



Ladies of Grace

Bible Studies for Women

The Ministry of Womanhood Series

Every woman has been born into the ministry of God. It is spelled out for her in Scripture, lived out before others in her home, church, and community, and recorded by God in the pages of eternity.

Life Giving Motherhood

All women have been created by God to be life givers. Life giving is stamped on the nature of every woman. Through childbearing we are given the unique opportunity of bringing forth physical life into this world, and through the life we live we have the unique privilege of bringing forth emotional, spiritual, and social life into this world as well.

Today we are going to study the life giving motherhood of Eve. Eve was the first woman created by God to bring forth human life into this world. Through her testimony as a mother, I believe that God will show us that it takes more than just giving physical birth to become the right kind of life giving mother ~ it takes a life that has a right relationship with Him.

Please turn with me to the book of Genesis, and let's read Genesis 3:16 - 5:5 together.

As we begin to read these verses, we find Eve's command to motherhood, her call to motherhood, and the actual carrying out of her motherhood duties.

Who was it that commanded Eve to give her life to the task of motherhood? It was God. What was the purpose of His command? Most people would say it was so that the earth could be filled and occupied. But as I have studied this command in light of the rest of the scriptures of the Bible, I think that God wanted more from the mothering efforts of Eve than for her to just give birth to a bunch of children. **I believe, with all my heart, that God wanted Eve to bring forth children that would be filled with the kind of abundant life that would bring glory and honor and praise to Him.**

Who else do you think wanted her to bring forth children that would be filled with the fullness of life that came from God? I believe her husband Adam did. After all, wasn't it Adam that turned to her (after they were judged for their sin), and said (in not so many words), "I'm not going to call you Woman anymore. I am going to call you Eve. Why? Because God just said that you are going to be busy giving life. As a matter of fact, you are the one that God has chosen to become the mother of all the people that will ever live!" Adam was so excited about all of this mothering stuff that Eve was being called to do. But you know what? At first, I don't think Eve was. Why do I say this?





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Because the effects of her bad attitude can be clearly seen in the testimony and lives of her first two children.

Turn back to Genesis chapter four with me and let's reread verses 1-24.

In verse 1, Eve says to Adam after she gave birth to Cain, *"I have gotten a man from the Lord."* The name Cain literally means, *possession - as if valued above everything else*. When Eve gave birth to Cain, many scholars believe that she most likely thought that she was giving birth to the promised seed of Christ. This is probably why she said that she had gotten him from the Lord. But it wasn't long before she realized that Cain was not the promised seed of Christ, and that what she had given birth to was just an ordinary baby boy, with ordinary cries and ordinary needs. Her disappointment in this realization is pictured very clearly in verse two when we read, *"and she again bare his brother Abel."* There was no fan fare of an announcement here, just the painful realization that God meant what He said when He said that He was going to greatly increase her sorrow and conception. I don't know if you know this or not, but the name Abel actually means *weakness, vanity, grief, or lamentation*. Her decision to give him this name is a snapshot of her attitude and spirit towards the ministry of motherhood that God had called her to.

Do you think her negative and self-centered attitude had any sort of effect on the lives of her children? Eve's heart was filled with sour things like resentment and discontentment towards God and the call and commands that He placed early on her life. When it came time to passing on any kind of emotional, spiritual, or social life to her children, the only kind of life that she had to pass on to them was the sour stuff stored up within her. The Bible confirms this principle in Matthew 12:35 when it says, *"A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."* Did you know that it is an evil thing, and not a good thing, to have a sour spirit in your heart towards the Lord?

Let's take a look into the lives of Cain and Abel and see just what kind of effects this mother with an evil heart had on her children:

1. **Her oldest son grew up to become a disrespectful, violent, and irresponsible man.** Even though he was supposed to be her most prized possession, because she had the wrong kind of "life" flowing out of her, all she was able to pass on to him was a rebellious, angry, and irresponsible spirit. It's no wonder that he grew up to hate the things that his mother resented and to want to run his own life in his own way.
2. **Her youngest son grew up to become a victim of a disrespectful, violent, and irresponsible man.** From the beginning, Eve resented the birth of this child, and because of this, the "life" she poured into him was filled with resentment and emotional neglect. It's no wonder that his older brother was able to take advantage of him in the way that he did.

I don't know about you, but I think this is such a sad story of motherhood! How it breaks my heart to think that Eve would have treated her opportunity to mold and shape the lives of her children in this way.

But you know what, Eve's example during those years is the testimony of most of us that weren't saved and filled with the light and truth of God's Word.

Do you think that Eve eventually became heartbroken over the negative influence that she had on these children? I think so. And I also believe that there was a time after the punishment of Cain that she repented to the Lord and asked Him to forgive her of her sins, for the Bible tells us in Genesis 4:25-26 that she later praised God when He gave her another chance to bear a son, and called his name Seth, *"for God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew."* Once Eve got right with God, she began to see the privilege and blessing of being a mother, and the great opportunity that it gave her to bring glory and honor and praise unto the Lord.

"I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Psalm 40:8



And you know what? The Bible tells us in Genesis 4:26 that it was through the life of this son Seth, that men began to call (again) upon the name of the Lord. God used his life to bring revival into a wicked world, and it was all because his mother was willing to allow the truths of I John 1:9 to flow through her: *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* Not only did God forgive Eve of her sins, but He also cleaned her heart up and restored unto her the abundant life that she would need to pour out into the lives of Seth and the children that would come after Him.

As we close this study, I want us to understand, that although all children are born in the image of God, every one of them is raised in the likeness of their parents. Especially their mothers. And how we live is going to be how they grow up and live as well.

Here is a nice little poem by Dorothy Nolte that says it best:

Children Learn What They Live

If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn.
If children live with hostility, they learn to fight.
If children live with fear, they learn to be apprehensive.
If children live with pity, they learn to feel sorry for themselves.
If children live with ridicule, they learn to feel shy.
If children live with jealousy, they learn to feel envy.
If children live with shame, they learn to feel guilty.
If children live with encouragement, they learn confidence.
If children live with tolerance, they learn patience.
If children live with praise, they learn appreciation.
If children live with acceptance, they learn to love.
If children live with approval, they learn to like themselves.
If children live with recognition, they learn it is good to have a goal.
If children live with sharing, they learn generosity.
If children live with honesty, they learn truthfulness.
If children live with fairness, they learn justice.
If children live with kindness and consideration, they learn respect.
If children live with security, they learn to have faith in themselves and in those about them.
If children live with friendliness, they learn the world is a nice place in which to live.

And the only way that they will ever be able to live with anything that is good is if they live with someone who is good ~ and that will only happen as we fill our lives with the only thing in this world that is good . . . The Lord Jesus Christ.

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“The Source of All Good Life”

Being the right kind of life giving mother is not just about giving birth. It is about bringing forth abundant life in the children that we bring birth to, by loving them, nurturing them, teaching them, encouraging them, comforting them, biblically correcting them, and by leading them to a saving knowledge of the Source of all life, the Lord Jesus Christ.

But, as any woman who has mothered children for any amount of time knows, being the right kind of life giver can be an emotionally and physically exhausting task. To do it well consumes everything that is within us, and if we are going to continually be fresh for the task, we are going to have to engraft ourselves into the true vine of life, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus said in John chapter 15, *“I am the true vine . . . Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”* As mothers, it is important to remember that we are only able to give good life as long as we are being filled with the life of Jesus through the working of the Holy Spirit.

What is the secret to being consistently filled with the Spirit of God? Obedience and humility. The Bible teaches us that the Holy Spirit is only released by God into our lives as He sees us obey the Word of God, and empty ourselves of the things of this world. And if we ever want to become the right kind of life giving mothers, **Jesus MUST become the source of our life and our whole purpose for loving and life giving.**

You know dear friends, it is only Jesus that can reshape our thinking and actions to make us into the kind of life giving mothers that we ought to be. As we spend time in the Word of God and in prayer, He promises to transform us and give us the life to live for and love others in the way that He does.

But, I must be honest with you, becoming this kind of a mother is a matter of choice. And with every choice that we make there is always some kind of a cost involved. If we are going to decide to become the right kind of life giving mother, we are going to have to make a commitment to spend time with God, and live a life that obeys Him. And if we commit ourselves to this, it means that we will have to spend less time doing other things and resist the temptation of obeying everyone and everything else.

Sometimes people say to me, “You are different than me, mothering seems to come easy for you. It must be because your kids are good or because it is something that you enjoy.” To which I ALWAYS respond, “The only reason that mothering comes easy for me and that I enjoy it is because of my relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.” It was Jesus who taught me that my children were a blessing from the Lord, that I should be a joyful mother to my children, and that when I grow weary or overwhelmed to remember that I can do all things through HIM that gives me strength.

You know, when I first had my children, I looked at them like many of you look at yours: as little hindrances that got in the way of me “being all that I could be”. As a matter of fact, even after I became a Christian, I thought that giving the abundant life that was inside of me to those *outside* of my home seemed more exciting than pouring myself into the little lives that lived inside of it. **But in time, as I grew in my walk with God, God showed me, that if I really wanted to do something significant and make a difference in this world, that I needed to give life to the precious children that He gave to me.** And as I made it my goal to obey Him in this area, He began to give me a heavenly love for mothering, and the mothering task itself got easier.

Dear friends, if we are going to become the right kind of life giving mothers, we are going to have to understand that it is going to involve the pouring out our lives for others. And the only way we are going to be able to do this successfully is to make sure that we stay filled with the kind of life that God wants to pour into us.

How can we make sure that we stay full of this kind of life? We must be willing to commit ourselves to prayer and the reading of God’s Word, and to staying under the preaching of God’s Word in our local church. These have to become non-negotiable in our lives, if we are going to pour out the right stuff to our kids. We must also be willing to separate ourselves from the temptation of the world around us and quickly confess our sins to God when we have allowed the world to ensnare us. Nothing drains the ‘right kind of life’ out of a mother more quickly than a day without God’s Word, a week without going to church, and a heart that loves the world and is filled with unconfessed sin.

Being the right kind of life giving mothers will truly encompass all that is about us and stretch all that is within us. If we are going to make it, we must allow the exhaustion of it all to draw us closer to God as we beg Him to fill us up again from His incredible well spring of life. If we will, I believe that He will use that opportunity to pour His strength and power into us and allow us to pass onto our children the abundant kind of life that will allow them to grow up and become the right kind of life givers as well.

