

Welcome

TITLE SLIDE

Happy Mother's Day

Mothers Survey

Announcements

What does Mother's Day mean - kick off for the Baby Bottles Drive.

Introduction

This message is like no other I have ever prepared for. I have told you that at 3:30 in the morning God wakes me up and gives me a message - He fleshes it all out and then tells me to go out and don't mess it up.

This one came to me in the middle of the movie theater. I'm just sitting there minding my own business, eating my wife's popcorn that I didn't want any of when she ordered it and God says "Why don't you talk about this?" So I said Cool!

Three Parts to today's message:

Part One - Since it is Mother's Day, I want to start with a tribute to Mother's.

Part Two - We are going to explore a link between Pastor Roland's messages about Being In Christ and Christ being in Us and Becoming a member of the Family of Christ.

And Part Three - I would like to share a bit about our Family story and a bit about the movie.

But, before we go any further, Let's go to Prayer.

Part One - Mothers

Mothers - Everybody has one

They shape our lives - first love, food, protection

Dad's we are pretty helpless - we are not completely useless, we do get the dirty diaper part but for quite a while we can only assist with food at the other end. We get better as time goes on but in the long run - mothers have those deep conversations with their kids and dad's just grunt.

I now have two grandchildren - Jack and Charlie. Which means that two of my sons are now dads - how amazing is that? I get to watch them grow into fathers which is really cool. I have one who is quickly discovering that "EVERYTHING IS FINE" is no longer an acceptable answer to, well...ANYTHING! Life is changing and it is so cool to be there for them - if they ever thought they needed help.

But Mom's you deserve your special day - you are incredible and we take you for granted. Shame on us and I speak for every one of us today - we are sorry and you are the greatest.

SLIDE 1 Check out these verses: Proverbs 31: 15-17

Look at how great this verse is.

*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*

What a vision of an incredible woman. And this is just a snapshot out of Proverbs 31 entirely dedicated to the **The Wife of Noble Character**.

Dad's the closest we get is something like "Fathers don't exasperate your children..."

If you want to give your mother or the mother of your children a special gift, read to her Proverbs 31 and insert her name whenever the word 'she' pops up. Yep - you will be a superhero.

Mother's we thank you, we love you, and you make everything groovy.

Let's give moms one more round of applause.

Part Two - Children - Families

Now, let's begin this transition from Pastor's messages of our personal relationship with Christ and His with Us into this concept of the Family.

Pastor asked me if I wanted to continue diving into Romans Chapter 8 and I thought, nope - I could really mess that up. But as he was

finishing up last week with Chapter 8 verses 12-13, I peeked ahead and found that the next verse spoke directly to the message that God had given me for today - imagine that.

Look with me if you will at:

SLIDE 2

Romans 8:14

“For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.”

OK Pastor - can you pick it up from there next week? Thanks.

This is the transition from Christ being here in person, raising from the dead, re-visiting his disciples and telling them of the Holy Spirit that would guide them from that day until His return.

So He is saying that if you are led by the Holy Spirit then you are the children of God.

And stick with me - children need WHAT? - a family.

The Bible is filled with verses that sing of family and community and the power of being part of the Church.

In fact, 23% of all verses in the New Testament speak of family or community. And did you know that 86% of all statistics are made up?

SLIDE 3

Later in Romans 12:5 we see this transformation from self into something called a member...

“...so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.”

And the power of the family is evident in our ability to care for one another, serve one another, teach and learn from one another, pray for one another and the Great Commandment - Love One Another.

SLIDE 4

In Galatians 6:2 we see this call to care for one another - to actually carry the burden of another.

“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ”

SLIDE 5

In Matthew 18:20 a very familiar passage where we are encourage to get together with others and Jesus will meet us there.

“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”

Notice that in each of these verses, Christ is with us as we join others - we don't leave Him and He does not leave us when we join the Family – because we are HIS children – we are now part of HIS family. And the Church is HIS family on earth.

Right now I want to set the groundwork for an alter call. Over the past few months, you have been encouraged to come down and answer

the call to enter into a personal relationship with Christ. Now I want you to start thinking about what it would be like to belong to an entire family of believers - make the Church your personal family. I'm going to come back to this later.

One last verse of family.

SLIDE 6

Of course, my life verse: John 15:13

“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

This is the perfect transition into Part 3

Part 3 - Our Story

SLIDE 7

You know, when I was traveling in Central America with mission teams, I was always awestruck by the personal tragedy and miracles of the testimonies of the people I met. I felt that these people truly had something that was worthy of sharing - something that captured the true essence of being saved by grace or what it was really like to experience a real intervention of some kind or a story of severe hardship that only a loving God could remedy.

I kept thinking who is ever going to find inspiration in my bad haircut or my lack of fashion sense. My life is boring compared to the stories I have heard in the field.

But, over time, I have found that Christ can use anyone and any part of their story to spread His message. AMEN!

So, today, I want to share a portion of our personal testimony - a story of pain and prayer of suffering and hope and of the true meaning and power of family.

Sue tells this story so much better than I do. But, as timing would have it, Sue is in North Carolina this weekend and couldn't be with us in person. So through the miracle of digital media here is Sue.

SUE'S VIDEO

RETURN TO SLIDE 7

OK, that would be enough onto itself, wouldn't it, but there is more.

Remember, I said this entire message came while watching a movie?

Sue and I went to see the movie Breakthrough. How many have seen it? Cool!, I'll try not to spoil it for anyone who hasn't seen it.

When Sue first told me about it - I thought right, a true story of a kid who falls through the ice, is saved by his praying mom and Jesus gets the glory. I don't mean to sound uncaring but this is maybe a 10 minute plot stretched into an hour and half film. But, if my wife wants to go to the movies, I want to go with her.

Here is where it gets personal. In the middle of this movie Christ grabs me by the scruff of my hairy neck and says:

“You are not the only family to have felt the presence of my love in the face of adversity.”

“You are not the only family to be surrounded by prayer and to see miracle after miracle.”

“You are not the only ones to have experienced the power of your church family when you needed them most.”

“Thirteen years ago I was with you just as I was with this family during their deepest time of need.”

“Now, Go out and tell your story!”

Check out these similarities - and for those of you who have seen the movie this will rock you...

Addie falls - an angel - a person we didn't find for two year, witnessed the fall and initiated 911, the first responders were trauma trained, the local hospital stabilized Addie. The helicopter flight to Dartmouth - wait, wait - let me spoil this part. The conversation the pilot has with Mrs. Smith in the movie was the exact same conversation that the pilot had with Sue - this trip is not about you, we are here for your child, if you get air sick, clean it up yourself. Oh and by the way, how much do you weigh?

Things would get worse before they would get better, induced coma, compromised lungs that miraculously clear in time for the critical seven hour surgery and a long but successful recovery.

I said, “God, I did not need to be reminded of that story - I have it memorized by heart.”

He said, “yep but you need to be reminded of the family that surrounded your journey.”

That is the heart of my message today – a reminder of the family that held us together.

God continued...

“I needed to be reminded that not only did Pastor and Suzanne say they were on their way, they drove down in the middle of the night, slept in their car - because there was literally, no room at the inn, and were at Addie’s bedside at the break of dawn on that very first morning. And that was just one of numerous trips that they made to the PICU.

“I need to be reminded that people at work covered for you for two solid weeks and that your sister-in-law set up a voice message that gave every caller a daily update.

“I needed to be reminded that your church family took care of your house, your lawn and your pets every day that you were away without having to be asked.

“I needed to be reminded that prayer teams filled the waiting room daily and that others were in prayer 24 hours a day all around the world.

“I needed to be reminded of the tears of joy you cried when your little girl came out of her coma, squeezed your hand and gave you that beautiful, crooked smile through the tubes and bandages.

“I need to be reminded that the doctors and nurses that worked so hard to keep you little girl alive were in awe of the power of prayer and support that you all showed during our time at Dartmouth.

“I needed to be reminded that when God saved Addie’s life that day, it was because He had unfinished business in line for her. She had to tell her story, become part of HIS YoungLife ministry, study under HIS Fellows Program and graduate in time to celebrate Mother’s Day with her mom and grandmother.

“I had to be reminded that she will do great things.

“And finally, I had to be reminded that there is no way you could have ever endured that tragedy without the help of your church family.

As the verses said...

“They carried your burden.

“They gathered in His name to pray.

“They laid down their lives for you.

Pretty incredible story.

SO, I ask you today - do you have a church family? Are you active in your church? Is there a ministry that is calling your name? For 22 plus years this has been our home, our family.

As I call the worship team back to the stage read these final verses with me.

SLIDE 8

Hebrews 10:24-25

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up on meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

SLIDE 9

1 Peter 4:8-10

“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gifts you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”

SLIDE 10

Joshua 24:15

“But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

If I could have the prayer team come forward. If you have a prayer need today, please come down and let this team pray with you.

And if you are not a part of a church family, we welcome you to meet with Pastor Roland or any member of the Church staff and let them fill you in on what it means to be a member of The Church of the Rock.

Amen.