

**What God Loves in a Mother**  
**Proverbs 6:16-19**  
**Englewood Baptist Church**  
**Sunday Morning, May 9, 2010**

Open your Bible to Proverbs 6.

I have been preaching a series of messages on the subject of “The Family.” Today I would like to talk to all the Moms in the room. Today is Mother’s Day, a special day for us. Even though this holiday isn’t found in our Bibles, there is certainly much material in Scripture pertaining to the importance of paying honor to our parents. Mothers are worthy of such honor and recognition.

This week, I asked some Englewood mothers two questions. I conducted a survey. What do Moms love and what do Moms hate? There are certain things that mothers cherish and certain things that they detest. So tell me. Here are a few answers of the top answers on the board. One mother said...

**Englewood Mothers Said,**  
**“I love...”**

- *Power walks with my adult children and my ability to keep up as mature adult.*
- *Watching my adult children teach God's principles to my grandchildren.*
- *Being told "I love you Mom" even with his buddies are around.*
- *When my child explains his philosophy of life and it just so happens to be what I've have been "preaching" to him for his entire life.*
- *When my adult sons take time from their busy lives to spend quality time with me without their families, so we can talk or have lunch together.*
- *Hearing my children sing praise songs at the top of their lungs while listening to the Christian music station instead of the pop station.*

**Englewood Mothers Said,**  
**“I hate...”**

- *Letting my children get in that car and drive off by themselves for the first time.*
- *Being so far away from my children that I am unable to brush away the hurt they go through.*
- *Being separated from my children during a storm!*
- *When they leave for college and their bedrooms are empty.*
- *That my daughter can beat me at Scrabble now!*

Those are just a few things that mothers love and a few things that they hate. In this passage in Proverbs 6 that I have asked you to turn to, we discover 7 things that God in heaven detests. He doesn’t care for these things. This morning, I’m going to flip them upside down and state them in a positive way to describe 7 Qualities God Loves in a Mother. Of course, these are qualities

that God loves in ALL people, so this sermon is for both men and women, but my application today is going to focus in on the Moms.

Let's read the passage together: Proverbs 6:16-19.

### ***7 Ways to Please God***

#### ***1. Be humble.***

Look at vv.16-17...arrogant eyes is number one on God's list of despised things. He is speaking against pride—the sin that gives birth to a litter of other sins. Arrogant or haughty eyes describe the conceited woman. She thinks that she is “high and mighty” and unfortunately, she is mistaken. The NT says that God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. What that means is, the Lord loves to partner with unassuming servants, he refuses to partner with puffed up people. Wherever he sees pride, he seeks to smash it.

Notice that pride is an attitude more than action. Do you realize that God despises our bad attitudes as much as he does our bad behavior? For this reason, we should be like a soldier posted in the watchtower searching our lives for pride. Like a virus in the preschool, pride is hard to see and yet easy to catch.

What is pride? Pride is that secret competition that takes place between people. Nobody talks about it, the contest is always raging on. We are prideful when we compare ourselves to other people and we view ourselves as more valuable and important. Listen to what C.S. Lewis says on the topic.

***Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man. We say that people are proud of being rich, or clever, or good-looking, but they are not. They are proud of being richer, or cleverer, or better-looking than others. If everyone else became equally rich, or clever, or good-looking there would be nothing to be proud about. It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest. —C.S. Lewis***

Don't be this way, God says. Humble people are not trying to compete with others to see who's the coolest, or the trendiest, or who has the body that's in the best shape. And so Paul says, “Don't think of others as competitors; think of them as your superiors.” He writes to the Philippians:

***<sup>3</sup>Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup>Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Phil. 2:3-4***

Are you prideful? Do you compare yourself with others? Mothers, be careful when you begin to compete with other mothers and you begin keep score in your mind. Be careful when you think thoughts like this:

- “Hmmm. My children are better behaved than her children.”
- “Her house is dirty. My house is cleaner.”

- “My husband has an important job. Her husband has a worthless job.”
- “My baby weight is gone! Hers is still there!”

Do you know what that is? It’s comparing yourself to others. And God hates it. You are developing arrogant eyes.

Be humble. God loves that.

## **2. Be honest.**

V. 17, a lying tongue is detestable to God. Children have the most difficult time with this one. At some age, they begin telling lies to get themselves out of trouble. “Who broke that vase?” “I don’t know.” That’s a lie. He does know. “Where were you last night?” “I was at Jacob’s house.” That’s a lie. He was at Taylor’s house, and they were up to no good. Kids lie sometimes, and it’s wrong.

Unfortunately, though, some children never grow out of this habit of deception. They mature into adults and they lie about the amount of money it’s going to cost to do this project because they want more profit. They lie about their age because they want to buy that case of drinks. They lie on their timecards because they want 38 hours of pay, not the 33 that they actually put it. If you and I are not careful, we lie. And we justify the lies.

But God loves an honest heart. Turn with me over to Proverbs 24:26. This is what it says, “*He who gives an honest answer gives a kiss on the lips.*”

Now let’s talk about this. We all know what the best part of every wedding ceremony is...at least for the groom. He stands there in a complete daze as I preach about the meaning of marriage. It’s almost like he’s looking right through me as I speak about the covenant and the commitment of this sacred tie. However, there is this one line that seems to snap every groom out of his haze, “You may kiss your bride.” And he does not kiss her on the cheek. He does not kiss her forehead. He does not kiss her hand or the ring.” He kisses her on the lips. He desires it. And that soft kiss brings intimacy.

So what does a kiss on the lips and an honest answer have in common? Here’s the connection. Honestly leads to intimacy. Honesty brings people closer together and it brings people closer to God. Deception, on the other hand, drives a wedge between two people. Lies destroy relationships.

Are you an honest person? Or do you twist the truth? Do you often cover your tracks with little lies? Don’t do it! God loves an honest person. #3, if you want to please God...

## **3. Defend the innocent.**

V. 17, God hates hands that shed innocent blood. What a timely moment for me to discuss the current state of abortion in America. Unborn children are, without question, among the innocent.

No unborn child has committed a crime, or made a poor choice, or caused someone pain or shame. And yet, their lives are taken from them every day.

Abortion Statistics:

- **In 2005—Approximately 1.21 MILLION ABORTIONS took place in the U. S.** Do you know how many lives were lost in World Trade Center attack? Thousands. And this country was outraged by that senseless loss of life...and rightly so. But every year in America, over a million people are killed, and nothing is done about it.
- **From 1973—2005, more than 45 million legal abortions occurred in the U.S.** (and this is just the legal abortions.)
- **Twenty-two percent of all U.S. pregnancies end in abortion.** 1 in 5 babies is never born.

I want to be very sensitive about this issue today because I am well aware that in a congregation this size, there are women who have made this mistake in the past. If that's you, I declare that God's grace is bigger than all of our failures. There's nothing you have done that God won't forgive you for. We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

But the church must not be silent on this issue. God expects us to rise up and fight the battle for the unborn. Today, here is a simple way to do that. Just pick up one of these bottles and fill it up with coins and bills. You are saving lives. God loves that.

Number 4 and 5. I place these together. If you want to please God...

#### **4. (and 5). Plot and scheme good works for others.**

V.18, says this, "A heart that plots wicked schemes is detestable to Him." I'm going to tie these two together since there is much similarity. This speaks to those who are bent on evil. God has little patience for those who have feet who like to run to into evil and for those whose heart is inclined to bad behavior. It was Judas in the New Testament who went under the cover of darkness and plotted with the Jewish leaders to kill Jesus. It was the Pharisees, we are told, who were constantly searching for a way to harm Christ. These people are no model for us today. Instead, we should realize that we were created, not to do evil, but to do good. Ephesians 2:10 says...

***For we are His creation—created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time so that we should walk in them. Eph 2:10***

God created you and prepared you for good works. And someone says, "But Christianity isn't about earning our spot in heaven. Salvation is not about works." That's right, salvation is not about works, but sanctification is! We become more Christlike as we do good works on His behalf.

Now, let me be clear about works. This is not a contest, so we don't serve with the motive of getting a leg up on others. And it's also not a wage, that we should think God loves us more on

the days when we mow our neighbor's grass. Good works are not tied to God's love. Good works are the fruit of your salvation and the fruit of your lifestyle shows which tree you belong to. As Jesus said, "A good tree doesn't bear bad fruit, and a bad tree doesn't bear good fruit."

So which tree do you belong to?

Let me give you...

### **Five Ideas for Plotting Good.**

- **Write a lengthy letter of encouragement to someone on your heart.** People keep these letters in a special place and pull them out years later. Do you know why? Because words of affirmation make us feel good. Lift a person's spirit this week by writing a heartfelt note. Plot and scheme it.
- **Take a day off of work and do a project for someone.** Maybe you have a neighbor with a broken fence or a family member with an unpainted kitchen. Plot and scheme. What good thing could you do this week for someone, so that they would say, "you did that for me? Wow!"
- **Volunteer for a leadership role at Englewood.** Our ministers are always short on help. We have no ministry with a leadership surplus. There are dozens of opportunities for people to serve and to give! Become a volunteer servant.
- **Take a tour of RIFA or Area Relief Ministries or Birth Choice ministries.** These are three ministries that we partner closely with. All three of these ministries are seeking to do good in our community and to help the hurting. Take 30 minutes and go to their place of operation and say, "Can you tell me what goes on here?" You will be amazed. There is so much good going on in this community that you don't even know about! See if the Lord lays something on your heart. Be open.
- **Give someone an unexpected gift.** Maybe you can help a young person go on a mission trip by paying for a portion of the trip. Maybe you could buy a friend a book that has helped you in the past. Maybe you can have flowers delivered to a person you know is having a difficult month or year.

These little acts of service matter. They matter to people, but importantly, they matter to God. We were created in advance to do good works, so be sneaky and plan something kind for someone this week. Show that your feet are quick to run to what is good.

Number 6, here's how you can please God...

### **6. Find something positive to say about people.**

V. 19, "a lying witness who gives false testimony" grieves the heart of God. This is a second form of lying, as I talked about earlier, but it's a more specific situation. It's not only a lie, but it's a lie told to make another person look bad.

Scripture says that "a good name is better than fine perfume or great riches." It's better to have a great reputation than it is a great fortune. Money can be lost and regained with hard work, but a man's integrity can rarely be regained once it is lost. So God says to us, "Don't muddy the

waters of other men and women. Let them muddy their own waters.” It’s not your job to tell the world that someone is dishonest or lazy or controlling. Let the Lord be the judge and the avenger. Don’t use your tongue as a weapon.

And you say, “Well, I don’t do that. I don’t post things on my Facebook about people. I don’t spread gossip about others deliberately.” Maybe not. We rarely slander deliberately. We prefer to conceal our slander and say things like this:

“Mr. So and So...He’s a good man. I appreciate what he’s done in this community. It’s just too bad that his own children don’t respect him. Hmm. Can’t figure out what went wrong.”

“Mrs. So and So...She’s a nice lady. She is very kind. You gotta watch out, though. Some people say that she is a different person behind closed doors.”

Now, what good are statements like that? They are no good. They don’t help anybody and they surely don’t glorify the Lord. God doesn’t want us dragging people down with our tongues. If he wants to humble a person, he will do so. So don’t tear people down or spread news that may or may not be true about them. Instead, keep a tight rein on your tongue, and say something positive when you can.

## **7. Be a peacemaker.**

V. 19...one who stirs up trouble among the brothers and sisters...this person dishonors and displeases God.

Most commentators agree that this Hebrew poetry is written in such a way that there is a climax in meaning. Notice v.16 says, there are 6 things, yes 7 that are detestable to God. That seventh thing is the highest on the list. God hates it supremely when a person does this. What is it? He causes trouble in the church, among the brothers and sisters...someone who starts a family fight and stirs up trouble.

Even a cursory glance at Ephesians 6 will help you understand how God sees the world. This fallen world is a beautiful place, but it’s a broken place. In many ways, it’s a war zone, and that’s why Ephesians tells us to put on the full armor of God so that we can stand against the devil. The devil is always trying to find an open door in the church. He loves to cause trouble and to divide people one from another.

You see, the family of God is supposed to be a source of strength, inspiration, and encouragement. This gathering of believers is supposed to be our lifeline, a reservoir of faith for us, the reinforcements in our weekly battles. How sad it is then, when a person decides to divide the church by forcing an agenda.

And listen, these agendas always sound noble to the ear and they appear pleasant on paper as good. It might be a frustration about our missions strategy, or about a particular program that was stopped, or a musical selection that was offered, or a decision that was made about property, or a conflict that took place between two staff people three years ago, or something else. There

are a thousand reasons to fight inside the church. But there's one reason why we should refrain. God hates it. Of all the things on his list, number 7 is the highest, a person that seeks to fracture his family.

Mothers, look at your own family first. Do you like to stir the pot and create drama, or do you seek serve others and be a blessing to them? Are you a peacemaker in your family?

Now think about the church. Inside the church, do you squelch rumors and choose to believe the best about people, or do you criticize others and look for reasons to complain. Are you a peacemaker in the body of Christ.

God loves it when we stir up love in the family. God loves it when a family chooses to stick together.