

Enjoying Motherhood

- A SEVEN DAY DEVOTIONAL -

Raising kids in today's culture is challenging. Now, more than ever, we moms need encouragement to help us stay motivated and filled with joy! Join the community of women at Help Club for Moms as we learn about important, life-giving topics for moms designed to encourage us to keep going and stay strong!

Day One: No One Said This Would Be Easy

by Heather Doolittle

"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all." 2 Corinthians 4:17

The other day, I was talking to the mom of a 16-year-old, and she was telling me about her child's current behavioral issues. I have no experience dealing with a rebellious teen, so I just offered encouragement and prayer. Then she made a comment about teens being difficult. Afterward, my 13-year-old told me that she will be an easy teenager since she was such a difficult little kid. Her words were true and her sentiment sweet, but something about that proclamation just didn't sit well with me. I pondered the conversation for a while, surprised that my daughter views herself that way. I came to realize there were two reasons why.

First, those hard years were harder on her than they were on me. She had a lot of struggles, and it broke my heart to see my innocent little girl constantly struggling. Yes, at the end of the day, she was cranky and rude to me, but anyone would be. I didn't want her to feel as though she had already used up her allotment of grace. In her difficult time, she grew in strength, grace, and compassion; and I want her to know I hold nothing against her for that.

Secondly, having easy children is not the goal of parenting. I didn't have kids to make my life easier. Raising my children has been hard; they have caused me immense struggle and heartache. They have brought me to my knees in prayer, but that is a good thing. I needed to grow and change. As a result, I can be not only a better parent but also a kinder, more patient person now.

I want my daughters to be bold and strong. I don't know what they will face in life, but I know that they will face it with the strength and courage that God is already cultivating in them. The present struggles and pain are refining them in a way that coasting through life never could. "For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all" (2 Corinthians 4:17). If we want to prepare our children for greatness in whatever they do, we must teach them that the road will not be smooth, but it is worth the struggle for the eternal glory to come.

Children face constant pressure to be who the world wants them to be, so as their moms, we need to reaffirm that we love them and appreciate who God made them to be, for "[they] are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10 ESV).



In God's goodness, He created each of His children with a purpose, and He gave us everything we need to succeed in that purpose. We must shed light on our children's gifts; after years of cultivation, those very assets will be what sets them apart as adults. We must remind them that God created them just as they are with a very specific purpose.

After pondering my conversation with my daughter for a few days, I invited her for some alone time and told her what I am sharing with you. While her comment wasn't out of a place of hurt, nor was it significant to her, I think it was important to have this conversation to reaffirm that I see her heart, and it is beautiful. I hope that, if you have been struggling with a "difficult" child, or if you have seen them struggling in the world, this message will encourage you to take heart and keep your long-term goals in mind. God made our children the way he wanted them to be with just the right skills to fit into His perfect plan for their futures. We need to observe our children and learn their strengths and gifts in order to encourage them and steer them down the path God has laid out before them. We need to remind them that God, their loving Father, has set them apart for greatness (Jeremiah 1:5).



Day Two: Remember to Take Care of Yourself by Rachel Jones

"May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it." 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

Motherhood is exhausting. If I can be honest, it is a lot harder than I thought it would be. I am sure most of you can agree that the intensity of it all has been a surprise. The love for our children is intense, and so is their strong will to be their own person, the tiredness from trying to do everything, and the frustration that comes from spending all of our time caring for others. It is hard. And that's why it's time to start caring for ourselves, mamas, because we cannot pour from an empty cup!

It's normal to get overwhelmed with the responsibility of being a mother, a wife, and a human. We spread ourselves so thin, taking care of everybody else but ourselves. But I'm here to tell you, mama, you need to take care of you too. In Matthew 11:28 Jesus calls to us, saying "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." He desires us to slow down and find a few tranquil moments with Him.

You are just as important as those babies that you spend every waking minute (and most sleeping ones too) worrying about. Your family is amazing, and they deserve the best version of you. Well, guess what? The best version of you will only be created if you take breaks! Love on yourself a bit and let Jesus do the heavy lifting. Psalm 55:22 says, "Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken." Go take a bubble bath, read a book, or go to Target and walk through every aisle alone.

Every mother is still her own person! Underneath all of the laundry, dishes, and lists, you're you, and you need to maintain that individuality in order to be fulfilled. Trust me, I've been there, and it's an empty feeling when you lose who you are. So go take a break, mama. It's okay. I'm taking one too.





Day Three: Worry, Worry, Worry: What Are You So Worried About?

by Deb Weakly

“For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power,
love and self-discipline.” 2 Timothy 1:7

When my children were babies, I worried about them dying in their sleep.

When they were toddlers, I worried about them getting really sick or having a serious accident.

When they were in elementary school, I worried about my complete inadequacy as a mom and felt like I did not know how to raise my children to be Christians.

When they were in high school, I worried about them turning away from God or not following Him.

Worry, worry, worry.

What does it accomplish? Nothing! It causes sleepless nights and days filled with dread. Worry steals our joy and allows Satan to gain a foothold in our thoughts.

I struggled with worry and anxiety so badly it stole my joy. When I focused on the bad things that could happen, I hardly noticed the good things right in front of me.

Jesus tells us specifically not to worry about tomorrow. I love the story from Corrie Ten Boom about how God gives us grace one day at a time. When someone asked her how she could have endured the persecution and suffering she went through in the German concentration camps during World War II, she said she had the unfathomable grace of God to help her.

Corrie said when she was a little girl, she would travel on the trains with her dad quite frequently. He understood that she did not need her train ticket for their journey until right before she stepped onto the train. He gave her the ticket just at the time she needed it.

She said that God’s grace is like that train ticket. We don’t get it until right when we need it. So, when we worry about tomorrow and all the things that could go wrong, we don’t have God’s grace to help us because we are not there yet. We stress and stress to no avail. It doesn’t help, and in fact, worry only hurts us. We can’t do anything about tomorrow anyway. So why not trust God for today and live in the moment?

Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. (Matthew 6:34)

God has given us everything we need—His power in us, His Word, and His grace one day at a time. He knows we want our kids to follow Him and love Him all the days of their lives. God knows we have financial, marital, or health issues. He is a good, good Father and will help us through whatever we may face!

Day Four: Let Your Light Shine

by Rae-Ellen Sanders

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house." Matthew 5:14-15

Have you ever met another mom who was so full of joy that she radiated Jesus? I have had the pleasure of knowing such a woman, and of course, I wanted a slice of whatever she was having! Her joy was contagious!

As Christians, we should be shining like a light on a hill, so that people feel compelled to ask us what makes us different from the rest of the world!

Several years ago, I learned a great lesson from Tommy Newberry, author of "The 4:8 principle." In that book, Tommy shares that living a life of joy should be our goal and that our actions will speak louder than our words. He mentions that it is our responsibility to demonstrate joy and draw others to the Kingdom of God! It is our privilege to show the presence of the Lord in our lives and to make our joy known!

Are you living with this kind of joy?

You might say, "Well, if my circumstances were different, if I didn't have a crying baby who kept me up all night, or if I didn't have a difficult child, then I would smile more...I would be more cheerful." Tommy says that joy needs to be developed. The Bible tells us to rejoice always! Exemplifying joy, despite our current situation, is an evident sign of spiritual maturity. Is there anything about our faith that glorifies God more than our joy? It is God's intention for all of His children to be joy-filled and to radiate His love!



Day Five: Enjoying Motherhood

by Kathryn Egly

"She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come." Proverbs 31:25

Being a mom is incredible, but it can also be incredibly hard.

I try to get the house picked up before I go to bed at night, but then by 10 a.m., it looks a hurricane swept through. Breakfast is finished, but dishes are piled in the sink, milk is spilled and "sort of" wiped up. I look in the living room, and my four sons have pulled out every pillow and blanket we own to make a fort. I look around at the messy house and feel overwhelmed.

Some thoughts that go through my head:

"I'll never have a clean house."

"I'm depressed."

"I can't do this."

I give myself about 60 seconds to feel that way, then I purposefully stop myself. I choose to think different thoughts, and my mood immediately changes.



"I can't do this" is replaced with:

"I can do all things through Him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:13).

"I am depressed" is replaced with:

"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24 ESV).

"I'll never have a clean house" is replaced with:

"Where there are no oxen, the manger is clean, but abundant crops come by the strength of the ox" (Proverbs 14:4 ESV).

I have young children living here, but I will eventually have a clean house again. Messes mean life is happening here.

I purposefully choose gratitude!

I look at the breakfast crumbs and spills and think, "My kids aren't hungry! They have food to eat!"
I look at the pile of pillows and blankets (aka "the fort") in the living room and think, "They are creative! They are playing together!"

Motherhood is a journey; a hard, but joy-filled journey in which your life isn't your own anymore. It's about choosing joy even with the mess, the noise, and the lack of free time. It's choosing gratitude when the enemy tells you that you are depressed.

I'm choosing joy one day at a time, sometimes one minute at a time.

Feeling stressed is a choice! Joy and gratitude are choices too! Choose well.



Day Six: The Power of Listening

by Mari Jo Mast

"Whoever has ears, let them hear." Matthew 11:15

I was in my late twenties when I met a few older women who were obviously in love with Jesus. They were strangers to me, but friends of friends, and as I held our fourth child in my arms, we talked about life and ordinary things.

There was something special about these ladies - love oozed out of them, and for the first time in my life, I felt DEEPLY heard and seen. They let me share without interrupting or making me feel small. They didn't "hijack" the conversation to make it about themselves or fake their interest in me.

They were Jesus, in everyday shoe leather - offering an ear, and somehow I could hear myself talk above the loud background noise in my head. My own speech was revealed to ME that night, yet I didn't feel condemnation or shame, just a great desire to know Jesus more. I felt love, trickle ever so gently - deep, down into unloved caverns of my heart that I didn't even know existed.

Precious mom, I wonder if we realize just how rare and important it is to be that friend or mother who genuinely “hears”, and how much of an impact we make when we really listen. It’s life-altering because when one feels heard, one also feels deeply known and loved, and that opens up a whole new world.

Listening to hear should begin in our home and never end - without always having an answer, trying to control, or defend. Oh, this is hard, especially when we feel motives are wrong or misleading. The struggle is real, but it’s so important to try to be sensitive and wise in our “hearing” and gain insight before we speak! Motives, strategies and inner struggles become revealed through hearing - helping us encourage or unravel the tangle of lies our loved ones may believe.

Mom, Jesus helps us hear because in Him we are deeply heard ourselves. We always have His ear, which creates this deeply “known and seen” well we can draw from.

Oh, it may seem and feel we are plain, ordinary moms, but we are not! We hold this God-given ability to be good listeners who alter lives at appointed times.

Yes, women created to see, by tenderly and graciously hearing those we love - this is who we are.



Day Seven: Leaving a Legacy of Love by Tara Davis

“And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.” 1 Corinthians 13:13

My dear friend, I know you try so hard to be the mom your kids need, the one God has called you to be. Between the messes, squabbles, and crazy life, maybe your fire and passion for this journey flickers a bit. Mine does too. Our time on this earth is so short, only just a vapor (James 4:14). And our time raising these precious little ones is even more fleeting. Oh, how I want my children to remember seeing Christ in me! A wise woman once told me to begin with the end in mind. Sisters, we must make a plan for the legacy we want to leave and stay the course as we allow God to make us into the women He desires us to be!

Have you merely been riding the waves of motherhood? Sweet sister, it is not too late to be intentional about writing your story and allowing Christ to write His story through you! Psalm 90:12 petitions the Lord, “Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” Who do you want to be during your remaining days? Begin walking more intentionally in God’s calling for you! Let Christ transform you into the hands and feet of His love! He will make you into the kind, patient, faithful woman you long to be if you simply choose to surrender yourself and be renewed in Him.

When you intentionally walk with Him, He will shine through you, illuminating the darkness around you (2 Corinthians 4:6-7). As a daughter of the King, it is no longer you who lives, but Christ who lives in you (Galatians 2:20)! Begin walking in that today! Your children will see your faithfulness to Jesus and that will become the scaffolding they build their own lives upon!

The legacy we leave is our offering to the Lord that continues on long past our last breath on earth. Are you choosing to love today, my friend? Are you showing your children mercy and kindness? Are you personifying the character of Christ? Let us love with the purpose and selflessness written about in 1 Corinthians 13. This is the summer to submit your life to the Lord and allow Him to leave a legacy of love through you!

Would you like more encouragement in your journey as a mom? Join the Help Club for Moms on Facebook, Instagram, or our website helpclubformoms.com. We hope to see you there! :)