

Gospel Grace to Mothers in Genesis (Genesis 1-18)

Today is Mother's Day as you know, and you also know I usually don't go out of my way with special messages for special occasions (except the birth and resurrection of our Lord). I'm not against any break from our regular book study for an occasional topical study, but I'm convinced that the healthy regular diet of the church should be expository verse-by-verse teaching through chapters and books of the Bible, and that even more relevant than what's going on in our world is what God put in His Word the way He wrote it. God's full counsel speaks to all His people beyond ways we could plan, so I want to let the Book speak and set the agenda, not the calendar

Today is one time, though, where the very book we're studying has some very timely words to say to mothers on this day that honors mothers. Honoring mothers is God's idea, not man's, and this book of Genesis honors mothers, including some we've looked at the last few weeks; Eve, Hagar, and Sarah. I want to review some of their stories that we just studied and tie each back to the gospel and the grace that's revealed to each of them in Genesis today. Now I know there's potential problems or pitfalls with a mother's day sermon:

- may not seem applicable to all people in the congregation (some may tune me out even now before I've even started)
- not only do many men not get excited about a message like this, but some women actually dread a mother's day focus:
 - a wife who can't get pregnant but wants to; that was my wife a number of years after we were trying, and we went through infertility process, miscarriage, etc., other ladies in the Bible study seemed to announce a pregnancy every other month without even trying, with a baby over here and a baby over there, here a baby, there a baby, everywhere a baby-baby! Every conversation after Bible study I'd overhear seemed to do with moms comparing labor hours or pregnancy side effects. The Bible does say *rejoice with those who rejoice ...* but don't forget the rest
 - others long to be moms but aren't married and they don't know if/when they will and they don't need a match-maker, unsolicited advice or well-meaning but insensitive comments that hurt more than help. Single people don't need to be fixed (as if broken) or fixed up to be useful (1 Cor 7:32), they're not incomplete or of less value in God's plan, Jesus and Paul remind us, and single ladies in Bible
 - one wrote of a pastor asking all moms to stand, she in her late 30s sitting a non-mom felt like an empty shell

- this day can be hard for moms whose children don't honor them, who've walked away from mom's faith.
- also moms of broken families or blended families where there are serious issues from spouses and siblings
- it's hard for some who've lost their mother to death
- it can be hard for those who feel they're too old to be useful again or who are just plain lonely on this day
- it can be hard for single moms (or spiritually single moms) who feel like they're on their own or don't fit in, or when the father of their kids loves a different woman

The book of Genesis has something to say to each of those, and it has examples of each of those scenarios and God's grace for each. I pray by grace we'll see His grace. In God's providence at the end of this message today, we'll be welcoming into our membership and church family 3 women, mothers and sisters in Christ, who are in some of the categories we just described, some of the categories of ladies our God welcomes equally into His family in Genesis. We will welcome them into our church family at the end of this service

From the first book of the Bible we see God's grace to His people:

- to those mourning the loss of a mother (Isaac, Gen. 24:67)
- to those feeling they're too old to be of use (Sarah aged 90)
- to single ladies faithfully serving the Lord in singleness, not just sitting around waiting or chasing guys (Genesis 24, 29)
- to single moms left on their own (like Hagar in Genesis 21)
- to moms not loved by the father of their kids (like Leah)
- to wives unable to have children who feel they aren't worth anything without them (as Rachel wrongly thought in 30:2)
- to women so desperate for children they resorted to sinful means for their idols: kids (Sarai, Lot's daughters, Tamar)
- to moms of sons who leave the mom's faith (Eve with Cain, Noah's wife with Ham, Rebekah with Esau, and others)
- in families with serious issues between spouses and siblings (Sarai/Hagar/Abram with Isaac/Ishmael, or Isaac/Rebekah with Jacob/Esau, or Jacob/Rachel/Leah and Jacob's dozen).
- there's as much drama in Genesis as any daytime TV drama
- Those are just mothers in the family of promise - those are the good ones in the original "good 'ol days" of Genesis. It's been a mess among the best since the first mother in Gen 3
- There's only been one *non-dysfunctional* family in history (Gen 1-2) and they brought dysfunction to all in Genesis 3!
- But the good news is that same chapter gives all good news

Turn to Genesis 3 and I want to see not only does the first book of the Bible show the reality of imperfect motherhood and mankind, it also has good news for imperfect families (which is all of ours). It's not just Hallmark card families, or a homeschooled classically, multiple-musical-instrument-mastering, sitting-in-a-row-happily family (which also needs grace). It's not just moms bread-baking, own-clothes-making, organic-blender-shaking, academic-record-breaking-kids, daily-blog-creating super-mom-emulating ladies in here (or anything else that rhymes along those lines). It's grace for families like in Genesis who don't have it all together but are just glad they made it to church alive today without killing each other!

It's grace to a mom whose 1st son tragically did kill her 2nd son in Genesis 4. It's grace to that same mom with great regrets of sin. In Genesis 12:3, according to Galatians 3:8, it's gospel grace through one very imperfect family to bless all the families of the earth, for the messed up people of Genesis and all us messed up people since
[we all need grace; if you know you need it, this is good news]

Title: Gospel (gospel=good news) Grace to Mothers in Genesis
Grace to Eve, Grace to Sarah, Grace to You

1. Grace to Eve

The first word of grace in the Bible relates to the woman. Genesis 3:15 is called by theologians "the first gospel." Let's start in v. 13: ¹³ *Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."* ¹⁴ *The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life; ¹⁵ And I will put enmity Between you and **the woman**, And between your seed and **her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.**"* ¹⁶ *To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children ...*

Verse 15 is called the proto-gospel or first gospel because it speaks of the coming seed of the woman, Messiah, Christ, to defeat Satan, as His heel, nailed to the cross, stomps on the head of the serpent. We've studied that before but I want you to notice a grace we often overlook, the mention of 'seed' itself, offspring...she'll be a mother! It's also in v. 16 *'pain in childbirth...you will bring forth children...'*

For ladies who've given birth, labor pains may not sound like grace but we have to put ourselves in Eve's shoes, or at least her bare feet

If you look in context at Genesis 2:17 God says of the tree she just ate from " *...in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.*"

So now in chapter 3 she's eaten from the tree, trying to hide behind a bush in a fig leaf outfit, and God calls her out. But instead of her being killed, God talks about the serpent's head being crushed. And instead of her dying that day, God talks about her having offspring, conceiving children, multiplied conceptions literally in Hebrew in v. 16. God promises her giving birth to multiplied children. Pain is part of birth now, but don't miss the grace to Eve: she deserved to die instantly, as she brought death into the world that day, but she gets to bring life into the world instead...the grace of motherhood. In 2:17 *you will surely die*... In 3:16 *you will bring forth children*...

In Genesis 1:28 the first recorded words to humanity speak of the exalted role of mothers with fathers: "*Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth...*" It says that was spoken as a blessing in perfect Eden. Children are multiplied grace from God in the womb of a mother, the fruitful "fruit of the womb," as Ps 127 calls them, "a heritage" or "an inheritance" or a blessing from the LORD, Ps 127:3 says. Children are not the curse, they're God's blessing in spite of it.

[in Gen 4:1, Eve knows God blessed her with birth, also in 4:25]

God in His grace allows this blessing of motherhood to continue in this world that Eve and Adam brought sin into. God's motherhood mission of multiplying children to fill the earth with God's glory is still in place despite the sin and pain it brings. I'm calling her Eve, but actually she was called "woman" since Gen 2:23 until this day when she's renamed. Genesis 3:20 says "*Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living.*"

A Jewish scholar: 'The word *was* is in the perfect tense, although Eve had not as yet produced [children, '*was*'] is the ... prophetic perfect, a common element in the Hebrew language. This shows that the command to populate the earth had not been withdrawn.'¹

[Adam trusts the word of v. 16, naming her 'mother of all living']

²¹ *The LORD God made garments of skin* [note: term in sacrificial system later, substitute] *for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.* Death was surely promised/required, but God allowed a substitute. This pictures the gospel in advance, for God's holiness, 'one must have a proper covering ... man-made covering was not acceptable ... God Himself must provide the covering ... the proper covering required the shedding of blood [in v. 21] ... grace provided for them, for the covering was given before the actual expulsion...'²

Now turn to 1 Timothy 2 where Paul gives some applications for the church today that he roots in the creation and fall of Adam and Eve, and God's order. 1 Timothy 2:13 says "*For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve.*" But that "*For*" reminds us there's a context before v. 13 he's arguing for, so let's start reading in v. 9: *I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly*

...

Since Adam and Eve's sin, there is now shame if we're uncovered, or there should be (it's sin that wants to uncover bodies intimately to others outside of marriage intimacy). Eve's leaves didn't help; God had to cover her skin with animal skins, with proper clothing. God's Word calls for the same for Eve's daughters--dress modestly for the sake of your brothers and sisters. As the weather gets more hot outside, bear in mind more bare skin can draw attention for the wrong reasons and in ways godly women don't intend and that can distract even godly men. If not sure, better to err on the side of less skin, less short, less showy (3s's :). If you need more input, ask my wife or a mature Titus 2 lady. 1 Pet 3 says holy women of the past were clothed with godliness and submissiveness, a far deeper truer inner beauty of the heart that's very attractive for the right reasons.

[see *Modest...Clothed in the Gospel*, Tim Challies/R.W. Glenn]³

Women braiding gold or pearls into their hair in NT times as v. 9 also says, was a way a wealthy woman might show off her wealth. But Paul says in v. 10 godly women are clothed in good works and humility in v. 11. A godly lady comes to church in v. 12 to learn, not to show off clothes to other ladies, not to show off to men how much she knows in a service or Sunday School class. Paul says in v. 12 women are not to teach men in the church, and even in an interactive or informal setting, ladies, be careful not to come across that way. In Corinth, churches probably met in houses and may not have been as formal, but Paul says in 1 Cor. 14, a wife should ask her husband after it, rather than interrupt the man of God teaching, because it's disgraceful to disrupt teaching by her speaking (v. 35).

This doesn't mean a man has nothing to learn from a woman, not at all – but there's a time and place. I'm going to quote 2 ladies I learned from later. Women witness to men in the gospels after the resurrection, there's even an occasion where a lady named Priscilla noticed that a male teacher named Apollos had some gaps in his teaching. But she didn't publically take him on while teaching, she privately *with her husband* met with Apollos, who became a better teacher for it. In church and home, God wants godly men to lead, teach and exercise authority, because of creation (v. 13) not culture

God gave Adam instructions in Genesis 2 before He created Eve so he could teach his wife, and the NT says that's still the pattern. A woman may have greater abilities but the greater *responsibility* falls to the man (why in Gen 3 God calls Adam to an account first). God gifts women to teach children (v. 15) and women (Titus 2:4). But v. 11 here and 1 Cor. 14:34 speak of being silent or quiet in the church as a man of God teaches, so ladies and all can learn without distraction in the proper order designed by God from the beginning

Side note for moms of babies and little ones: this church has had a number for years, PTL, they're welcome here, but be aware that the noise travels in this building more than the old building and also be aware that not everyone has the same ability of moms to block out the joyful noises of your little blessings and it can be as distracting to others learning as what Paul talks about here. Some moms find it hard to fulfill v. 11, receiving instruction in quietness, with some little ones with them, which is why we offer a ministry for nursery up to K-1st grade, as mothers need the word, not just males. 1 hour of focused teaching a week can help fill moms up for the other 167 (and keep in mind non-moms around you need to be filled up, too). I encourage the husbands also to help your wives be fed the word.

The Word of God is vital for us all. 1 Tim 4:13 says we're to give our attention to preaching of the Word. So if fussiness or noisiness is hindering or distracting it, I would lovingly ask you to take little ones at least to the lobby, as I shared last week, we now have audio speakers, ladies bathrooms, nursing lounge, to not miss the Word. I encourage kids as they are able to listen (Neh 8:3), but I don't want moms to habitually miss out on the service (Heb 10:24). We'll also make sure any in lobby don't miss communion, deacons will serve. If we can support you moms in other practical ways, let us know. And the rest of us, let's all be extra gracious to moms in our midst.

Paul wanted women to learn in this passage, which wasn't always true of Jewish culture. Some rabbis refused to teach women, some placed a stigma on women since Eve was deceived, as v. 14 says ...
¹⁵ *But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.*

Some versions say she "*will be saved in/through childbearing ...*" if so, we have women saved sevenfold, eightfold, nine-fold here? But being fruitful and multiplying even double digits of children doesn't save a woman eternally, only grace through faith (Eph 2:8).

NIV footnote says "saved" can mean "restored." If that's the idea, it's saying even though a woman was deceived, bringing sin (v.14), she can be restored to God's glorious intention by raising children who continue in godly faith. Eve's sin and Adam's brought death to all their children, but the grace of motherhood can bring many life, not just bringing them into the world, but raising them for the next. Since Genesis 3, mothers have been redeeming the situation of sin we inherit from the mother of all living by preserving a godly seed (Mal. 2:14 KJV) if they continue in their mother's faith (2 Tim 1:5)

Not all of Eve's children did (Cain) but the godly were preserved. NASB says she "*will be preserved*" and my Study Bible footnote: 'though a woman bears the stigma of being the initial instrument who led the race into sin, it is women through childbearing who may be preserved or freed from that stigma by raising a generation of godly children (cf. 5:10) ... a woman may have led the human race into sin [but] women have the privilege of leading many out of sin to godliness ... deliverance from any inferior status ...'⁴

God delivers womanhood and motherhood by His gospel grace. Not that single women or barren women can't be blessed. Ps 113:9 says God "*grants the barren woman a home, like a joyful mother of children*" (NKJV). Jesus promised His followers "*will ... receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes...children ...)...*" (Mk 10:30 NIV). He doesn't mean biology, the family of Christ has homes for singles, it has many children for us to love, and Titus 2 celebrates ladies who are spiritual mothers to the younger in faith.

I know some of the ladies who serve little ones downstairs, it's a joy for them and a blessing to them to serve that sweet hour. Lisa has some great ladies and system to page moms if needed. Women not at that place in life count it a joy to share the grace of mothers.

That brings us to #2: **Grace to Sarah** (1 Pet 3 calls spiritual mom) Back in Genesis 12, God reveals more of the plan of gospel grace to begin to reverse or restore God's family plan that sin corrupted in chapter 3. As we've seen before, Paul calls Gen 12:3 "*the gospel preached beforehand...all the families of the earth will be blessed.*"

[the family of Abraham and Sarah would bless many spiritually]

There's one human race and human family, we're all sons of Adam or daughters of Eve (as C.S. Lewis calls us in *The Chronicles of Narnia*), but Genesis 12 introduces us to another family of faith for those who *by faith become sons of Abraham or daughters of Sarah.*

Are you just Adam and Eve's children, or Abraham and Sarah's? All families of the earth can join Sarah's family through the gospel preached first to Abraham, not just for his people, for all peoples. But in Gen 16, his family wasn't initially exactly so picture-perfect. **16:1** *Now Sarai, Abram's wife had borne him no children, and she had an Egyptian maid whose name was Hagar. ² So Sarai said to Abram, "Now behold, the LORD has prevented me from bearing children. Please go in to my maid; perhaps I will obtain children through her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.*

Sarai is leading the home and Abram is following her (*listen to the voice of* = obey in OT language). Sarai gives Hagar to Abram as a concubine in v. 3 and in v. 4 a conception takes place, and in v. 5 a conflict takes place and she speaks out: ⁵ *And Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done me be upon you. I gave my maid into your arms, but when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her sight. May the LORD judge between you and me."* ⁶ *But Abram said to Sarai, "Behold, your maid is in your power; do to her what is good in your sight." So Sarai treated her harshly, and she fled...*

[we'll see grace to Hagar as a mother in Gen 21 in future message]

Not exactly the model of a leading husband and a submissive wife! Yet the Lord comes in covenant grace to Abram again in Gen 17, changes their names to Abraham and Sarah, and changes hearts so that 13 years later in chapter 18, we see a transforming couple, a man leading the way and her serving with him harmoniously, 18:6. A man teaching his family, 18:19, a wife respecting his role, 18:12. In Gen 16:5, she lords it over him, later in 18:12 she calls him lord. In Gen 16, she leads, he follows; in Gen 18, he leads, she follows. She responds to the grace of the Lord, even though she laughed at it initially. Hebrews 11:11 says she then trusted God as faithful in promising a child, and by faith received the grace of motherhood.

Peter explains her hope wasn't in her great husband (he wasn't so great at times) but by grace she hoped in a great God. 1 Pet 3:5 *For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, ⁶ like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her [lord]. You are her daughters if you do what is right...NIV*

Are you a daughter of Sarah this mother's day? This is true beauty in God's sight. A young lady writes of her experience visiting her mom's ladies Bible study group: 'I sat back to listen as the women discussed the topic of *how* they could show love to their mates.

I began to squirm at the blatant disdain most of the women felt towards their husbands [not 1 Peter 3 beauty, ugly words]. They were failures as husbands, fathers, and men ... a minister's wife looked across the table at me. "Christine, what are your thoughts."

"You wouldn't care to know. I'm young...what do I know?!"

At this the women in the room turned their attention to me, assuring me that my thoughts mattered. I began slowly. "I believe that a man feels most loved when he knows that he is respected." I went on to describe how I desired to serve my husband and show him respect to himself, in front of our children, and before others (whether he was present or not). In matters of submission...I did not qualify my statements by saying that I would only do these things if he proved to be a godly leader and lover. I knew that many of their husbands were not. However, wives are responsible for their own actions and attitudes ... not those of their husbands ... After explaining my opinion, the women sat there slack-jawed for a moment ... and then ... they burst out laughing! They laughed!

"Ha ha ha...Just wait and see...ha ha ha! You're so green!"

... hopelessness I saw in these women...the search to excuse their own faults by placing the blame on their husbands ... the pride ... the bitterness ... the disrespect ... the sin. Many had come to Bible study hoping my mother would pat them on the heads, understand their point of view, agree that their husbands were failures, and pat them on the back for doing the best they could do under the circumstances. Perhaps the Bible might even have some sort of loophole that would make them feel even better about themselves'⁵

But Sarah '*obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.*' Dan Phillips writes: 'The Bible delves more deeply than outward behavior alone. For many women, including the women in Christine's "Bible study," changing outward behavior would itself represent a massive transformation. But in marriage as elsewhere, our righteousness is to exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees ... From the heart flow the springs of life ... She must focus on how she thinks about her husband. She must attend to and police the thoughts she indulges, and the attitudes in which she marinates [taking thoughts captive]. How many women do not merely tolerate[sin], but actively cherish, nourish, feed, and embrace thoughts of their husbands that are low, denigrating, demeaning, haughty, bitter, resentful, disrespectful?'⁶

Gen 18:13-15 reminds us God holds us accountable for thoughts and it also reminds us of transforming grace to Sarah (Heb 11:11), who once made her husband obey, but now graciously obeys him.

This 90-year-old who initially lacked full faith and even laughed in v. 13 was strengthened in her faith by the Lord Himself in v. 14 as He reminds them *'Is anything too hard/difficult for the LORD?'* The ESV footnote says that could be translated "is anything too *wonderful* for the LORD?" The Lord appears again in bodily form in Judges 13 promising another barren wife a miracle son, saying *'Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?'* (Judges 13:18)

That same word and name is used for a most miraculous birth ever, the virgin-born Messiah promised in Isaiah 7:14. Isa 9:6 says *'unto us a son is given ... and His name shall be called wonderful ...'* It goes on to say He would sit on a throne over a kingdom as a king. Jesus is the ultimate Seed of Eve and Sarah. Genesis 17:16 said that Sarah would have kings come from her, a wonderful grace to a barren lady of little faith, a descendant of hers to be King of kings! Sarah's great descendant would show grace to others of little faith.

The LORD who appeared in human form in Genesis 18, Judges 13, actually took on humanity as the seed of a woman in the womb of the virgin Mary who also initially asked how it could be, a woman like her being pregnant. The angel says *"nothing is impossible with God"* and Mary sings of God's promise to Abraham (Lk 1:37, 55). Nothing is too marvelous for God, and this mother of the Messiah who Genesis 3:15 prophesied, Mary *marveled* at the fulfillment of prophecy in Abraham and Sarah's descendant Jesus (Lk 2:33). The One whose name is wonderful proved nothing is too wonderful for God, not just in His birth, but in our equally impossible new birth.

Salvation is impossible by man but with God all things are possible including bringing life from non-life. God alone caused Eve, Sarah and Mary to give birth, and none of us here caused our own birth, and none of us here can cause our spiritual birth. All we can do is like a helpless baby to cry out faith in response to the Lord of life.

Such is the kingdom of heaven, Jesus said. Infants are dependent, with no accomplishments, in need of nourishment, clothing. Jesus said if we're to go to heaven, we must all become that way, seeing ourselves as spiritually helpless, hopeless, bringing nothing into this world but sin from Adam, no accomplishments, nothing in our hand we bring, we simply cling to the cross like a little child clings to his father's hand and we cry out in childlike faith. We're naked, needing God to cover us with His righteousness replacing our own. We need Christ to cover us, clothe us, keep us, feed us, and save us

Jesus loves the little children, and us who see ourselves as them.

Which takes us from Grace to Eve and Sarah, to #3. Grace to You

[by grace those sharing the faith of Sarah's family join God's]

He gives grace also to all who honor earthly dad & mom (Eph 6:2) and calls churches to honor all to whom honor is due (Rom 13:7).

One lady writes of ways churches can seek to honor all on mother's day: 'To those who gave birth this year ... we celebrate with you

To those who lost a child this year – we mourn with you

To those who are in the trenches with little ones every day and wear the badge of food stains – we appreciate you

To those who experienced loss ... we mourn with you

To those who walk the hard path of infertility, fraught with pokes, prods, tears, and disappointment – we walk with you.

Forgive us when we say foolish things. We don't mean to make this harder than it is. [I add for all awaiting kids, we pray for you]

To those who are foster moms, mentor moms, and spiritual moms – we need you

To those who have warm and close relationships with your children – we celebrate with you

To those who have disappointment, heart ache, and distance with your children [I'd add or with your mother] – we sit with you

To those who lost their mothers this year – we grieve with you

To those who experienced abuse at the hands of your own mother – we acknowledge [and I'll add, pray God's grace to you]

To those who lived through driving tests, medical tests, and the overall testing of motherhood – we are better for having you in our midst [I'd add to any feeling persecuted, Christ is there for you]

To those who have aborted children – we remember them and you on this day [I'd add we remember grace greater than any sin]

To those who are single and long to be married and mothering your own children – we mourn [and I would add personally, I hope we will be a good spiritual family to you as our sisters in Christ]

To those who step-parent [or who step in for parents in other ways shorter-term] – we walk with you on these complex paths

To those who envisioned lavishing love on grandchildren -yet that dream is not to be, we grieve with you

To those who will have emptier nests in the upcoming year – we grieve and rejoice with you

And to those who are pregnant with new life ... we anticipate with you [I would add to dads fulfilling roles of moms who can't, we honor you, too. This task] is not for the faint of heart and we have real warriors in our midst. We remember you.⁷

And beyond this day we must all remember the gospel of grace. I want to close reading from a new book my wife just got called *Christ in the Chaos: How the Gospel Changes Motherhood*. The author writes not as one who claims to have it all together but to point to the only One in the universe who does and what He did for us who put our faith completely in Christ's death *and His life* for us

'As a mother, I need to hear over and over the good news that Christ came to be my friend when I hated him. (Because some days, it looks like I still do.) I need to hear the good news that he lived a perfect sinless life on my behalf because he knew just how much I would make a mess of things. (Which I do on a regular basis.) He knew at times I would yell at my kids (yes), not desire my husband (it happens), and want to run away screaming (which happens surprisingly often). He knew my doubts and fears, and he knew I could never live a life acceptable to his perfect standard ...

Jesus is not only my example...He is my replacement.

Jesus came to do everything I haven't done and could never do, and he did it sinless and perfectly [for me] ... taking my record of sin...and replacing it with the grace gift of his perfect, righteous record so that when God looks at me, he is not disappointed or disgusted but instead always says, "This is my beloved daughter with whom I am well pleased, always and forever -- not just when she is doing good, and even when she runs from me."

... The gospel will get you through those long nights of newborns crying and those long days of caring for clingy, feverish toddlers. Take the gospel with you on those car trips back and forth from soccer to piano. Let the gospel guide you when you drop your "baby" off at college and he steps forward into young adulthood. Bask in Christ's love for you and bathe in the outrageous grace you receive ... no matter how many times you fail: the gospel will help you find Christ in all that goes on within and around you.⁸

How can a mom do that, preach gospel to herself during the week?
How to preach the gospel to your soul-not just for moms(handout)⁹

For When You Blow It

1. His kindness leads me to repentance. (Romans 2:4)
2. He is not angry with me. (Romans 5:9)
3. He saved me when I was His enemy. (Romans 5:10)
4. Where sin abounds, grace abounds all the more. (Romans 5:20)
5. Sin is no longer my master. (Romans 6:14)
6. Nothing I do can separate me from His love. (Romans 8:38-39)
7. My sin has already been forgiven and nailed to the cross.
(Colossians 2:13-14)

8. God is greater than my heart. (I John 3:19-20)
9. There is no more judgment against me. (Romans 8:1)

For When You Feel Weak

1. It's OK to be weak! We can be content in our weakness because that is where God's strength is found. (2 Corinthians 12:10)
2. His grace is *always* sufficient and will always be poured out on you in your weakness. (2 Corinthians 12:9)
3. The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. (Romans 8:26)
4. He understands our weakness. (Hebrews 4:15)
5. He first loved us in our weakness, so we don't have to prove we are strong to earn His love. (Romans 5:6-7)
6. It is not until we see our weakness that we will praise His strength. (Psalm 118:13-15)
7. Our strength fails but His strength goes on forever. (Ps 73:26)

For When You Are Discouraged

1. Wait on the Lord and he will strengthen your heart. (Psalm 27:13-14 NKJV)
2. Wait for the Lord expectantly. (Psalm 130)
3. He bottles every tear. (Psalm 56:8)
4. His strength is mine. (Psalm 73:26)
5. He loves the brokenhearted. (Psalm 34:18)
6. He will not burden the discouraged heart. (Isaiah 42:3)
7. He is never discouraged even when we are. (Isaiah 42:4)
8. Even when we are discouraged and our faith is weak, he remains faithful to us. (2 Timothy 2:13)

For When you Are Overwhelmed

1. God was *for* me before I could even speak His name, and He remains *for* me today. (Romans 8:30-32)
2. "It is finished" means I can rest in the finished work of Christ. There is nothing left to do [for salvation or for God's favor to me] that has not already been done. (Hebrews 4:3)
3. If God's grace was sufficient to fulfill the law through Christ, then God's grace is sufficient for me today. (John 1:16-17)
4. He will enable you to do what he has called you to do. (I Thessalonians 5:24)
5. He promises that He provides never-ending love and mercy each day. (Lamentations 3:22-23)
6. He holds everything together even when I cannot. (Col 1:17)

7. He promises to walk with us in trials and not let us get overwhelmed. (Isaiah 43:2)
8. He is gentle with mothers. (Isaiah 40:11) ["... *he will gently lead those that are with young.*" God has a special grace for those with young children, and for all His children, the verse at the top, Ps 91:4 says like a mother hen He covers us under His wings]

Study the verses and learn to preach to yourself their gospel truths (if you want more copies of the handout, I'll post on sermon page, or you can get through the office). Let's pray to our gracious God.

¹ Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Ariel's Bible Commentary: The Book of Genesis*, 1st ed. (San Antonio, TX: Ariel Ministries, 2008), 110.

² *Ibid.*

³ Tim Challies and R.W. Glenn, *Modest: Men and Women Clothed in the Gospel* (Cruciform Press, 2012).

⁴ *The MacArthur Study Bible*, 1997.

⁵ <http://ckhnat.blogspot.com/2006/08/my-path-to-womens-ministry.html>

⁶ <http://teampyro.blogspot.com/2006/11/calling-him-lord-or-blacks-and-women.html>

⁷ <http://www.messymiddle.com/2012/05/10/an-open-letter-to-pastors-a-non-mom-speaks-about-mothers-day/>

PDF version at of "the wide spectrum of mothering" part of above at:
<http://www.sermonaudio.com/playarticle.asp?ID=4759>

⁸ Kimm Crandall, *Christ in the Chaos: How the Gospel Changes Motherhood* (Cruciform Press, 2013), p. 12-14.

⁹ 1-page PDF of this at <http://www.sermonaudio.com/playarticle.asp?ID=4760>