

Our Dearest Mothers

High points from my presentation on Mother's Day at the Grant's Town Seventh-day Adventist Church, May 11, 2019

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Mothers have an integral part to play in creating a healthy nation and building spirituality in the homes. Fathers, you are to make sure that the mothers of your children are included in the leadership and decision making in the homes. Men, please don't trample over the mothers and treat them like children. They are your equal.

Let us remind ourselves of mothering over the thousands of years.

Come with me to Genesis. You will discover that the first mother was side by side with the first father. You will discover that the instructions were the same to both of them. **Genesis 1:27-28:**

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. ²⁸ God blessed them and **said to them**, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. **Rule over** the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

First Point: In the beginning women/mothers were equal with men/fathers in authority and responsibility. They were to walk side by side as co-equals. They had equal authority over the earth but not over each other.

Some argue that since God made Adam first, naturally he would be the one in charge or the one with greater authority. I ask the question: “What does being created first have to do with authority?” Note that a typical patriarch during Bible times was the first-born son (not daughter) and he became the CEO of the entire family. However, God never followed this tradition when he selected the twelve patriarchs. None of them were the first born. A few were even the last child.

Also, if the order of creation sets the parameters of importance and authority, and since humans were made last, animals would have greater authority than humans. This makes not sense.

What is important to note is that God gave Adam and Eve equal authority and made them equal in his eyes. They have equal vote, voice, authority, access, opportunity and access.

Second point: Because of sin, mothers/women lost the equal value and authority with fathers/men.

Genesis 3:14-15 it tells us about a change that took place as the result of sin. In other words, what we are about to read is a **description of sin and not a prescription to sin.**

¹⁴ So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” ¹⁶ To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”

From then on, there will be a struggle for the control of power between men and women—mothers and fathers. Because of sin, they both

wanted greater authority over the other. However, history would tell us that women lost the struggle and thus women/mothers faded as a co-equals. Hence, laws and traditions were created specifically to lower the value of women and keep them in a subjugated position. Constitution were written, institutions were created, traditions formulated, all to subjugate women.

Classical examples are those teachings created by the Greek philosophers. The ancient Greek philosophers have set the foundation for us believe that mothers/women are not equal to father/men. Read carefully.

Socrates (470-399) taught that "Being born a woman is a divine punishment, since a woman is halfway between a man and an animal."

Aristotle (384-322) taught that "The courage of a man is shown in commanding, of a woman in obeying."

Aristotle also taught that "A female is a deformed male." During the time of Moses women were of no more than sexual property.

Explanation of Genesis 3:14-15. Note carefully that this text is **not an instruction** to the human race about God's plan for us. It is clearly **an explanation to us of what sin caused**. Also note that Jesus came to remove the affects of sin and to return us to the Edenic plan of equality.

Many misinterpret the use of the word "desire" in this passage. Actually, it is not the definition we have in English. The Hebrew word means "an insatiable desire to control another person." Hence, mothers and fathers, because of sin, will seek to control each other instead of live in harmony.

Third point: Mothers became cunning and manipulative.

Mothers are not innocent when it comes to corruption and evil in the world.

Genesis 16:3: So, after living ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai gave her Egyptian slave to Abram as a second wife. ⁴ Abram slept with Hagar, and she became pregnant. When Hagar realized this, she became very proud and began to feel that she was better than Sarai her owner.

Sarah doubted God that she could become pregnant. So, she set it up that her maid would have sex with her husband to have a son. She was jumping ahead of God. This has caused a division and animosity that still exist today in the Middle East.

Because of this action there is the battle in the Middle East still continuing today.

Fourth point, women lost their value and purpose God intended.

The treatment and the role of women began to change, but not as God had planned. It got so evil that women/mothers were reduced from an equal position with fathers to property of fathers—sexual property.

Let us read in **Deuteronomy 22:28-29**: "A man who rapes a maiden, however, (but only if the commission of his crime is witnessed), will pay the victim's father fifty shekels or silver and then marry her, and never be allowed to divorce her."

Numbers 30:3-5: "When a young woman still living in her father's house makes a vow to the Lord or obligates herself by a pledge and her father hears about her vow or pledge but says nothing to her, then all her vows and every pledge by which she obligated herself will stand. But if her father forbids her when he hears about it, none of her vows or the pledges by which she obligated herself will stand; the Lord will release her because her father has forbidden her."

Note this interesting text. Although Moses forbid incest it is forbidden in the context that women are sexual property of men.

Leviticus 18:6-18: brings that out:

"You must never have sexual intercourse with a close relative, for I am the Lord. Do not violate your father by having sexual intercourse with your mother. She is your mother; you must never have intercourse with her. Do not have sexual intercourse with any of your father's wives, for this would violate your father. Do not have sexual intercourse with your sister or half sister, whether she is your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether she was brought up in the same family or somewhere else. Do not have sexual intercourse with your granddaughter, whether she is your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter; that would violate you. Do not have sexual intercourse with the daughter of any of your father's wives; she is your half sister.

A BRIGHT SPOT

There was a bright spot. But it did not last for long It is found in Proverbs 31:10-31. This is a description of noble women who had almost equal authority with men in the community and government. The setting is in Egypt.

Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies.

The Hebrew word "Hayil" translated "noble" in Proverbs 31:10 has various shades of meaning. They are "capability," "skill," "substance," "valor." In fact, it is usually used to describe military might in the Old Testament (Exodus 14:4, 9, 28; Numbers 31:14; 2 Samuels 8:9; Isaiah 10:14; Micah 4:13). Interestingly, another common usage of the Hebrew word "Hayil" is "force" and "strength." It is usually used to describe the strength of mind and body of an individual.

We see this in Ruth 3:11 when Boaz speaks to Ruth. He says, "I know you are of noble character." (NIV) A clear interpretation would be "I know you are one of strength in mind and body." What a beautiful way to describe a woman. Even the Greek equivalent "Aret'," as found in Philippians 3:11, gives one the idea of "force" and "strength."

The setting of this passage is in Egypt where at that time history would tell us that women were more liberated than most other countries around it.

Note that this woman was able to

1. Own her own property
2. Go to the bank by herself
3. Go to college
4. Go to the food store alone
5. Read books
6. Go to a realtor and purchase property
7. Vote for her own politician

We like to read the passage in Proverbs 31 about mothers/women or talk a lot about her, but many men do not really want that kind of liberated, independent woman. She is too independent and self-reliant. They want the women they perceive had to be submissive that is mentioned in Ephesians.

The women in Proverbs 31 in Egypt was closer to what God had planned.

Here's the problem. One thousand years later (after Proverbs was written), in Roman, Corinth, Ephesus, where the Apostle Paul lived, women were once again reduced to sexual property. Being a true mother was taken away from her. Mothers were kept out of school, politics, leadership of any kind. She was treated just like you would treat a dirty pit bull tied outside in the yard. This is why these two verses were written by the apostle Paul. These verses were written to help men elevate mothers to their rightful position—by their

sides. In these countries, men were by law and constitution in charge of women. Women were of no value to no one. She could not sue or be sued because she was of non-existence.

Ephesians 5:22: Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Ephesians 5:23: For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

When Paul tells husband in Ephesus to be the “head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church”, he was speaking to men who were by law, head of and in charge of their wives and all women. What is most important, Paul did not say “Head of the wife” and stopped. He said “head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church” which indicates he is speaking about something specific.

When one understands what it means when it says “Christ is head of the church” it makes hierarchy concept of “headship” in that verse a moot point.

When Jesus was teaching Mary while Martha was serving Guava Duff, he was doing something that was only done to men at that time. Women were not to be taught. The physical position where she was sitting “at Jesus feet” was a teaching position reserved for men only.

Also, in John 15:15 Jesus tell his disciples:

“I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.”

These are a few of the examples of how Jesus, “the head of the church” came to us and treated us as one of him.

Could it be that the Apostle Paul was giving to the Ephesian men this message?

“Truthfully husbands/fathers, I created mom’s and dad’s to be co-equals. You distorted that teaching, and have adopted the false teachings of your country about the low value of women. You have been teaching that you, the men (fathers), are more equal and have more rights and privileges and are to rule over the women (mothers). That was not how I made it Hence, I want you to notice how I operate as the head of the church. Although I am head of the church, take a look how I relate to others. I treat them as my equal and I treat both men and women as equal partners. If you do that you will not be teaching that you are in charge of women. That has never been my emphasis or teaching.” *By Barrington Brennen to demonstrate what he believes Paul is stating in Ephesians 5*

Note carefully that when we understand the meaning of “Submissive” in Ephesians we would also get a clearer view of what Paul was trying to do. Remember earlier I stated that mothers/women were of no value in that society. Their fathers had authority over them even when they were married. The word “submit” in this passage also means “to identify with.” Paul was stating the women were not longer to be identified with their father but with their husbands. Thus, husbands were to think of them as their equals.

Because of the poor treatment of women over the thousands of years, women I lost the real understand of who they actually are.

I like however, the words of Ellen White. She reminds us of the place women and mothers are to have.

In the Adventist Home, Chapter 38 it states:

“Woman (mother) should fill the position which God originally designed for her, as her husband's (father's) equal. The world needs mothers who are mothers not merely in name but in every

sense of the word. We may safely say that the distinctive duties of woman are more sacred, more holy, than those of man. Let woman realize the sacredness of her work and in the strength and fear of God take up her life mission. Let her educate her children for usefulness in this world and for a home in the better world.”

When it comes to home-making and roles of the mother, there are too many distorted pictures out there. Mothers and fathers first worked together in raising their children. Then because of sin, that changed. During medieval times in Europe, mothers did not think of breast feeding as important, In fact they considered breast feeding to be for the lower-class people. Mother’s could not be bothered. Hence, new born were sent away to wet mothers who breastfed them and cared for them up of age eight to ten.

Also, in the West, mothers and fathers worked in the farm together. However, when the industrial age started, mothers had to go to factories to make weapons of war while the men went to war. At the time men were secretaries in offices and got a great salary. Then the governments figured out that women can also be secretaries and they paid them less.

Many women are torn between whether they are to stay at home full-time or work.

Today, more women are getting a college degree first, then working, then getting married, then having children.

Women are getting married latter these years.

The question is, should a woman work outside of the home? Yes, she is free to. How can we ask this question when the instructions were given to Adam and Eve to work?

It is good to have a parent stay at home during the early years. During

the first months it is ideal that it is to be the mother. But that does not rule out the intimate role of fathers. There is no Biblical requirement that a mother must stay at home all during the early years of the children's development. What is needed is for fathers to have the same burdens and responsibility as mothers.

Today's women are torn between a commitment of being a mother and the drive and passion to be a career person. Fathers unfortunately do not take on that burden, but we should. Why is she burdened? It is because she is still having to deal with 75% of the household chores while she works outside of the home. Why should that be when both are working? It should be the natural responsibility for the father to wash dishes, clean the house and supervise children.

Let's jump to the 1800s One hundred-and-fifty years ago, on July 19, 1848, a political and social movement was born. Born mostly by mothers. Three hundred persons, including 40 men traveled by horse-drawn wagons and by foot, from up to 50 miles away, to Seneca Falls, New York, to protest the legal bondage of American women and to demand full equality. It was the first women's right convention to demand greater civil liberties for women, including the right to vote and to get an education. They came together to rewrite the United States constitution and to sign the **Declaration of Sentiments** which proclaimed that all men and women were created equal. During this occasion the Declaration of Sentiments presented a list of evils against women. Here are a few of these points these mothers raised in 1848:

1. He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.
2. He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men — both native and foreigners.
3. He has made her, if married, in the eyes of the law, civilly dead.

4. He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education — all colleges being closed to her.
5. He allows her in church as well as state, but in a subordinate position, claiming Apostolic Authority for her exclusion from the ministry, and with some exceptions, from any public participation in the affairs of the church.

They marched. That march propelled mothers around the world to raise up higher to the place God had placed them. They insisted, agitated, and protested until women were able to vote. Here are a few countries and dates when women were able to vote for the first time:

British-1918

Dutch-1919

United State-1920

Jamaica-1944

France-1944

Barbados-1951

Ethiopia -1955

Haiti-1957

Bahamas-1962

In every case it was because of mothers and other women who marched, fought the battle of prejudice. Now they continue to fight for equal pay and respect. They had to fight to be recognized and honored. Similarly, our women are fighting to be recognized as people who also have been called by the holy spirit to be spiritual leaders—pastors.

The best way we can honor our mothers today is to remind ourselves that they were created by God to be on the side on fathers as co-equals with the same authority, opportunity, vote, access, protection and voice. We must also remember that men (fathers) have created a wicked and demeaning views that have propelled women to move out

of the box of oppression and insist with a loud voice “we are you equal.”

Women and mothers have been faithful over the thousands of years fighting for the truth to be told. Fighting to be recognized. We must be reminded that almost no institution today is existing without the creative force, ingenuity, influence of mothers. Even though only the men get the praise and glory.

We can see that in science today. The first computers were made by mothers. They made the first motherboards but the men instead, got the praise.

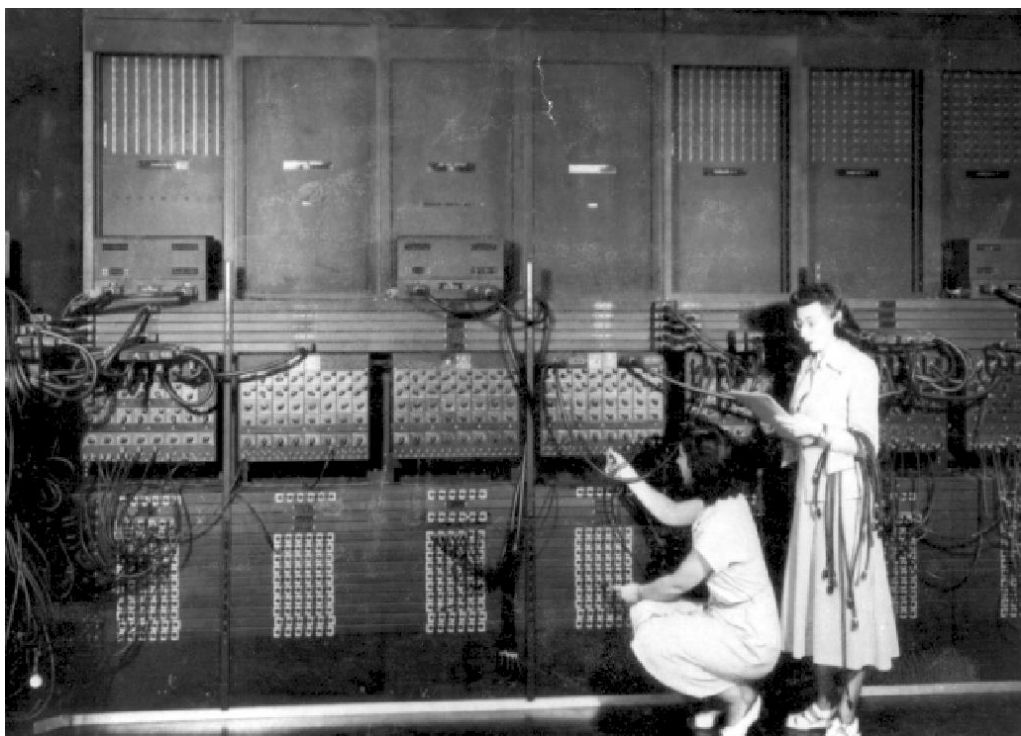
Here are the names of four women and the motherboards they created:

[Patsy Simmers---ENIAC board](#)
[Gail Taylor---EDVAC board](#)
[Milly Beck---ORDVAC board](#)
[Norma Stec---BRLESC-I board.](#)

See their photos below:



BELOW: Two women wiring the right side of the ENIAC with a new program



Let's conclude.

Mothers around the world have become a symbol of change, endurance, tenacity, hope and faithfulness. But the greatest honor for mothers is to be the symbol of the true church in the last days. In the book of Revelation there are two women or mothers. One is about damnation; the other is about redemption.

REVELATION 12:17: And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 17:5-6: And on her forehead was a name written, **Mystery, Babylon Thegreat, The Mother Of Harlots And Abominations Of Theearth.** ⁶ And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

Revelation 19:7-9 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready. ⁸ And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. ⁹ And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true sayings of God.

Revelation 21:9-11 And there came to me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come here, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife. ¹⁰ And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, ¹¹ Having the glory of God: and her light was like to a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

Let us sing **“Great is Thy Faithfulness”**

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;
As Thou hast been, Thou forever will be.

Refrain

Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see.
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

Faith of our mothers

Faith of our mothers, living yet
In cradle song and bedtime prayer,
In nurs'ry love and fireside love,
thy presence still pervades the air:
Faith of our mothers, living faith,
We will be true to thee till death.

Faith of our mothers, lavish faith,
The fount of childhood's trust and grace,
O may thy consecration prove
The well-spring of a nobler race:
Faith of our mothers, lavish faith,
We will be true to thee till death.

Faith of our mothers, guiding faith,

For youthful longing--youthful doubt,
How blurred our vision, blind our way,
Thy providential care without:
Faith of our mothers, guiding faith,
We will be true to thee till death.

Faith of our mothers, Christian faith,
In truth beyond our man-made creeds,
Still serve the home and save the church,
And breathe thy spirit through our deeds:
Faith of our mothers, Christian faith,