

THE MOTHERS' ACADEMY
Mothers' Day –May 8, 2011 – I Peter 4: 7-11
The Church of the Covenant

I believe that there is a secret training academy where all Mothers secretly attend and they learn the tricks of the trade of being a Mother. I mean, all those stock phrases you Mothers use. They're all so similar. Sort of like you went to a class and learned them. There must be this worldwide conspiracy of Motherhood. I refer to it as "THE MOTHERS' ACADEMY". Think I'm goofy? (Don't answer that!). Let me recite some of the lessons our Mothers taught us and see if your Mother said similar things to you.

My Mother taught me religion –"You better PRAY that comes out of the carpet!" My Mother taught me logic –"Because I said so, that's why!". My Mother taught me strategic planning –"Always wear clean underwear just in case you're in an accident." My Mother taught me the science of osmosis –"Keep your mouth shut and eat your dinner!" My Mother taught me stamina –"You're going to sit at the dining room table until all those stewed tomatoes are gone." My Mother should have been a trial lawyer –"Are you guilty or are you just ignorant?" My Mother taught me about weather –"Your room looks like a tornado hit it." My Mother taught me about sanitation –"Go back and change your clothes you look like you're dressed to burn the garbage." (I don't know what it was about burning the garbage but I know you'd never want to dress like it!) My Mother taught me about charity –"Think about all those millions of Chinese who have NOTHING to eat and would LOVE those vegetables!" My Mother taught me about medicine –"If you keep crossing your eyes like that you're going to freeze that way!" My Mother taught me humor –"When that lawn mower cuts off your toes, don't come running to me." My Mother taught me how to be an adult –"If you don't eat those vegetables you'll never grow up!" My Mother taught me genetics –"You're just like your Father!" (I think that's a compliment!) My Mother taught me about my roots –"Put that toilet seat down –do you think you were born in a barn?" (Jesus was!)

And when we would go out to dinner with family or company she had a little routine, when I'd be acting up, where she'd point to her eyebrow and that meant, "Do you know what I'm thinking?" That was meant to settle me down. But sometimes I didn't see the warning sign. And she'd start poking at her eyebrow more and more vociferously, like unto poking her eye out. "Do you know what I'm thinking?" Yes I did –"I think you are thinking you want to brain me just about now." It also meant, "If you don't shape up I'm going to take you to the ladies' room." The ultimate threat. Now I don't know what went on in the ladies' room, but it must have been pretty ugly, and I surely didn't want to wind up there. All these tricks of the trade, stock phrases, similar ways of being. I rest my case; there just MUST be a secret Mothers' Academy out there somewhere...

Our scripture for this Mothers' Day is from the New Testament, the book of I Peter, where it says, *"Above all hold unfailing your love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins..." (I Peter 4: 8)* The main thing I *really* learned from my Mother is how much she and my Father love me. When I was good they loved me; when I was bad they loved me. When I was little they loved me; when I grew up they loved me. Through those awkward years of adolescence they loved me. When I was ornery they loved me. When I thought I was smarter than they are they loved me. When I actually figured out that they are WAY smarter than I am they loved me. From beginning to end, from birth through adulthood, the main constant in my life has been their love and the love I have known from the hand of a loving God. And whatever didn't go just right, and however I failed, and whatever they did as parents, because it was all done in love it was right and good. Because indeed LOVE covers a multitude of sins; love trumps anything wrong in this life; and we know from the Bible that in the end love triumphs over all.

"Above all hold unfailing your love for one another..." says I Peter. And I Corinthians 13 as if in reply notes –*"Love never fails."* (I Corinthians 13: 8)

And she sees me, not as I am, but as I can be. I know this because every Easter she gives me a new sharp Easter tie to wear. I have an entire tie drawer filled with sharp ties from my Mother given me at Easter. There are thin ties and wide ties and bright ties and subdued ties and striped ties and pastel ties. See, she sees me, not as the fat fifty something I am, but as the sharp, svelte distinguished person I was made to be. She sees me, not as I am, but she sees me through the eyes of love. That's how love sees us.

There is a day coming when we shall all stand in the presence of a Holy God. We will die and one day stand before the judge of the quick and the dead. We have not led perfect lives; there are things we wish we had done and other things we wished we had not done. As the Bible says, *"All have fallen short of the glory of God."* But see, when we are standing there before God, He will not see us, per se. Rather, we will be covered with the righteousness of another; we will be covered in the imputed righteousness of His Son, Jesus Christ. We will stand there like saints whose white robes are washed in the blood of the Lamb. He will *"remember our sin no more"*, as the prophet Jeremiah reminds us. We will be covered with Jesus, if you will. We will be covered and protected with the love Jesus has for us.

And this Holy and righteous God will not see us, per se. God will see instead His Son. God will see His Son's blood covering us as a garment. God will see the LOVE Jesus has for us, covering us in that day. And God will see us, not as we are, not as we deserve, not all our sins and our failures and our faults, but God will see us, just like our Mothers see us, through the eyes of love. And God will smile, the same smile our Mothers smile when they see us. In that day God will smile. And we will learn the lesson of the Mothers' Academy that indeed, indeed, LOVE covers a multitude of sin...

Everything I learned about the love of God I learned from my dear Mother...and she learned it from her Mother...and she learned it from her Mother...and we all have learned it from God...

Amen.

*By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant, Washington, PA
IF THIS HAS BLESSED YOU, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND!*