

When Mother's Day Hurts

Mother's Day. It's almost a sacred institution in our culture. If you think I'm exaggerating, ask any preacher who's ever failed to preach on the topic or have a Mother's Day emphasis on the second Sunday in May.

I'm all for honoring mothers, but not everyone looks forward to Mother's Day.

- **Those who grieve over what once was.** Many people still feel the pain of the death of a mother or a child.
- **Those who grieve over what could've been.** Many women have suffered a miscarriage.
- **Those who grieve over what never was.** Many women want children but have never been able to conceive.



Let's find ways to encourage people to honor their mothers while being sensitive to those who hurt.

Acknowledge the hurt. Most people struggling with these emotions and feelings on Mother's Day do so in silence. They endure the emphasis during a worship service, but it's not easy. Let's be open and acknowledge that many of us feel pain when we talk about

motherhood. People are encouraged when they don't feel forgotten or overlooked.

Avoid overstating the worth of mothers. I'd better explain that. Mothers are important. The Bible is clear on the importance of the family and its pivotal role in all our lives. But consider the message we send when we make motherhood the greatest task a woman can undertake. For those women whom God has not blessed with children, they can be made to feel they have no worth. For women who've lost a child through miscarriage or death, they can be led to think their worth has been taken from them.

Make it a day to appreciate our own mothers. To put it bluntly, my role as a church leader is not to honor all mothers; my role is to encourage and challenge everyone to honor their own mothers (and fathers). That's biblical.

"Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise" (Eph. 6:2).

We can honor our mothers whether they are living or not.

- Honor is seen in our attitude toward them.
- Honor is seen in what we do when we're with them.
- Honor is seen in how we talk to them or respond to their advice.
- Honor is seen in how we talk *about* them.

Make this Mother's Day a day that honors Christ in the way we both honor mothers and love those who hurt.