

LOVING BACK

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A Jewish proverb declares: “God could not be everywhere, so He created mothers.”

A mother’s love is stereotypical. Universally so.

Someone has said, “it is the purest love...unconditional.” It is sacrificial.

A loving mother sacrifices

- Preferences
A mother is a person who seeing there are only four pieces of pie for five people, promptly announces she never did care for pie.
- Energy
A suburban mother's role is to deliver children obstetrically once, and by car forever after.
- Effort
The phrase "working mother" is redundant.
- Money
Is there ever an end to the things a child wants or “needs”? And who else would take a second job to meet those needs?

A loving mother endures numberless interruptions, sacrificing

- Time
Some mothers are kissing mothers and some are scolding mothers, but it is love just the same, and most mothers kiss and scold together. ~Pearl S. Buck
- Rest
Any mother could perform the jobs of several air traffic controllers with ease.
- Quiet
She never quite leaves her children at home, even when she doesn't take them along.

Asked Milton Berle: “If evolution really works, how come mothers only have two hands?”

There are always exceptions to the rule.
Some moms suffer mental illness or addiction.
Some become preoccupied with their career.
Some are tormented by crippling fears.

If your mom was one of those, and you feel as if something is always missing, something is always threatening—lean on God, let Him hold you. He alone can provide inward security.

Where do moms get this astounding kind of caring from?

Dad’s may care out of responsible intent, but mom’s care because they can’t help it!

Their children are part of them. It is innate.

It is from God. It is like God.

Romans 8

³¹ *What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us?* ³² *Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else?* ³³ *Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself.* ³⁴ *Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us.*

³⁵ *Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death?*

³⁶ *(As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.")* ³⁷ *No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.*

³⁸ *And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love.* ³⁹ *No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

"If God is for us, who can ever be against us?" You and God are a majority in any situation. Nothing and no one can successfully oppose Him. Some may make a stand in opposition, but they will not last; they cannot succeed.

"Won't he also give us everything else?" Our heavenly Father did not withhold His very best, His dearest Son, but offered Him as a ransom for us, so He has already demonstrated His extreme generosity and intentional love for us. Having given His heir, He also has given everything that belongs to His heir: "everything else." Everything that you need or ever shall need to live for Christ is already provided. That's why Paul could offer such strong assurance: *"My God will supply your every need according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 4:19; NET).

"Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death?" This is a question that plagues many people (more often than we want to admit). Does God STILL love us? We know He loved us at the beginning, but we have failed so many times since then...can it be that He still loves us through our inconsistencies? While that question rattles around our brain, circumstances confront us that amplify our uncertainty—trouble, calamity, persecution. Is God judging me? Is He angry? Has He turned away? Hunger, destitution, deadly danger—Has He abandoned me? Given up on me? Such questions are entirely natural, but Paul has asked a rhetorical question that can only have one appropriate answer: NO! If you will hear this today, you may seal in your heart that the answer you may give to such doubts is always NO! That's not what those circumstances mean! Whatever they do mean, it does not diminish God's love for you.

"And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Paul was a man of some considerable life experience by the time he wrote these words. Once a persecutor of the faithful, he had become one of the persecuted—beaten, left for dead, run out of town, shipwrecked at sea for three days (how would you feel about God's love after that?), threatened with death. Yet, he wrote, "I am convinced." After those experiences, that could be no light conviction. *Through* those events, God had persuaded Paul of His faithful and generous love,

from which nothing and no one could ever separate him. Not even supernatural powers are able to isolate. The grip of God's grace is strong.

Romans 5

⁸ *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

God "demonstrates." That's a verb tense (in the original language) that expresses an action that has been completed, yet still exerts influence. God demonstrated His love for us in the substitutionary death of Jesus, and it was a complete work (nothing left owing). Yet, its influence is still felt to this day, not only by new converts but also by people converted long ago. His love still reaches us, still touches us, still heals us, still lifts us.

And it all began "while we were still sinners." Our rebellion, disobedience, and uncleanness did not prevent Him from loving us then, nor from saving us then.

Do you still sin? What, then, has changed? God's love remains faithful. You can depend on it! He still demonstrates the love that is "greater than all your sin."

So, do not take God's gracious and persistent love for granted. Tell Him, "I love you." Say it often. Say it loud. Say it gratefully.

And tell your mom that you love her, too.