

CHRISTIAN HEADS, HEARTS, AND HANDS

ARTICLES TO FORM US AS FOLLOWERS OF “THE WAY”

Motherhood: A Call to Arms

By Rachel Jankovic

As another Mother’s Day rolls around, we find ourselves floating in a sea of sentimental, loving, and sweet words on the things that mothers do for us. It is good to recognize, appreciate, and honor all of that, but it is not what I want to do today. I want to pull back the sentiment and look at the unbelievably powerful position that God has called his women to.

Yes, I intentionally said “his women,” and not just those women who are mothers. Womankind in this sense is the same thing as *motherkind*. If you are a woman in Christ and obedient to him, you are just as much a part of this archetypal feminine power as those who have borne children.

I once spoke to a room that was crowded with pregnant bellies, nursing infants, and fat toddlers. You almost always see this kind of power thinned out in a crowd, but not in this room. Looking at it head-on and packed together was breathtaking. I was reminded of this glorious passage in Song of Solomon where the husband says of his bride, “Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?” (Song 6:10, KJV). The loveliness and fearsomeness only compounds when the bride becomes a mother. It’s no wonder that the world is so unsettled by Christian women bearing children — it is a fearsome thing.

Babies Change the World

There is a nineteenth-century poem that ends each stanza with this high-octane refrain: “For the hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world.” The second verse of Psalm 8 gives us a surprisingly similar take on how God views motherhood. It tells us what he thinks of the babies themselves.

Out of the mouth of babies and infants,
You have established strength
Because of your foes,
To still the enemy and the avenger.

If the purpose of our infants is this God-ordained strength, which he is using to silence the enemy, then motherhood is hardly beside the point to womanhood. It is hardly beside the point to kingdom work, or to cultural transformation.

Motherhood is central to the calling of women because it is central to the creational power that God has bestowed on us. This is our strength, this is our glory, and this is our true power. We make babies, and babies change the world.

The Modern “Woman”

Modern women are starving for power. They are marching, demanding, and fighting — doing everything they can do — to try to obtain a sense of power because they are painfully aware of a feminine power shortage. The horrible irony is that they trample on the bodies of infants — demanding abortion rights as essential to feminine strength. But it is all a perverting of the truly shocking feminine power — that of childbearing, that which they are discarding.

We have been slowly brought to believe that empowered women are those who have detached themselves from fertility. We stand by feeling embarrassed of our bellies, while intentionally infertile

shells of women despise our childbearing, as though it was a hobby for the low-achieving and undereducated. They take the glory and the awe out of sex, both the act itself and the incredible archetypes God wrote into human sexuality. Love that is creational. Mankind and womankind, constantly creating new men and new women.

They have persuaded us that there is no fight in motherhood, no value to children in marriage.

Your Part in Ruling the World

“Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring” (Malachi 2:15).

Your work with your children matters. Your pouring out of your life for theirs matters. They matter. Because God made it so. He ordained strength to come into the world in this way. He seeks godly offspring. That growing belly, those hungry cries in the night, the comfort of your breasts, the arms wrapped around your leg, the child on your hip, the teen in the car with you, the smile around freshly lost teeth, the weight in the stroller you are pushing — this is your strength, this is your power, this is your hand doing its part in ruling the world.

I can already hear all of the objections coming at me — all of the horror that I would say the power of women is in bearing children (as though that was not amazing). Can we really only have power in our biological functions? Of course not. Isn't there more to our lives than cranking out babies? Absolutely.

You need to follow up that glorious act by raising them up to fear the Lord, to love him with their whole hearts and minds and souls and strength. And how are we to do that? We will do it first by loving him with our whole hearts. We will love him with our whole minds. We will love him with our whole souls. And we will love him with our whole strength, including the strength of making babies.

Spurgeon says, “Those who think that a woman detained at home by her little family is doing nothing think the reverse of what is true. . . . Mothers, the godly training of your offspring is your first and most pressing duty.” If you don't have children, or aren't married, you are still called to live like you are part of this glorious archetypical motherkind — you are called to live like a woman who would honor God in her mothering, because you honor God in your whole life, embracing his design and purpose for women as a whole, and for yourself as a woman.

Fit for Nothing Less

Imagine all the playgrounds in your city. Imagine all of them full of children who know what it means to be loved. They know God and know his people — hearts full of the stories of his faithfulness. Swings weighed down by children who are living in the joy of the Lord — children who know who they are and what they are for. Now ask yourself: in what kind of a city would that be the case? What would it mean if every playground in our country was full of Christian children? It would mean you were in a Christian country.

When Paul describes the duties of Christian women in Titus 2:3-5, he is not describing some kind of retirement home for the delicate — where we are to be discreet and chaste and love our husbands and love our babies because we are fit for nothing else. He is describing our battle stations. He is saying we are fit for nothing less.

Paul is describing the role of a good woman in making the kind of children you just pictured on that playground. He is calling women to their powerful, and glorious, and world-changing work — the great good work, his work, of silencing the enemy and the avenger.