

# AN HONEST MOTHER'S DAY

## READ THIS OVERVIEW

**3 PRAISE BE TO THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO HAS BLESSED US IN THE HEAVENLY REALMS WITH EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING IN CHRIST. 4 FOR HE CHOSE US IN HIM BEFORE THE CREATION OF THE WORLD TO BE HOLY AND BLAMELESS IN HIS SIGHT. IN LOVE 5 HE PREDESTINED US FOR ADOPTION TO SONSHIP THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS PLEASURE AND WILL. EPHESIANS 1: 3-5**

For some of us, Mother's Day brings feelings of joy and delight. But a lot of this day can be pretty complicated. It can cause a sort of identity crisis in us. For some, the day will tell them they are loved. For others, the day will tell them they are forgotten. For some, the day will tell them they are blessed. For others, it will tell them that they are cursed. It's a day that celebrates identity but can also hijack it. And so I think it is important to call out these complexities. Because your identity shapes how you show up in the earth and so it is important to be secure in it.

This is what Paul is doing in this first chapter of Ephesians. He is writing this letter from prison to the church in Ephesus, and for the first 3 chapters, all he spends time doing is reminding them who they are in Christ. Over and over again, he lays out the blessings they have been given and then spends the last few chapters telling them how they ought to live because of it. Paul knows that us knowing who we are has a direct impact on how we show up in the earth, so he secured them in their identity.

One of the things he reminds them is that they have been chosen before the foundation of the earth to be holy and blameless before him. The words blameless and holy mean to be unblemished from the effects of sin, and set apart for a specific purpose. That is your spiritual blessing. You are not common or ordinary, but set aside for a specific purpose. This is so important because there are a lot of days when the enemy tries to convince us that we are useless or that what we are doing is inconsequential and unimportant. So we believe the lies, and it keeps us paralyzed from being all that he has called us to be and doing all that he has called us to do.

But Paul says before the foundation of the earth, you were thought of and chosen to live your life in a way that stands out from the crowd and points up toward His glory. What does that mean? It means there is purpose in you. And I know it may not always feel like it. I know that life has

a way of trying to steal our truth and have us live into a false identity. But before the foundations of the earth, God had you on his mind and set a path before you. A path with good works that only you could do. And even though life has made you try to feel otherwise. At some point we have to decide if we are going to live into our spiritual identity or the false one the world has tried to give us. At some point, we have to decide if we will keep in step with the lies of the enemy or the truth of our God. Because though the enemy may try to convince you that you are unimportant. God says there is an assignment on your life that He has hand picked you for. Which not only makes you important, but friend, it actually makes you indispensable. You are necessary. But first we have to receive his truth over our lives and then make the choice every day to live into it.

So how do we actually receive and live that truth? Well, let's talk about some practical steps we can take this week!

### **PREPARE WITH SOLITUDE, SILENCE, AND PRAYER**

**5-10 MINS**

To prepare our hearts for what the Holy Spirit wants to do in us during this time, we'll need to be intentional about 3 postures that we'll revisit each week throughout this series. Solitude, silence, and restful prayer. Let's unpack that really quick.

Henry Nouwen says, "Solitude is the furnace of transformation. Without solitude, we remain victims of our society and continue to be entangled in the illusions of the false self." So the idea here is that the spiritual life can't grow without normalizing "aloneness." So each week, set apart a time and a place, away from people and things, to be with the Holy Spirit and Him alone.

Next is silence as a posture. Nouwen says that silence completes and intensifies solitude. Why? Because we live in a busy, noisy world, under a non-stop assault of words. In order for our spiritual lives to emerge in the midst of the chaos, we need to normalize "listening." So each week, insert a 3-5 minute pause before you move to the next step, and normalize stillness in your solitude. "Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few." Ecclesiastes 5:2

Lastly, rest as a prayer posture. The literal translation of Paul's command to "pray always" is "come to rest". The Greek word behind this term carries the idea of someone resting in God amid a very intense daily struggle. So the prayer of rest, in the context of solitude and silence, is about bringing our heart's activity to a complete stop so it can simply receive whatever the Spirit wants to surface.

Here's a simple prayer that you can recite 2-3 times to tie all these together before you engage in this week's practice. Spirit of the living God, I am here before You, I am listening to You, and I am resting in You.

## ENGAGE THE PRACTICE

15-20 MINS

Ok, so we've given you a posture of the heart, now we'll provide you with a practice to engage a different part of your brain than what you might be used to (stay with us!). This week we want you to sit in the power of how much you actually matter to God, because for many of us, receiving the affirmation of God is a really hard thing to do.

Dr. Curt Thompson, an author and psychiatrist informed by a Christian perspective, will help us with a reflection exercise that will focus your attention and assist you in an encounter with the goodness and beauty that God is narrating and longs for each of us to hear and dwell in.

To participate in this exercise, you will need your journal and a device with the ability to access a web browser. Please go to the link and follow the 3 steps that Dr. Curt Thompson provides for you.

Click here: <https://curthompsonmd.com/reflections/luke-322/>

## CLOSE IN PRAYER

5 MINS

Wrap up your time by engaging in a prayer of quiet reflection. This type of prayer is less about the words that you write and more about holding a silent space to reflect on God's goodness and the revelation you've received from Him. "On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night" Psalm 63:6. So what sense, new understanding, or reminder are you taking into the rest of the week with you?