



CAPTIVATING Thoughts

To Mother

Stasi Eldredge, *Captivating*

As large as the role is that our mothers play, the word mother is more powerful when used as a verb than as a noun. All women are not mothers, but all women are called to mother. To mother is to nurture, to train, to educate, to rear. As daughters of Eve, all women are uniquely gifted to help others in their lives become more of who they truly are — to encourage, nurture, and mother them toward their true selves. In doing this, women partner with Christ in the vital mission of bringing forth life.

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6

This proverb is about raising a child to know who he is and to guide him in becoming ever more himself. In the way he should go. Not in the way you would like him to go in order to validate you as a mother and a woman. It speaks of teaching a child to live from his heart, attuned to it, awake to it, aware of it, and when that child is grown he will continue to live a life from the heart. It is about seeing who a person really is and calling him out to be that person.

The impact on a life that has been seen and called out is dramatic and eternal. The nurturing of life is a high and holy calling. And as a woman, it is yours. Yes, it takes many shapes and has a myriad of faces. Yes, men

are called to this as well. But uniquely and deeply, this calling makes up part of the very fiber of a woman's soul — the calling to mother.

I am reminded of a courageous African-American woman who was thrilled to purchase her first home. After moving in, she came home from work to find drug dealers doing business on her front steps. It seems her new home was smack dab in the center of their "territory" in Los Angeles. She wouldn't stand for it. Head held high, finger wagging, she "mothered" them to higher aims. She mothered them out of their sin. She mothered them into becoming the young men they were meant to become.

You can mother other people's children.

In truth, our world needs you to.

We mother each other when we offer our concern, care, or comfort. We mother each other when we see a need and rise to meet it, whether it is a sweater for a friend who is chilly, a meal for a struggling family, or a listening ear for a hurting friend.

All women are called to mother. And all women are called to give birth. Women give birth to all kinds of things — to books (it's nearly as hard as a child, believe me), to churches, to movements. Women give birth to ideas, to creative expressions, to ministries. We birth life in others by inviting them into deeper realms of healing, to deeper walks with God, to deeper intimacy with Jesus.

(continued)



A Mother's Day Prayer

Lord, on this day in which we honor mothers, may we love and cherish the special women who have born us, who have nurtured us, and who have prayed for our well-being. May our hearts overflow with gratitude to you, who formed and knitted each of us in a mother's womb. We pray you give each mom strength. We ask you to be the daily bread of tired mothers. May each mother find rest in you. Amen.

JILL CHURCHILL

There's no way to be a perfect mother and a million ways to be a good one.

Poetry

by Lori, aka Adorable

EPHESIANS 2:10

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

Handmade items often come with a statement that because of the process involved in hand making the item, each piece will be a unique, one-of-a-kind work of art. Perhaps it is in the wood's grain, the curves of a vase, or the coloring of a stone. Just the knowledge that what we have is original and no other exactly like it exists gives us a measure of joy. The item may not be perfect, but we treasure it for its uniqueness.

The Bible says that we are God's workmanship. It doesn't say we are a random concoction, an accident, or a mistake. The Greek word used for workmanship in this verse, *poiema*, is the same term form which we get the word "poem." If you've ever tried to write poetry, you understand this is a complicated process. It is not just stringing together a bunch of words that rhyme. It is a process of carefully and deliberately selecting each word for sound, rhythm, and meaning in order to express a thought, idea, emotion, or truth.

We learn to draw simple lines together to form letters. We collect the letters to form words. And we collect these words into expressions of beauty, emotion, and wisdom. Then we gather these expressions into poetry.

Often poetry isn't understood by a single word, but by the collective blending of every syllable it contains. Like the brush strokes of a painter, every touch is significant.

If we are each God's workmanship—His carefully crafted poems—then the expression of our lives has meaning and purpose.

Sadly, the world is a hard place for a poem to exist. Much like high school students in their required English Literature classes, the world would rather skip out on the section on poetry.

I confess, I'm not a huge consumer of poetry myself. Only certain forms and subjects really appeal to me. But if I'm really honest, I will also admit that occasionally my avoidance is because some poetry is challenging to read and difficult to understand.

Wait. Are we still talking about poetry or have we switched to people? If each person I meet is a product of God's workmanship, then their life is a poem that should affect my heart. So why don't they?

Is it because the "subject" doesn't appeal to me? Or perhaps I don't like the form in which they come to me. Or maybe they're just difficult to understand.

None of those things make them any less of a poem, though.

This verse also tells us we have good works that God prepared for us—He wrote the poetry of our life with a purpose and a plan. And it says we are to walk in this plan and purpose.

Just like a poem doesn't decide which book it goes in or where it's shared. It doesn't dictate who reads it or how it's remembered. Yet it is still a poem.

Another beautiful thing about poems is that no two are the same. Can you imagine how boring it would be to read the same poem everywhere you went? Why then does society embrace a maddening rush to find conformity, to establish a sameness, and destroy the different?

Why would we ever want to trade a life where we live and move and breathe amid a vast an eternal collection of poetry for one where every song is the same?

Everyone we meet is a hand crafted, one-of-a-kind a poem. Our lives will become richer and more beautiful when we consider their lyrics. ♥

God's Masterpiece

Herbert Farnham, Artist

God took the fragrance of a flower,
The majesty of a tree,
The gentleness of morning dew,
The calm of a quiet sea.

The beauty of the twilight hour,
The soul of a starry night,
The laughter of a rippling brook,
The grace of a bird in flight.

Then God fashioned from these things,
A creation like no other,
And when his masterpiece was through,
He called it simply - Mother.

3 JOHN 1:4

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth."

To Mother (continued from pg 1)

A woman is not less of a woman because she is not a wife or has not physically borne a child. The heart and life of a woman is much more vast than that. All women are made in the image of God in that we bring forth life. When we enter into our world and into the lives of those we love and offer our tender and strong feminine hearts, we cannot help but mother them. ♥

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

"Youth fades; love droops; the leaves of friendship fall; a mother's secret hope outlives them all."

Gratitude – Proverbs 17:6

Coach, aka Songbird

This year my Mother's Day has new meaning. I am blessed to watch my daughter mother her daughter. And I don't mind confessing that I feel a sense of pride, not in what I have done, but in who she's becoming. She's a beauty and I thank my Heavenly Father for the gift of being her mother. ♥