us by godly moms, some of us not so godly. But we can all be grateful for the heritage that we have, whether it's a sad time or whether it's a happy time, we truly are blessed to have had our moms. And so if you would join me in a word of prayer, we will close out our service and go off to spend our time with our moms or our memories of our moms.

Dearest Lord God, thank you so much for everything that you give us. God, we are truly blessed to have mothers who are the image of you and fathers who are the image of you. God, we are so grateful that you love us so dearly, that you gave us Jesus. God, that he teaches us how much we can love. God, and I pray that you'll be with us over the course of the next week. Help us to love others deeply from heart, God, and to be more and more like you. We love you so much, and we thank you. And offer up our praise to you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Go have a great week.

Contact & Copyright

Thanks for watching or listening. The Beamsville Church of Christ meets at 4900 John Street, Beamsville, Ontario.

Scripture quotations marked (NIV) taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version© NIV© Copyright © 1973 1978 1984 2011 by Biblica, Inc. TM Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. Scripture quotations marked NRSV are from New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved

You can learn more about the congregation on our Facebook page or at BeamsvilleChurchOfChrist.ca.