



**FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH**

# **“Jesus’ Love for His Own Mother”**

**May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
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***Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.***



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### John 19:25-27

**25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.**

**26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!"**

**27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.**

Thank you very much for coming to hear the message for today. Before we begin our next lesson, let us reiterate our reason for attending Church.

We attend Church to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so that we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

Today is our annual celebration for those women who chose to make the sacrifice to care for, nurture and raise their children. I honor those women this morning, just as Jesus honored the woman that cared for Him from His insertion in her womb by the power of the Holy Spirit to the end of the first phase of His earthly life in His sacrifice on the Cross.

I have spent some time personally, in the last few weeks, studying to determine the design of God in the creation of the mother/infant and the mother/child relationship, which God created very specifically and purposefully. I have found, in my studies, that there is a structural reason that an infant needs an emotional attachment to his mother.

A women's birth canal has a size limitation that will not allow a fully developed human brain to successfully travel through it to the outside world. Therefore, an infant in the womb has the best chance of successfully being born if his brain matter is compacted in the smallest amount of space possible as he endeavors to complete the birth experience.

The mature human brain is analogous to a structure built with Lego blocks. Lego blocks are sold in a small, tightly packed package to reduce the shipping costs from the factory to the store. All of the blocks in the package are functional, rigid and can be snapped together, but the blocks do not come constructed in the form of the structure that you intend to build. After you buy the package, however, you can configure the Lego blocks to construct whatever Lego structure that you wish.

Similarly, the cells and structures in the infant brain are all functional, but they are not constructed in the form of the mature brain. The infant brain is packed small and tight; it is developed with minimal functionality to make the



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infant's head as small as possible to fit into the package, the mother's birth canal, and be born.

The maturation of the brain must wait until after the head passes through the birth canal, meaning, that the structure cannot be completed until the blocks are taken out of the box.

At birth, the infant will need some automatic functions; sensory functions such as sight, hearing, taste, smell and feeling in the skin, and primary motor functions such as breathing, sucking, movement of the limbs, and organ function. Because of the cranial mass needed for these required functions and the size limitations of the birth canal, the development of the infant's intellectual functions must wait until after the infant has been born, that is, after his head has passed through the birth canal.

Thus, although the newly born infant has the capability to determine whether the physical sensations that he has are pleasurable or painful, the infant does not have the intellect to communicate his reactions to physical stimuli in any but the most primary way. Infants are limited to emotional reactions such as crying and smiling.

God has chosen to give mothers to infants in order to translate these emotional reactions into intellectual requests.

Dr. Michael G. Conner, a clinical, medical and family psychologist, writes, in his article, *Understanding The Difference Between Men And Women*:

In most people, especially those people who are right handed, the processing that takes place in the left side of the brain can be described as literal, logical, linear and linguistic. This means that we use our left brain to understand and express experience in words that are logically organized, in the right order or sequence, and correctly chosen.

Men, those who experience the masculinizing effects of testosterone during their first three months as a fetus, tend to be left brain dominant. As a result, the connective tissue between the right and left side of the brain is less than it is in woman.

What is very interesting about the differences between men and women is the woman's access to right brain. Women are more connected to their right brain because the connective tissue is greater. (Cadaver measurements indicate that women have about four times as much connective tissue between brain hemispheres than men.)

Men can access their right brain but they have to intentionally "listen" for the messages it provides. It is normal for most men to somewhat ignore what the right brain has to offer.



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The right brain is focused, for the most part, on information that is not left brain. The right brain "makes sense" of the qualities of voice such as tone, pitch, volume. It also "makes sense" of facial expressions, gestures, body language and the feelings we get. In a sense, our right brain is our emotional radar. It picks up on information that is felt, perceived, heard or seen. This is one reason that women are so much more aware of how children and adults are feeling.

This ability comes in handy to a mother because it allows a mother to "read" and understand an infant based on behaviors and sounds. That's important because children can't speak. It is also why women are usually much more attuned, sensitive and unable to ignore an infant who is upset. Mothers seem to know more for reasons that they cannot explain fully to fathers.

The intrinsic brain differences between men and women have positive and negative characteristics for both genders. Women, with their greater perceptive ability, seem to "know" more than men, but can not explain why. I can remember an experience that I had travelling by car with a preacher and his wife to the National Baptist Convention in Atlanta, GA. As we travelled through unfamiliar territory, the preacher and his wife had a series of similar discussions about the details of our travels; directions, landmarks, hotel rates, and the like. The wife would make an assertion about something, and the preacher would ask her, "How do you know that?" She could not explain how she acquired the information, but she assured the preacher that the information was correct. The preacher responded, "Well, if you don't know how you acquired the information, how do I know whether or not it is true?" As we reached the various places to which the preacher's wife referred, we found the information that she offered proved to be true at least nine times out of ten. Still, every time the wife offered information, the preacher skeptically asked her about the source of her information.

After at least ten occurrences of this phenomenon, the preacher's wife turned to me for sympathy. "He never listens to me. I don't know why he doesn't trust me. I tell him things all the time and he just ignores me."

"Well", I began, "it's not that he doesn't trust you, but he's just a straight line thinker. He's used to finding out the truth by reading things in the Bible or from some other reference, and so he wants to know what reference you are using. To him, you seem to be pulling information out of thin air, and he can't understand how you are doing that. Maybe you should tell him that you read it in a book before you left home, or in a pamphlet that you read at our last rest stop, or that you saw a sign by the



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side of the road or something, and then maybe he would take your word for it. But your husband is a straight line thinker who needs a reason to be convinced that you know what you are talking about.”

The fact of the matter is that the woman did acquire the information from some reliable source. Unfortunately, random, uncategorized facts are recorded in our right brain, but not necessarily in the most organized manner. When she saw the information, her brain recognized its significance and recorded it, but did not find the source of the information significant and disregarded it. When she later spoke to her husband, she had the information, but her husband, being a linear thinker, wanted a source to validate the information and her right brain could not provide it.

Infants, however, do not have the intellectual capacity for linear communication; to be understood, infants need to communicate with someone that has the type non-linear perception exhibited by the preacher’s wife. Right-brain capacity allows a person to understand the communication style of a baby; it enables a person to draw information from random stimuli, voice tones, and non-verbal clues, and to correlate this random information non-linearly into a plausible conclusion. The facility to decipher the communications of babies is a brain function; a function of the connectedness of the two hemispheres of a parent’s brain, which women have in more abundance. This is one structural reason that a mother can more efficiently communicate with an infant.

As the infant’s brain is assembled after birth, the infant develops not just intellect, but personality. While intellect is largely a physical brain function, personality is developed as a function of the infant’s interactions with his environment.

One of the most important aspects of the development of personality is the process known as bonding. To understand bonding, consider the infant’s initial environment, the womb. The infant in the womb is generally in a secure environment. The womb regulates the temperature of the infant’s environment and provides the infant with amniotic fluid as a cushion from the outside world, and the umbilical cord provides the infant with oxygen and nourishment from the mother’s bloodstream. Once the infant is born, however, he no longer has access to any of the woman’s internal structures and, because of his minimal brain development, lacks the intellectual capacity to adapt to his new, more hostile, environment. Thus, the infant is at the mercy of his environment, and can only survive if someone supplies him with the warmth, the cushion from the environment, and the sustenance that he formerly received from the womb and now cannot provide for himself.

The person that is ordained by God to facilitate survival for the infant is his mother, from whose body the infant came. The infant drew sustenance from the mother’s bloodstream while he was in the womb; once born, the design of God is that the infant will continue to draw sustenance from his mother’s body, through



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her breasts. As the infant nurses, a hormone, oxytocin, is released in the mother's bloodstream. The purpose of this chemical is to create an emotional bond between the mother and the person that is stimulating the flow of the hormone, that being the baby. The emotional bond created by the design of God; emotional bonds are not intellectual, but primal; emotions stem from the subconscious mind, the part of the mind that controls the automatic functions that we have discussed earlier, and thus function more automatically.

The bond between the mother and infant is designed to be emotional for two reasons; first, the infant can only experience the bond on an emotional level because of his lack of intellect, which will develop later in his life, and second, the mother finds the subconscious bond to be more personally compelling than an intellectual bond would be. As the child develops, at some point the mother is going to find the caring for the child very inconvenient, to the point of being personally sacrificial, so God made the bonding experience as intense as possible by rooting it in the emotions. A bond created by making a decision to do something is not nearly as intense and long-lasting as an emotional bond. Brain hemisphere connectedness and the oxytocin bond are the two structural reasons that a mother can more efficiently communicate with an infant.

The mother/infant bond is the foundation of the development of the infant's personality. If the infant's needs are met with immediacy, the mother/infant bond grows strong, and the infant feels as secure outside the womb as he was when inside of the womb. Because the infant lives in a predictably secure environment, the infant can then develop a personality that is confident and positive. If, on the other hand, the infant's needs are not met with immediacy, the bonding between mother and child is weaker, the child becomes insecure and develops insecure ways to deal with the unpredictability in his environment over which he has no control.

An example is found in the research of Dr. Arthur Becker-Weidman of the Center of Family Development, in his article, *Understanding Attachment Disorders in Children*

Jill was 30 months old when she was removed from her parents' home because of their pervasive neglect of her. Both of her parents were heavy drinkers. They fought with each other, sometimes with knives as weapons, and they had been observed to punish Jill for small infractions by biting her.

Jill did not see her parents for the first ten days that she was in foster care, and then was reunited with them for a visit in our clinic playroom. When they came into the room, Jill did not respond to them and seemed not to see them or anyone. She sat frozen in her chair. She did not explore the room or play with any of the toys. When her mother offered her a toy or food, Jill sometimes seemed



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to be looking at her without seeing her, and sometimes turned away. When either of her parents spoke, Jill startled visibly, pulled at her hair, and shouted, "What?" in an alarmed tone. Other than that she spoke no words during the two hour visit.

When the therapist said that it was time to leave, however, she fell screaming to the floor, refused to put on her coat, grabbed for her mother and clung to her as she tried to walk away. She remained inconsolable for nearly 20 minutes after her parents left the visiting room.

The infant does not control the development of his own personality; using the metaphor of the Lego house, the infant cannot build his own Lego house; building the house requires someone, generally his mother, who knows how to build the house, who has the ability to build the house, and who wants to build the house. It's important to know how to build the house, but if you don't have any hands, you can't build the house. It's important to know how to build the house and have hands, but if you don't want to build the house, the house won't get built.

To build the house, the mother needs knowledge, ability and desire.

The women that we are celebrating today are women with the knowledge, ability and desire to build the house of raising children; to follow the commandment that God gave us in **Proverbs 22:6:**

**6 Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.**

The design of God is that the mother is the primary builder of the house of an infant; she is the one whose brain God structured to understand the infant, gave breasts to supply nourishment to the infant, and the oxytocin response to provide bonding for the development of the infant's personality. If the house is to be built successfully, the house must be built according to the design of God, who is the architect. However, God makes it clear that building the house is not exclusive the job of the mother, as He gives us more details about the design in **Proverbs 1:8, 23:22, and 30:17:**

**8 My son, hear the instruction of your father, And do not forsake the law of your mother;**

**22 Listen to your father who begot you, And do not despise your mother when she is old.**

**17 The eye that mocks his father, And scorns obedience to his mother, The ravens of the valley will pick it out, And the young eagles will eat it.**

God gives children parents, not just for the primary process of bonding, but for the development of the higher intellectual personality processes, such as decision making according to the Law of God. God's plan is that parents partner in building the house, which is why God says, in **Hebrews 13:4:**



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### **4 Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.**

The plan of God is that the polarity of masculine and feminine are required to properly form the personality. God requires that people be married to conceive children, because although the child's mother is bonded to the child by the oxytocin response, the father is not. Men are not bonded hormonally, but through a volitional decision, a commitment. Without a prior commitment to the mother, the father's commitment to the child is tenuous at best, thus, God commands marriage before sex or child bearing.

The mother's oxytocin response is oriented towards making the child's environment as close to the environment in the womb as possible; an environment in which the mother protects the child from feeling external stimuli. As the male child matures and develops toward adulthood, however, the protection of the womb becomes less and less appropriate as the child needs to develop independence to deal with the realities of making a living in the world. At this point, the less hormonal, more adventurous masculine personality of the father is needed to loosen the male child from the womb of his mother and propel him into an environment in which he can develop a more autonomous personality. Still, the emotional development of childhood is, to a greater degree, the responsibility of a child's mother, which is why we have such a visceral reaction on the day that we celebrate our relationship with our mother.

Good fathers provide instruction for their male children once boys become old enough to stand on their own, but mothers provide us with our very life, sustaining us with their very bodies when we have no capacity to do anything for ourselves. As grateful as we may be to our fathers for their provision and instruction, we know that we never would have reached the point at which our fathers could help us had it not been for the physical sacrifice of our mothers.

Fathers are analogous to the surgeons who perform heart transplants; mothers are analogous to the donors who give the hearts.

Speaking of giving hearts, the virgin Mary gave her heart to her firstborn son. Her experience started with a visit from an angel, as **Luke 1:30-38** records: **30 Then the angel said to [Mary], "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.**

**31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS.**

**32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.**

**33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."**

**34 Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"**

**35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon**





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you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

**36 Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren.**

**37 For with God nothing will be impossible.”**

**38 Then Mary said, “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.**

After this experience, Mary did not go to see her betrothed husband, the man who would be most affected by her pregnancy. Mary went to see Elizabeth. Mary needed to communicate on an emotional level with another woman. **Luke 1:39-45** records:

**39 Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah,**

**40 and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.**

**41 And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.**

**42 Then [Elizabeth] spoke out with a loud voice and said, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!**

**43 But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?**

**44 For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.**

**45 Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.”**

When Elizabeth’s baby, who had been in her womb for six months, moved upon Mary’s arrival, Elizabeth interpreted the movement as a sign of her baby’s joy about Mary’s pregnancy. This was certainly not an example of linear thinking, but the historian Luke records that Elizabeth’s perception was actually correct. I suppose my preacher friend would have asked Luke how he knew that Jesus caused John the Baptist’s joy in the womb, but Luke didn’t question the episode. Elizabeth and Mary shared their pregnancy experiences on this “right brained” level that allowed them to hang together until Elizabeth’s baby, John the Baptist, was nearly born. **Luke 1:56** records:

**56 And Mary remained with [Elizabeth] about three months, and returned to her house.**

So Mary spoke to the Holy Spirit, who announced to her that she would become pregnant, went to see Elizabeth and stayed for three months, and then came back to tell her betrothed husband Joseph, who did not have a leaping baby in his womb or joy at receiving the news. **Matthew 1:18-19** records:

**18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.**



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**19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away, [meaning divorce her] secretly.**

Here is the linear, left-brained response that I would have. Joseph was betrothed to Mary, which in Biblical times meant that they had the responsibility of marriage to be sexually faithful to one another, although they were waiting for their actual wedding date to consummate the marriage. We see the definition of the betrothal status in the Scriptural admonition of **Deuteronomy 22:22-24, 28-29**:

**22 “If a man is found lying with a woman married to a husband, then both of them shall die—the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so you shall put away the evil from Israel.**

**23 “If a young woman who is a virgin is betrothed to a husband, and a man finds her in the city and lies with her,**

**24 then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she did not cry out in the city, and the man because he humbled his neighbor’s wife; so you shall put away the evil from among you.**

**28 “If a man finds a young woman who is a virgin, who is not betrothed, and he seizes her and lies with her, and they are found out,**

**29 then the man who lay with her shall give to the young woman’s father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife because he has humbled her; he shall not be permitted to divorce her all his days.**

The betrothed woman’s sexual sin is considered adultery, for which the penalty is death. The sexual sin of the woman that is not betrothed is not considered adultery, but fornication, which is punished by having to marry the man with whom she committed the sin with no possibility of divorce.

Joseph did not want Mary stoned, but he also did not want to marry her. He heard her story about being pregnant by the Holy Spirit, but, like my preacher friend, was skeptical about the information he was given. God intervened and assured Joseph that the information was true. **Matthew 1:20-25** records:

**20 But while [Joseph] thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.**

**21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.”**

**22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying:**

**23 “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”**

**24 Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord**



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commanded him and took to him his wife,  
**25 and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.**

At Jesus' birth, the prophet Simeon warned Mary about the trials that would come to Mary at the end of Jesus' life, as **Luke 2:25-35** records:  
**25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.**  
**26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.**  
**27 So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law,**  
**28 he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said:**  
**29 "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word;**  
**30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation**  
**31 Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,**  
**32 A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel."**  
**33 And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him.**  
**34 Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against**  
**35 (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."**

In our text, we see the sword piercing Mary's soul, as she saw her first born Son, whom she brought to life through miraculous experiences and watched wield the power of God, hanging on the Old Rugged Cross. Jesus had had a great ministry in which Mary had shared. Mary was the impetus for Jesus' first miracle, as she entreated Jesus to make wine at the feast of Cana in Galilee, and had sought Jesus to protect Him when the scribes first called Him demon possessed and threatened Him in Mark chapter 3. At the Cross, we see these threats come to fruition, and we see Jesus' mother still trying to comfort her son as she in her womb and during his infant days. Jesus repaid Mary as He died on the Cross, committing her care to the only disciple that He had left. Love stood at the Cross that day, as God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, and the Son so loved His mother that He gave her to His loving disciple, as **John 19:25-26** records:  
**25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.**



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**26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!”**

All Jesus told Mary verbally was to look upon Him, but in those looks that passed between Jesus and Mary He said to her, “See what the work of your womb and the many days your spent caring for me before I could care for myself has brought you to? The Son, with whom you spent so much time and devotion and for whom you had so much hope, is hanging from the Cross. Although My earthly ministry is over, but I have a gift of gratitude for you, because of your tender care for me. **John 19:27** records:

**27 Then [Jesus] said to the disciple, [John] “Behold your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.**

I told my son, when he left my residence to go off on his own, “Whatever you do, whatever your situation becomes, always take care of your mother. Don’t worry about me; I’ll always figure out some way to live, but I am giving you the responsibility to always take care of your mother. Jesus did not allow all of His disciples to forsake Him at the Cross, but He developed a love relationship with one of them so that when the time came, He could entrust the care of the one woman that loved Him unconditionally to that one disciple whom He loved.

That’s what Mother’s Day is all about. We show our devoted love for the one person that cared for us in her very body, with her very blood, her breast milk, and her devotion when we were helpless and could not care for ourselves in any way. The one to whom we bonded from before birth; the one who shares our joys and sorrows on the deepest emotional level; the one that literally gave herself for us.

I miss my mother today. She cared for me, just as I know your mothers cared for you. I have great memories of Mom’s care, but she has gone on to be with the Lord. Son, you will not always be able to take care of your mother. If life goes for us as it generally does, she is going to leave you one day even as my Mom left me. Prepare your heart for that day by cherishing and nurturing the bond while you have it. It’s a great gift from God.

But the greatest gift, even surpassing that of our mothers, is the gift of Jesus Christ, who made the linear decision to give Himself, who gave His body, who gave His blood, and who suffered, bled and died on Calvary’s Cross so that one day, you, I and all of us will be reunited with our mothers, with our believing families, and with all whom have gone before. So let us remember Him as we celebrate this day of love for our mothers, looking forward to that ultimate family reunion when the bonds of love are restored. Jesus tells us, by the pen of His most loving disciple, whom He entrusted with the care of His mother, in **John 13:34-35**:

**34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.**



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**35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”**

Pastor Darryl R. Curtis  
Family Life Baptist Church