

“Listen to your mom, dude!”

Proverbs 1:1-9 New Living Translation

“These are the proverbs of Solomon, David’s son, king of Israel. <sup>2</sup> Their purpose is to teach people wisdom and discipline, to help them understand the insights of the wise. <sup>3</sup> **Their purpose is to teach people to live disciplined and successful lives, to help them do what is right, just, and fair.** <sup>4</sup> **These proverbs will give insight to the simple, knowledge and discernment to the young.**

<sup>5</sup> Let the wise listen to these proverbs and become even wiser. Let those with understanding receive guidance <sup>6</sup> by exploring the meaning in these proverbs and parables, the words of the wise and their riddles.

<sup>7</sup> **Fear of the LORD is the foundation of true knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.**

<sup>8</sup> **My child, listen when your father corrects you. Don’t neglect your mother’s instruction.** <sup>9</sup> What you learn from them will crown you with grace and be a chain of honor around your neck.”

**Mothers take front and center in our thoughts today.**

**Societies honor their heroes.**

Brave people receive awards for valor.

**Yet, many mothers struggle arduously for years and get little thanks.**

An unnamed author wrote:

“The bravest battle that ever was fought;  
Shall I tell you where or when?  
On the maps of the world you will find it not;  
It was fought by the mothers of men.”  
We should add—“the mothers of women, too!”

A fellow named by Amos R. Wells penned the following entitled: **“Mothers and Others.”**

**Though I never met Mr. Wells, I suspect that the “others” referred to in his title are fathers.**

**“Others weary of the noise, mothers play with girls and boys.**

**Others scold because we fell, Mothers ‘kiss and make it well.’**

**Others work with patient will, Mothers labor later still.**

**Others’ love is more or less, Mothers  
love with steadfastness.**

**Others pardon hating yet, Mothers pardon  
and forget.**

**Others keep the ancient score, Mothers  
never shut the door.**

**Others grow incredulous, Mothers still  
believe in us.**

**Others throw their faith away, Mothers  
pray and pray and pray.”**

An old Spanish Proverb reads:

**“An ounce of mother is worth a pound  
of clergy.”**

**Would you like a truer comparison?**

**“No amount of clergy can equal  
one ounce of mother.”**

**Last week a popular news channel reported  
on a study related to the work mothers do.**

**Conclusion: being a mom is the equivalent  
of 2.5 full-time jobs (97 hrs. a week).**

**If paid wages for her work, her salary  
would amount to \$100,460 per year.<sup>1</sup>**

**We owe our mothers more than just money.**

Erma Bombeck observed:

**“It is not until you become a mother  
that your judgment slowly turns to  
compassion and understanding.”**

**On the other hand, Bombeck, herself a  
mother, confessed: “Everyone is guilty at  
one time or another of throwing out  
questions that beg to be ignored, but  
mothers seem to have a market on the  
supply. ‘Do you want a spanking or do you  
want to go to bed?’ ‘Don't you want to save  
some of the pizza for your brother?’  
‘Wasn't there any change?’**

— Erma Bombeck

**Today, we'd like to turn our  
compassion, understanding and  
appreciation toward mothers**

**In their parenting roles, mothers go through  
at least three stages:**

**1. Hope describes the first stage.**

**During their children’s early years, mothers  
greatly hope for their kids’ happy success.**

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<sup>1</sup> ONE POLL SURVEY, CAMPBELL’S® WELL YES!®  
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Many share a hope attributed to the poet John Keats: “The stars through my window pane are my children,” wrote Keats.

We’ll come back to Keats later.

Contemporary Author Christina Tiplea shared seven hopes for her children.

Let’s look at a few of them—the hopes that is.

1. We hope “the kids will forgive us for the mistakes we’ve made in raising them, and know that we were only doing the absolute best we could.”
2. That they will be able to confide in us like a friend, but respect us enough to remember we are still their parent.
3. That they will find a career they are passionate about that brings them immense fulfillment and purpose.
4. That they will find someone to marry or share their life with that brings out the best in them.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [embracingsimpleblog.com/7-wishes-every-parent-has-for-their-child](http://embracingsimpleblog.com/7-wishes-every-parent-has-for-their-child)

Chances are most mothers share these hopes. What were/are some of the specific hopes you had/have for your children?

Presidents?

Teachers?

Ball players?

Farmers?

2. **Frantic period** - When you realize that you have independent beings with definite minds of their own.

Jimmy’s mother believed in the “be-a-little gentleman and don’t-fight school” of upbringing. She tried to instill this noble outlook into her pugnacious young son.

“Jimmy, when that naughty boy threw stones at you, why didn’t you come and tell me instead of throwing them back?”

“What good would that do?” snapped Jimmy to mom. “You can’t hit the side of a barn!”

Mary and Joseph, Jesus’ parents, were in the frantic stage when they took Jesus to the Jerusalem Temple when he was twelve.

**Remember how all the people from Nazareth headed home?** Joseph and Mary assumed Jesus was somewhere in the group.

**Do you suppose the “Home Alone” writers got their theme from this biblical event?**

Jesus was home all right, but with the Father of the universe, not with his earthly relatives. Joseph and Mary searched frantically eventually finding him in the Temple.

**Mary admonished Jesus:**

**“Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.”<sup>1</sup>**

**During their parenting tenure, the best of mothers endure frantic moments.**

**Mothers experience the hope period and the frantic days.**

**3. Reality years - When you finally accept them, and give them over to God.**

This last stage may come early or late or not at all.

**In a book entitled *Jewish Mother’s Guide to Education*, I found this decades ago.**

**“When your son is about to graduate from college, go to him, put your hands on both his shoulders, smile proudly and say as follows:**

**‘Marvin?’**

**‘Yeah.’**

**‘Your father and I have been talking.’**

**‘Yeah?’**

**‘We have come to a very important decision.’**

**‘Yeah?’**

**‘We have decided that you are no longer a baby.’”<sup>2</sup>**

**This last stage of parenting, as you know, when you’ve given all your children over to God, may be most difficult.**

**But it can be the most rewarding, especially as children express greater appreciation.**

**I pray that all of us today, children, parents, all categories, greatly appreciate our mothers.**

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 2: 48 NIV

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<sup>2</sup> *Jewish Mother’s Guide to Education*, p.58,59 I took the liberty of changing the original “high school” to “college” to better fit current times.

**Do you recall the woman named Tiplea we quoted earlier, who expressed her hopes?**

One of her expressed hopes was:

**“That they will have enough joy in their life to override the inevitable heartbreak and joy they will experience at some point.”**

**Tiplea apparently based most of her hopes on happenstance.**

**Is it only by accident that children find rewarding careers, marry good mates, and have more good fortune than bad?**

**Are they totally victims of chance in an impersonal world that produces more losers than winners?**

**Can we only hope that our kids will overcome odds of fate and chance?**

**Do children have no choice or say in life?**

**Our Proverbs text brings encouraging news.**

**All can gain major life-advantages.**

**Three simple steps increase kids’ success odds.**

**A) Parents must know God’s Word.**

**B) Parents teach their children the Word.**

**C) Children listen and follow their parents’ directions in the Word.**

**The Proverbs state specific goals:**

**3 “Their purpose is to teach people to live disciplined and successful lives, to help them do what is right, just, and fair.”**

Politicians, the media, and social planners constantly argue about justice and fairness.

These proverbs guide us to true justice, but few people pay attention to them.

**People would rather talk than listen.**

The success of Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter proves the point.

**The Proverbs offer these advantages:**

**“4 These proverbs will give insight to the simple, knowledge and discernment to the young.”**

Every kid can get substantial life-help.

**Kids don’t have to be Rhodes scholars, or 140 IQ, or have decades of experience.**

**God’s Word gives: “Insight to the simple, knowledge and discernment to the young.”**

## How does this happen?

Kids gain early advantages when their parents learn and teach the Word, and the kids listen to God’s life-giving instruction.

**“Fear of the LORD is the foundation of true knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline. My child, listen when your father corrects you.”**

**“Don’t neglect your mother’s instruction.”**

**True knowledge, wisdom, and discipline begin with fearing God.**

Without the foundation of knowing and fearing God, we build our dream houses on sandy, rain-soaked soils.

**True parental wisdom comes from God.**

Wise parents teach God’s wisdom guiding their kids into what is right in God’s sight.

**I’m ashamed that I didn’t always have the greatest respect for my father or mother.**

**At 15 I bought my first car and began driving by myself at 16; I paid for my own car insurance.**

I lived at home, but helped with none of the expenses; yet I felt really independent. **My dad worked for the railroad; to earn a little extra, my mother helped care for elderly folks.**

The floors in our little house needed sanding; the parents rented a sander. **Before she left earlier, mom asked me to sand the floors.**

I was home all day. My friend Richard came. We probably called a few girls, talked about girls, and whatever teens consider important.

I sanded not one square foot.

Mom got home a little after dark and Richard and I were ready to go out for the evening.

**Keys in hand, I told her we were leaving.**

**After all I bought my own car, paid for its fuel, upkeep, and insurance.**

You can recall tense moments when it seemed time froze and all motion stilled.

My mother, Jessie Editha Blair, and I, Bob, had a very close, time stopping, conversation.

**I was probably three inches taller and much stronger than mom.**

Her brown eyes sad with disappointment, and with her jaw quivering, Mom firmly declared:

**“Bob, you are not leaving until you sand these floors.”**

**Jessie Editha didn’t curse.**

She didn’t bawl, throw a tantrum, or threaten to tell dad.

She simply looked up into my face with courageous determination invoking God’s will for every child: **“Children obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.”**<sup>1</sup>

**Richard and I went out that evening, but not until I completely sanded the floors.**

**Was I angry with my mother?**

The incident embarrassed me some, but my respect for her grew—immensely.

**“Don’t neglect your mother’s instruction.”**

The word translated “instruction” is “torah,” the Hebrew term for law.

When parents give children godly teaching, they are in effect channeling God’s Torah-law.

**Wise parents instruct their kids in God’s law.**

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<sup>1</sup> Colossians 3: 20 NIV

**Wise kids obey their parents.**

**Kids will someday respect parents for teaching them God’s word.**

By the way John Keats never had kids and never married.

After living a dissolute life, he died at age 25.

**Keats simply wrote dreamy poetry.**

To close today, I’d like to share the following about mothers written by Phil Whisenhunt:

**“The most important occupation on earth for a woman is to be a real mother to her children. It does not have much glory to it; there is a lot of grit and grime. But there is no greater place of ministry, position or power than that of a mother.”**<sup>2</sup>

**God bless all mothers.**

**We appreciate and love you in the Lord!**

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<sup>2</sup> Phil Whisenhunt, *BAKER’S POCKET BOOK OF RELIGIOUS QUOTES*, #975