

WHAT'S BETTER THAN A MOTHER?

Introduction

In our Wednesday night Bible study we are involved in a series of studies entitled "Distorted Images of God." Our objective in these studies is to consider some images or views of God that people have and compare and contrast them with the images and views of God in the Bible. A quote from A.W. Tozer is key to the purpose of our study:

What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. For this reason the gravest question before the Church is always God himself, and the most portentous [or significant] fact about any man is not what he at a given time may say or do, but what he in his deep heart conceives God to be like.

–A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*

So let me pose the question: what do you conceive God to be like?

There is, among some people, an issue about the gender of God as expressed in the Bible. He is, of course, always referred to in the masculine. *But at least one Bible translation from the Hebrew and Aramaic—the [Hebraic Roots Version](#) (HRV)—assumes that the [Holy Spirit](#) (the *Ruach HaQodesh*) is referred to in feminine terms, unlike the masculine terms applied to the Father and the Son. And over the last twenty plus years many Jewish prayer books have been rewritten to be gender-neutral (Reform, Reconstructionist Judaism) or gender sensitive (Conservative). (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender_in_Bible_translation)*

At the risk of entering into or even fueling this gender-of-God controversy—and this being Mother's Day—I would like to suggest that God is *like* a mother. (Please note that I am not saying mothers are like God—although if some of us had viewed them this way, we might have been better off!)

Follow this logic, if you will. All that God does glorifies Him, or reveals Him in some way and to some degree. And so, everything He has created reflects Him or something about Him.

When God created woman, how was He glorified? What about God is reflected in a woman? I believe we can say that, perhaps among other things, the most evident thing about God reflected in a mother is the love of God.

Granted, the love of God is not perfectly reflected in a mother, and some mothers reflect it more than others. But I believe one of God's primary intents when He created mothers was to reflect His love.

And so, let's consider that idea for a moment.

MOTHER'S CONCEIVE IN LOVE. GOD CONCEIVES OF US IN LOVE.

Women become mothers upon the conception of a child within their womb. Ideally, this conception is the fruit of the act of love-making (we were all meant to be "love children"). According to God's design, every child is to be conceived in love.

Since this is a reflection of a more fundamental truth, we can know that each one of us was conceived in God's love. In an act of God—inconceivable to our human minds—God conceived every one of us in His love.

We are not the product of chance, or merely the result of a biological process. We are the fruit of God's love. You were conceived in God's love!

It's no coincidence that the most intimate and pleasurable physical act between a man and a woman results in the conception of physical life; *it's a reflection of how God conceives each one of us.*

Following conception is, of course, birth.

MOTHERS GIVE BIRTH IN LOVE. GOD CREATES US IN LOVE.

I am told—because I can never know by experience—that the discomfort and pain of pregnancy and delivery is overshadowed by the love and joy of the actual birth. A supernatural love floods the soul of the mother the moment she sees and holds her newborn, and the pain is forgotten (or at least, ignored).

And this must be true, because many mothers repeat this discomfort and pain a second, third and even more times!

We know from Scripture, from history, and even from personal experience, that human beings bring *discomfort* and *pain* to God! And yet, He continues to create us! Why?

Because the discomfort and pain is overshadowed by the love and joy God experiences in us. And with each one He creates, love floods His heart for each one.

And so, we are conceived of and created in God's love. You exist because of God's love for you.

MOTHER'S CARE FOR AND NURTURE THEIR CHILDREN IN LOVE. GOD CARES FOR US AND NURTURES US IN LOVE.

And then, of course, there is a mother's care and nurture. Indeed, what is greater than a mother's care and nurture!?

A newborn must nurse every hour or so, and is need of constant care for everything. And a mother is constantly there to lovingly and patiently meet all those needs.

While a young child may be able to feed and care for him or herself, the mother still has to prepare and serve the food, bathe and dress her child. And a mother is constantly providing for those needs.

Although an adolescent may become more and more self-sufficient, he or she still needs the comfort, assurance and guidance of his or her mother. And a mother is always there to meet whatever is needed.

Even in adulthood, an adult child wants the love, affection and approval of his or her mother. And a mother is always available for these needs too.

And don't we see the love of God active in every stage of life as well!?

Even as mature, capable and responsible adults, we need God's care, nurture, comfort, assurance, guidance, affection and approval. And He's always there for us for whatever we need!

Through the prophet Isaiah, God said, ***As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you . . .*** (Isaiah 66:13).

But often in our "maturity" and "self-sufficiency," we don't look to God for all we need. Jesus once said, . . . *how often I have longed to gather your*

children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. (Mt. 23:37)

Why is that? Perhaps it's because we fail to see how much God loves us; that He loves us like a mother loves her child.

What if, today—Mother's Day—you began to understand that the love of a mother is really a reflection of the love God has for you! That God wants to *gather you under His wing* and care for, nurture, comfort, assure, approve and guide you! Will you be willing? Will you accept and receive it?

If you will, it will change your life!

Let's just consider one more characteristic of a mother's love and compare it to God's.

A MOTHER'S LOVE NEVER CEASES. GOD'S LOVE FOR US NEVER CEASES.

All of my children are adults now, with their own children. They are all mature, capable and responsible. They are all self-sufficient and need no help from us, their parents.

But do you know what my wife—their mother—thinks about, worries about; talks about? Her children! Why? Because a mother's love never ceases; never diminishes; never fades.

Maybe it's because their children are literally, physically a part of them. Maybe it's because of all the time and tears, effort and energy they've invested.

Maybe it's because a mother's love is like God's love; it never ceases!

The Bible says, ***The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end . . .*** (Lamentations 3:22 NRSV)

Nothing a child ever does will cause a mother's love to cease. And her love will never cease as long as she lives.

In the same way, nothing we ever do will cause God to stop loving us. As long as He exists—and that's for eternity—His love for us endures.

Conclusion

It's true that we've been comparing God's love to a mother's love—a *perfect* mother's love. It's also true that there are no *perfect* mothers; and some are less perfect than others.

I read this the other day:

Mothers Day is this Sunday. I ALWAYS HAVE trouble trying to find a very generic card for my mother. I will not spend much on a card and it has to be one that is not mushy. IT CANNOT say you were the best mom or that you were always there for me, because she wasn't. Mom left my sister and I with our alcoholic father and left with her boyfriend when we were kids. We did not see her or hear from her for many years. SO yes, we have a relationship, but superficial is the best way to describe it. She is not pleasant to be around, argues about everything that happened in the past and that happens nowadays. When my sister or I suggest something to help her out, she will not take the suggestion, unless it comes from a male. 86 years of age and she is meaner every day. It is sad but even my late grandmother told us, mom was stubborn from when she was little and argued with her parents about everything. I did find a very generic card so I am glad.

This is a sad commentary on a mother. And this is by no means the worst example. There are even mothers who kill their children.

But these are the gross exceptions. By far, most mothers love every one one of their children—with a love that is like God's love for every one of us. It's a love that conceives and gives birth to us. It's a love that cares for and nurtures; comforts, assures and guides; gives affection and approval; and especially never ceases.

And because mothers reflect God—especially His love—we are to honor them. Because in honoring mothers, we are really honoring God.