Mother's Day
Rolling Meadows - 1969

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IN NOMINE JESU

Proverbs 15: 17 BETTER IS A DINNER OF HERBS WHERE LOVE IS THAN A FATTED OX AND HATRED WITH IT.

For many of you this Day will be a Day of reflection, renewal, and rededication - in which you give expression and appreciation to ONE CENTRAL FIGURE in your home and family -- MOTHER! You husbands and fathers will think back to your courting days and perhaps even to the moment when you asked this fair madden to be your bride and share your life. You will offer special thanks to God who has so blessed you with such a wife and help mate who has become the mother of your children!..... You children will think of the love, security, and surety which "mom" has given you during these days of your growing up -- of the clean clothes, clean sheets for your bed, clean house for you to live in - the good meals, the understanding concern when you are hurt or need someone to talk to, the nurse who sits up with you when you are sick. You will offer special thanks to God who has so blessed you with such a "loving," "caring", "concerned" MOTHER!

For many others of you - I am sure - this Day will be completely phony! You will perhaps go through all the motions, but the Day will be phony nevertheless! You will do and say all of the right things, but it will all be phony! You may have given MOTHER breakfast in bed - you may have purchased for her a corsage - you may take her out for a fine Mother's Day Dinner; but if there is no love, and devotion, and sincere affection in all these things - IT IS PHONY.

We live in an age of PHONY FAMILIES! Husbands often work overtime - or else they moonlite - in order to provide their families with all of the "good things" in life. Sometimes they are driven to it by complaining, dissatisfied, self-seeking wives. Before long these men are coming home exhausted and tired. They are short-tempered and irritable. And they cannot understand why things are going so badly. They have given their wives every gadget and convenience imaginable. They have provided their children with every luxury. They have given their families EVERYTHING -- EVERYTHING, that is, except the kind of love, and understanding, and companionship that is needed to make a real family.

Vicious circle - never get enough

too

Wifes are often disillusioned into believing that these material things wil bring satisfaction. They falsely equate love with acquiring. They imagine that real happiness is always just around the corner. They will find real fulfillmen with the next item to be purchased for the home - the next new dress - or the next new pair of shoes. Whenever she does not get what she wants, she has her little ways of letting her husband know her dissatisfaction. He usually retorts in kind: "What do you think I am - Made of money?" - "Money doesn't grow on trees you know" - "It's about time you understood that I AM NOT FORT KNOX!" In most cases, I dare to say, the wife wins out - and the husband retreats to worrying about how he will pay the bills.

Parents who are given to over indulging themselves usually raise self-indulgent children. Children are quick to capitalize on the "I want this" and "Give me that" way of life. Later on, when they discover that things do not reall satisfy, they are also quick to label the whole business as phony!

A fellow pastor ~~friend of mine~~ tells of standing in line at a check-out counter in a supermarket. Just ahead of him was a couple with their four year oldson. The little fellow walked over to the gum and candy counter and filled his fists with 5 or 6 packages of gum and candy. The parents tried to restrain him. They pointed out that 1 or 2 packages would be enough. But their words had no effect. Almost in desperation the father turned to my pastor friend and said: "I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THIS KID. HE HAS VERY BAD TEETH. I SPENT $350.00 ALREADY ON DENTAL WORK FOR HIM."

tantrum

The trouble with this boy is not just bad teeth. There are other boys with bad teeth. It isn't just willfulness either. There are plenty of willful boys around. This boy's trouble is that he has PHONY PARENTS.

Very many of the serious problems we have in the world today go straight back to such phony families with ~~their~~ extreme permissiveness on the part of parents. First of all parents let their children do what they please, and then they yell their heads off at them when those children make a mess of their lives

and maybe even disgrace the whole family. The real trouble was, of course, that there wasn't any family in the first place.

One of the most characteristic signs of a phony family is a set of values that is completely cockeyed. There is a lot of talk of love, but no real love around. The parents of this little boy whose hands were full of gum and candy probably thought of themselves as loving parents. Actually they didn't care anything about the boy. Otherwise, long ago, they would have put the foot down and said, "NO!"

A loving mother and father do not say "No" just to be saying "No." They help their children develop sound habits of thinking and a taste for life that will enable them to live with their fellowmen. A real parent cares - cares enough to say "Yes" at the right time and also to say "No" at the right time. A real parent cares enough to enforce the kind of responsibility that will help make a man a man and a woman a woman.

Many mothers and fathers have simply forfeited the honor and respect due to them by their children - simply because they have never given themselves - they have assumed that love can be bought along with everything else.

Most of the things children need money can't buy. They need well-timed correction by parents who don't like to punish but bring themselves to do it anyway for the good of their children. Children need an atmosphere in which they can fail, repent, be forgiven, and try all over again.

The highest goal many parents have for their children today is that they should get ahead in the world. Nothing is good enough if it will help them get ahead - make more money when they get out of school - find a desirable partner in marriage preferably from a wealthy family - belong to the right clubs and associate with the right people. Against this sort of thing young people are rebelling. I am not surprised that they are rebelling. The whole business is phony.

It is a lot more important that children grow up to be mature adults with

wholesome affections - with clear values that don't have to be changed every time they turn around - and with a warm personal attachment to God — the kind of faith and relationship to God that will carry them through thick and thin. THAT IMPORTANT!

God cares! He cares that we live in an intimate relationship with Him. He wants our company and companionship. He knows that we need help and understanding and forgiveness along every step of the way. That is why He GAVE HIS ONLY SON. That we might live with Him again as His dear children. He makes it possible for us to live together in a meaningful relationship with one another - and ~~especially as parents and children~~. Mothers and fathers do not have to be ashamed to admit to themselves or to anyone else that they need forgiveness. Children do not have to be ashamed to admit that they need forgiveness. We all need to be forgiven - and we have that forgiveness now in Jesus Christ. And from there we can go on to real RESPECT and HONOR - first for God and then for ~~MOTHERS and FATHERS and all who are in authority!~~ each other

Relationships are important in life - important between husbands and wives, between parents and children. Relationship are important, but no relationship is more important than your relationship to God. A right relationship with God in Christ produces the right kind of mother, father, child - with everything else finding its proper perspective - like the writers of the Book of Proverbs says: BETTER IS A DINNER OF HERBS WHERE LOVE IS THAN A FATTED OX AND HATRED WITH IT. It is better to eat hamburger sandwich with love in the home, than prime rib of beef with hatred. It is better to have a tile floor with peace and love, and wall to wall carpeting with fighting and quarreling.

The greatest thing you mothers and fathers can hand down to your children is a family that is not phony because real love is there. 30 or 40 years from now, when you are dead and gone, your children will still be talking about you - because there was love in your home. They will talk about how they were corrected. They may even laugh about it, but they will treasure it. They will rise up to call you blessed. Let THIS DAY and EVERY DAY be that kind of FAMILY DAY. Amen.