

My 62nd Mother's Day

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By Bob Young

As I sit to write another Mother's Day article, I have to admit something. I am not an expert on mothering—I am an expert on being mothered. I am an observer of mothers, but I will not be so bold as to write about how to be a good mother. My expertise comes from receiving my mother's love, attention, discipline, and support. I want to reflect upon my mother and those experiences. As I honor my mother, I seek to honor mothers in general. I hope you will think about and appreciate your mother.

My mother has been gone 16 ½ years. I was only 45 when she died prematurely in an auto accident. That experience, which now seems long ago, taught me that one must decide before the fact whether God is God and whether God is good. When the difficult days and faith challenges come, it is too late to try to decide what one thinks about God. I know now that I drew that conclusion from the faith I saw in my mother—a faith that continues to sustain me as it did her.

My mother had had a stroke about two years before the accident. From that point onward, I never again went home as a care-receiver, I always went as a care-giver. There were always things to be done—yard work, house repairs, and special projects. I never again woke up to the smell of bacon cooking. Life was different; but my mother's love was the same.

My mother's death was ultimately a liberating event. Jan and I would probably have never felt free to move half way across the country to work in higher education at a small Christian college had we still had the responsibilities of caring for my mother. God works in mysterious ways.

My mother was a pioneer—not only because her family moved from Missouri to New Mexico in a covered wagon while she was still an infant, but because of the way she experienced and endured and overcame life as a single-parent in the middle years of the 20th century. It seemed to me then (and still does) that my mother was fearless in a time when there was much to fear.

My mother is my greatest heroine—and greatest hero. She is the standard of excellence for my life. There were lots of things I did not do as a youngster because I knew it would break my mother's heart if she ever found out. She is still my guiding star and great moral compass.

My mother was my greatest fan. She saved everything I wrote—as though it were priceless. Now I know that it was—at least to her. She was my greatest supporter in preaching. She would be amazed to know where God has led her boy and his bride since her death—literally around the world for the Kingdom. She would be proud. Her memory yet compels me.

I cannot tell her “thank you” today, but I can say “thank you” to God for mothers, and for my mother. May God bless all mothers, and the memories we cherish of the mothers who blessed and continue to bless our lives.