



— 5-DAY —

Mother's Day

DEVOTIONAL

By Melody Stampley



In May, with Mother's Day in the U.S., we give extra attention to moms—bouquets, gifts, quality time, and church services filled with appreciation. These are ways we show our love. But the most important love a mother can receive is the love of the Father.

God knows that motherhood is one of the most challenging and rewarding roles a woman can have. He understands the joys, struggles, comfort, hurt, confidence, anxiety, togetherness, and loneliness that come with it. He sees both the sacrifices and the days when appreciation goes unspoken.

To God, mothers are His daughters first—beautiful, precious, and cherished. We always need His love, guidance, provision, and protection.

Learning what God says about moms is one of the best things we can do for ourselves. Nurturing is best when done from a full cup—and there's no better source than Him.

When you surrender your—and your family—to Christ, you can be the wife, mom, and woman you're called to be.

In this devotional, we'll spend some time in scripture and discover God's heart, desires, and plan for mothers. Over the next five days, let's look to His Word and learn how to love everyone in our lives, starting with our Heavenly Father.



Melody Stampley

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DAY ONE

WATERING THE ROOTS



John 15:1-5 (NIV) "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes[a] so that it will be even more fruitful. 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. 5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

Have you ever bitten into a bad fruit? Maybe the fruit looked good, but when you bit into it, nothing could be further from the truth. Most likely, the tree or plant the fruit came from was rooted in bad soil, and that's why, even though the fruit looked just like any other healthy fruit, it was no good.

In John 15:1-5, we learn that we are like trees that are meant to bear fruit. God is the gardener. He is not just concerned about pruning and watering. He is also responsible for the soil.

The tree has to depend on the gardener for everything it needs to bear plenty of good fruit. If we don't rely on the gardener... if we don't cut off what doesn't belong or what grows too wild, and if we don't root ourselves in good soil that receives clean water and nutrients, something will go wrong with our fruit.

An apple tree can produce hundreds of apples in one season. That's a lot of fruit from just one tree. But that also means it needs an even greater source. The woman--not just the mother--God desires us to be is one who can bear much fruit. He wants us to be healthy enough to produce plenty within our lives, our families, and our communities.

It's a big responsibility and expectation. It's also an honor and a blessing. One tree can produce fruit that's bigger than itself. And it can only do this with the main source. That's also the case for you and me... Let God be your main source and He will give you everything you need.

Self Reflect:

What is one thing you can do to depend on God for strength?

How can you build a stronger, loving relationship with the Lord?

DAY TWO



WATERING THE VESSEL (TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF)

John 15:9-11 (NIV) "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. 11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete."

Think back to a time you did everything you wanted to do to make yourself feel better. Indulge in your favorite desserts and comfort foods, lounge on the couch watching your favorite movies, go shopping, or pamper yourself at the spa. For those short moments, maybe these things made you feel better. But after the gratification faded, you may have felt empty again.

When this happens, it's because we're feeding our flesh, not our soul. In John 15, Jesus shows us that our own true joy comes from loving Him. It can be a difficult concept to wrap our heads around at times. Put simply...when we feed ourselves with junk, we're going to feel like junk, and our output will be junk; but when we feed ourselves with Jesus, the only One who is good, we drink from His well, where we can become enriched abundantly to nourish everyone around us.

Feeding our flesh with its desires will only bring us happiness, which is temporary. And when we rely on temporary happiness for fuel, we're going to get burned out.

Feeding our soul, our innermost being where the Holy Spirit dwells, is something completely different. It brings us joy, which is everlasting. Joy doesn't depend on our circumstances, but on our hope and faith in Christ Jesus. And when you have the joy of the Lord, a full relationship with Christ, you have the strength to wake up, love yourself, tackle the day, rest peacefully, and do it all over again.

Seek the Lord first and let the Holy Spirit show you how to love yourself above your family. It's the only way you can truly learn how to love.

Self Reflect:

Ask God to show you how to recognize when you're prioritizing others over yourself.

What steps can you take to take better care of yourself?

Who can help keep you accountable and encourage you to take time out for yourself?

DAY THREE



WATERING CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS

Proverbs 31:10-31 (NIV) "A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. She gets up while it is still night; she provides food for her family and portions for her female servants. She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night. In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.

When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet. She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple. Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes. She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all." Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate."

Psalms 37:4 (NIV) "Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart."

When I first read about the Proverbs 31 woman, I was in disbelief to say the least. My first thought was: Well, I am definitely not this woman!

I've read Proverbs 31 a few times since then and I think I've taken something new from it each time...

For starters, a husband is blessed to find his Proverbs 31 wife. Not only does he honor her, but he is respected because of her. She is always working for the benefit of her family. She's dependable, trustworthy, resourceful, creative, wise, responsible, hardworking, valuable, and multitalented.

Secondly, the Proverbs 31 mother is loved dearly by her children. They see that she is blessed. Her family clearly puts a lot of their trust in her, because they would be lost without her.

Most importantly--what I felt the Holy Spirit personally showing me--is that the Proverbs 31 woman can be many things at once, but maybe she doesn't have to be all these things.

You can be a Proverbs 31 woman if you're single or widowed. In 1 Corinthians 7:8, the Bible clearly states that, for some, it is better for them this way. But if it is your desire to find a companion in the future, Psalm 37:4 instructs us to delight in the Lord, and He will grant our heart's desires. You can also be this woman of honor even if you have just one of the many talents the Proverbs 31 woman has. You can be this woman even if you don't have children but have friends, coworkers, nieces, nephews, or mentees instead.

DAY THREE

WATERING CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS



Self Reflect:

How do you identify with the Proverbs 31 woman?

What steps can you take to take better care of yourself?

DAY FOUR

WATERING OTHERS WITH PURPOSE



Proverbs 11:25 (NIV) "A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed."

Proverbs 31:15 (NIV) "She gets up while it is still night; she provides food for her family and portions for her female servants."

Proverbs 31:21 (NIV) "She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy."

Proverbs 31:26 (NIV) "She speaks with wisdom and faithful instruction is on her tongue."

Proverbs 31:31 (NIV) "Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate."

Not only is the Proverbs 31 woman all about her family, but we can see that she even takes time out for others. Proverbs 11 is one of the reasons why this is important. Being a breath of fresh air to others with generosity and kindness is good for both the giver and the receiver. Once your cup is filled, it's your turn to overflow into the cups of others. And as you continue to pour, more will be poured back into your cup. Yes, this involves your money, but giving transcends finances into our resources, our time, and our talents.

Like the apple tree from Day 1 that bears plenty of good fruit, we are capable of so much more than we know. We're blessed by God to be a blessing to others. Yes, we're meant to be a blessing to our husbands and our kids. But we're also blessed to be a blessing to our parents, our extended families, our friends, our coworkers, our neighbors, our church, and our communities.

You're not "just one person." You are a woman of God He has blessed abundantly to nurture, guide, love, encourage, and inspire others. And because of your loving dedication and commitment to how you serve them, they will go on to be a blessing to others. And to God... that's more than enough.

Self Reflect:

How can you make a difference outside your home?

Other than your family, who in your circle can you help and influence?

DAY FIVE



WATERED WITH GRACE (LETTING GO OF PERFECTION)

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (NIV) ...“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

At the risk of criticism, I want to be vulnerable and share about something that recently happened...

I decided to take my son to a new park to let him run out all the energy he has. When we first got to the park, there was a playground with no one in sight. My 2-year-old pretty much took off to explore right away. About 20 to 30 minutes later, two ladies brought a group of big kids, who took over both areas of the playground.

They weren't causing trouble or anything. Just being kids, having fun. I thought about leaving, because I didn't want him to get hurt. But I decided to just stay closer while he studied how the big kids got on the swings, climbed the ladders, and swung on the monkey bars all by themselves. Before the big kids got on the swings, I steered him away from the empty swings and told him to stay away from them, because if he got in the way when someone was using them, he could get hurt. I did this about two or three more times before he made his way over to the slides and monkey bars... and then by some trees.

Ten minutes later, my son became re-interested in the swings, and to my dismay, he meandered too close. I saw exactly what was about to happen and I repeated, "Don't get so close...!" I didn't finish my sentence. I was only 5 feet behind him, but that was still too far away. Then, *Bang!* The next second he was on the ground. I quickly scooped my son up as he cried out.

Thankfully, he stopped crying just one minute later, and he appeared like nothing ever happened. I think the look of horror on my face made him cry more than the pain from the collision did. Needless to say, I regretted staying at that park. I kept lecturing myself for hours, *Why didn't we just leave? Why didn't I just stop him from walking over to the swings in the first place? Why didn't I pull him out of the way in time? How could I be so foolish?*

I felt like such a bad mom. Like I should've been able to make a better decision. But I was reminded that I'm not perfect. And it's okay, because God never asked me to be.

I've learned my lesson from that day at the park: that the feeling in my gut is probably actually the Holy Spirit or wisdom, at the very least. But more importantly, I learned that, 1) I'm not going to make all the right decisions and I will make many more mistakes, 2) I'm not going to be there to protect my son from everything, 3) when I'm not able to protect my son, God always is, 4) that's why I need to depend on His strength, especially when I'm weak, and 5) even though I'm an imperfect mom--and a person, as a whole--I'm still more than enough to everyone who loves me because of God's mercy and grace.

The next time you, dear Mom, mess up... I pray you'll read 2 Corinthians and remember these truths--nothing else. Water yourself with as much grace as you can. God knows we need it, and He's perfectly fine with that.

Thank you for spending these past five days with me. May God's Word continue to lead and guide your life through all of the challenging and cherishable moments to come.

DAY FIVE



WATERED WITH GRACE (LETTING GO OF PERFECTION)

Self Reflect:

How can you better embrace your imperfections?

Who can you depend on to encourage you when you make mistakes?

Who can you invite to do this devotion with?

