

This coming Sunday is Mother's Day. So, we want to wish all the moms a "Happy Mother's Day." Having said that, we also need to acknowledge some other ladies. Not all the women we know in our life are biological moms. Some have children, some do not.

The reasons vary as to this but the point I want to make is this – we all have ladies who have influenced us in some way or another during our lifetime. Our moms, teachers, aunts, grandmothers, family friends, ladies from church who treated us as one of their family. The list can go on and on.

Not everyone has been blessed with a healthy, happy family, or upbringing. My heart goes out to those who grew up in a difficult situation. I am so sorry for that. Hopefully, there were others who brought stability to our lives, who made us feel as if we mattered.

With ladies at the center of this devotion, I want to share some thoughts that are principles we can all apply to our lives, but we will focus on a particular individual from the Scriptures who by her life is an example for all of us to learn from.

Her name was Salome. Her claim to fame, shall we say, is that her two sons, James and John, were students of Jesus. Her son John penned five books of the Bible. James, would, because of his influence in the early years of Christianity, sadly be put to death by the governmental officials.

Despite the fact that not much is written about Salome, there is enough, I believe, to help us come to some conclusions regarding the influence this woman had on her children, and no doubt, on others as well. And though one extended part of the Bible that does deal with her shows a questionable motive, shall we say, even in that episode we get a picture of this woman that may not be necessarily all bad. We shall see that.

Her sons, James and John, were known as the "sons of thunder", a nickname given to them by Jesus (**Mark 3:17; Luke 9:49-56**). Some think it may have been a title of honor, not negative, as others think. Both brothers were incredibly loyal and zealous for what Jesus was doing. Those characteristics would be greatly used by God in their lifetime. They also would have to be refined, shall we say, over the course of time, because they seem to be a little hotheaded at times.

These two brothers were also different. James was zealous, passionate, uncompromising and task oriented. John was also zealous and passionate, but he was more sensitive and loving (which God refined in him), and very much, a truth seeker. These traits probably came from their parents. James, some would say, reflected more his mom before she really encountered Jesus who took her fiery side and used it positively.

Now to Salome. She was the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus (**Mt. 27:56; Jn. 15:40-41; Jn. 19:25**). As we shall see, the positive traits of her life give us a picture of a woman of honor. And these traits should be seen in the lives of all of us.

Though we are talking about the ladies in our life who have left a positive imprint on us, the following thoughts are indicative of what a person of honor, which we are going to define as a person who wants to be a difference maker in their world, should be known by.

First, a person of honor is dedicated to those they care about. Of course, family comes to mind. In **Mt. 20:20-28**, the dedication Salome had to her family led her to make a request to Jesus that was a little out of line. She asked Christ that her sons be given places of honor in His future kingdom.

The Lord let her know that this request was not His to answer. We also see that the other disciples of Jesus were less than enamored with the question she asked. We need to give Salome credit in this way – she was dedicated to her family. But she would also learn over time that God had something different planned for her kids than she may have envisioned.

Dedication is not blind obviously. As our kids grow, we need to let go and let them live. We raise them to release them. But we still love them. We are there for them. But we do not try to run their lives. When our kids marry, as **Gen. 2:24** says, they “leave and hold fast” to their husband or wife. There is a change in relationships that happen.

Dedication to those we care about means we pray for them, offer advice (when asked), encourage them, love them, to name a few things. Think about others that we care about. Friends, our church family. If we care about them, we are also dedicated in some ways to help them to be the best they can be. We pray for them and encourage them.

More could be said but the point is, dedication is not control or smothering, it is acknowledging that God has brought people into our lives that we can be thankful for and minister to, beginning with family.

A second thing to note about Salome, and anyone who is an honorable person, is that they have a spiritual sensitivity. In Matthew, Mark, and John, we read that Salome was watching when Jesus died on the cross. She was, I believe, committed to His cause. She was also one of those who went to the tomb to finish the preparation of the body of Jesus for burial (**Luke 24:1**).

A person like this, such as Salome, looks for stabilizing factors in their life. They are sensitive in seeking answers. They are willing to give God a chance to speak through His Word and to listen to what He may be saying to them. I believe Salome became even more sensitive to knowing God and wanting to understand Him after the incident with her sons and her spending time with Jesus. A person like this finds the real meaning of there was and is to life.

Do we allow God to speak to us through His Word and through others? Are we spiritually sensitive to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives as He helps mold us into the image of Christ? These are questions we need to answer as we seek to be spiritually sensitive.

A third point regarding a person of honor is that they have a humble heart. Humility is a missing ingredient in our culture today. Sadly, over the years I have known Christians who were less

than humble. In fact, they were proud, arrogant, and know-it-all's. Humility did not fit into a description of their lives.

I believe Salome had a humble heart. A humble person realizes that all they have is a gift from God. In **Mark 15:40-41** we read that Salome had been a follower of Jesus and had cared for Him while He was in Galilee.

Vs. 41 says that a group of women, including Salome, "followed" Jesus and ministered to Him. This word "followed" describes someone who "is a student" or "conforms to one's example." Salome had chosen to set aside her ambitions to learn about God and how He could make her life and the life of those around her, better. She had developed a servant's heart. She had helped care for the food needs of Jesus and the disciples, for example. She lived a life of humility.

Humility does not mean we are walked on. It means that we recognize our need for God and that all we have and are comes from Him. That is a mark of a person of honor. We must daily submit to God's leadership in our life.

And finally, a fourth and final point to note, is that a person of honor perseveres. Salome would lose one of her sons, James, in **Acts 12**, to the rage of a governmental authority. But she did not give up her faith or her love for her family and others. She did not throw away her beliefs. It is a choice to persevere through tough times. God can help us as He did Salome.

This type of person, even when things may look dark, even if thoughts of quitting come to mind, in their hearts they persevere, praying for those they love and care about.

May we learn from Salome and again, to all the ladies who have positively influenced our life, "Happy Mother's Day" to one and all.