



## Honoring Mom By Pastor Kevin

Only recently did it occur to me that children of all ages across the Niagara region are probably facing a crisis. Kids are lying awake at night, tossing and turning, losing sleep, grades suffering because of one simple question they can't shake:

*What in the world am I going to get my mom for Mother's Day?*

Okay, so maybe it's not a crisis of pandemic proportions. Nonetheless, maybe we could all use a refresher on the importance of a day like this, and perhaps the younger generations might appreciate a little help in getting the creative juices flowing when it comes to selecting that something-special for the lady who carried you in her stomach for nine months!

Before we get to that, let me offer a few suggestions of things NOT to buy mom for Mother's Day. Kids, the following list contains words of timeless wisdom acquired by those who have gone before you (and sacrificed much in the process!):

- 1) Don't buy anything that plugs in. What may be seen as a convenience in your eyes might be viewed as yet another thing for mom to do.
- 2) Never—I repeat, NEVER— buy clothing that involves sizes. Though I have never conducted a scientific survey of any kind, I'm sure statistics clearly show that only 1 man or child in about 3 million has a chance of getting this one right. You could perform a middle-of-the-night, covert operation into the depths of your mom's closet that would make Jack Bauer proud; even this attempt to find the right size rarely increases our chances of success. Kids, I wish I could explain this, but I can't; it's just true.
- 3) Don't buy anything from that annoying guy on TV that sells the "Sham-Wow!"
- 4) Don't buy anything that involves weight loss. Should you choose to ignore my advice and tie a pretty pink bow around a can of Slim-Fast, be sure to tape my card to the top of the can for the mandatory counseling sessions that are most definitely in your mom's future.
- 5) Most importantly, never believe your mom when she tells you: "Don't make a big deal about it." I'm pretty sure that's mommy-talk for: "After everything I've done for you, you better get this right!" Kids, listen to everything your mom says, including this. But if you have any plans to stay in her will, make a big deal. **Always** make a big deal.

Fortunately, the Bible gives more important counsel than this. In fact, this idea of honoring our mothers is so foundational to life that God included it in the Ten Commandments:

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long  
in the land that the Lord your God is giving you" (Exodus 20:12, ESV)

So what does it mean to honor someone? In Old Testament Jewish culture, the concept of honor was a cornerstone. To honor someone meant to treat them with respect because of their position or role. It was an act done or a word spoken that conveyed to the one being honored how much they are valued.

Even today, this concept of honor is alive and well. Athletes are honored for outstanding achievements. Others receive Nobel Prizes or the Pulitzer Prize or any number of bowls, cups, or plates that celebrate an important accomplishment. Actors and actresses are honored with anything from a Grammy to an Oscar to a Golden Globe ... and someday if we're all lucky enough ... a golden Sham-Wow!

But the Bible says that honoring your mother (and your father, too) is bigger than a gift and a card. When Moses gave this commandment to the people, he followed it up a little while later with these words: "Whoever curses (or dishonors) his father or mother shall be put to death" (Exodus 21:17). The idea is clear: honor is what your parents deserve. In short, love, respect, and appreciate them every day, not just on the one day each year that is set aside for their recognition.

### ***Beyond the Flowers***

Kids, there is no honor in the Value Village boxer shorts you've been getting dad for Father's Day. In the same way, use this Mother's Day to go beyond the nice flowers and the card. Those are great gifts and still very appropriate, but what can you do this year to leave no doubt in mom's mind that you honor her? Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Give mom a gift card to her favorite coffee shop. Tell her it entitles her to a few hours on her own with a warm drink and her favorite book.
- Make your bed. Clean your room. Make your own breakfast. For many kids, these things rank up there with going to the dentist or popping zits. But think about the joy it will give your mom when you do something for yourself that she normally does for you. Better yet, make her breakfast and she just might love you in ways that will embarrass you in front of your friends for the rest of your life. But hey, she's your mom, she's worth it.
- Tell your mom you are praying for her. Every once in a while, ask her if there is something special you can pray about for her.
- Be creative. Think about the stuff your mom really likes, and find a way to honor her with that.
- No kids in your house? Offer a single mom an afternoon alone while you watch her kids.
- Unless your mom is totally in love with the Sham-Wow, stay far, far away from it.
- After you've honored your mom on Mother's Day, do any of these things again for her on any other day.

For all of us dads, a quick word of caution, and it may be one of the more important lessons: Let your children honor their mother. Be involved in guiding your kid's thoughts, ideas, and plans, but when it comes to executing that plan, let the kids be the ones to honor their mother.

Moses makes the purpose of the commandment very clear: "that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you." In some ways, this was a promise made specifically to the people of Israel but there are still some practical realities for us today. We don't honor our parents just for the sake of living to an old age, but we do this so our family can enjoy the ongoing blessings God intended when we live according to his plan.

Whatever you end up doing, make sure your mom knows how much you love, respect, and value her. After all, honor is what your parents deserve.