



Embracing Motherhood

By Christelle Baldovinos

Special Story By Karen Anderson
Two Part Series
Biblical View On Children - Part 1

EMBRACING MOTHERHOOD – Part 1- Building a Legacy

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I. BUILDING A LEGACY – HIGH CALL OF MOTHERHOOD

Only a woman can carry in her body an eternal being which bears the very image of God. Only she is the recipient of the miracle of life. Only a woman can conceive and nurture this life using her own flesh and blood, and then deliver a living soul into the world. God has bestowed upon her alone a genuine miracle — the creation of life, and the fusing of an eternal soul with mortal flesh. This fact alone establishes the glory of motherhood.

Women today are told so many lies. Rarely do we hear or see what a godly woman should look like, act like – and be. The lies that the feminist movement of the 60’s brought in have infiltrated our western culture and the Church. The results are a radical decline in birthrate, abortion, fatherless families, and social confusion. The spirit of this world is trying to take women from their positions of strength. The message rooted in pride, self-centeredness and self-advancement must be countered with a company of women who walk out their value, their worth, and who embrace the high call of raising up disciples in their own home.

This subject of “*Embracing Motherhood*” has been something that I have been pondering in my heart for many years. I do not want to call it just “*motherhood*”, because you can be a mother and even a good one without really embracing it. Getting a vision for the immense change in the world you can make by sending out your own missionaries or arrows (Psalm 127:4) from your home, changes the perspective with which we view everything.

The moment I gave birth to our first beautiful son, I hoped that somehow I could change the world by investing in this little life one moment at a time, but could I really? As the realities of how much work and time it took to raise a child set in, my dreams of raising kids that changed the world dwindled to, hoping I could get enough free time to take a shower. My excitement at being a new mom slowly went to me fighting to keep my attitudes in check as I walked around on little sleep, wondering why my husband didn’t seem to get it. I worked through many feelings and emotions trying to use the Word as my guide. I kept reminding myself that I must do this as “*unto the Lord*” and I desperately tried to keep my heart free of a “*complaining spirit*”, and with some success. By the time we had our third son I was getting used to constant nursing, sleepless nights and a messy house, but was I “*embracing motherhood*” or just getting through it? I knew children were a blessing, but did I really? How do I raise kids to be equipped to live a life of radical obedience to the Lord, in a culture that pursues mostly personal gain instead of personal sacrifice? If being a mother was so valuable then why did society view it as a downgrade? Why do cultural norms, even in Christian circles, seem to be so very different than scripture? Can being a mom really affect more the kingdom than pursuing my own interests, even godly ones? Do I have what it takes to raise kids as ammunition against the enemy as Psalm 127:4 says that kids are? As our family continued to grow, I really began to ask God to reveal the answers to these questions to my heart. God has since allowed me a glimpse of what I get to take part in by being a mother. I am not only getting to raise five children to pursue God, and take hold of what He has for them, but I am building a legacy that will echo throughout all eternity.

After much thought and struggle, I felt that I should share some things I have learned and am still learning. I have put together a two-part teaching on “*Embracing Motherhood*”.

My parents were pastors and as a young girl they began to get actively involved in pro-life ministries. This began a journey that imprinted my young mind and shaped who I am today. I have asked my mother Karen Anderson to write her story to begin this teaching, because her story is really the beginning of my journey and

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has paved the way for me. Her ceiling is really the ground I stand on, and I hope that as you read this you will have an open mind and an open Bible, and see God's heart for children, which is laced all throughout Scripture.

II. “RICHEST WOMAN IN THE WORLD” written by Karen Anderson

People see riches in different ways. I now have a new perspective because of an event that happened many years ago. It was a warm summer day in Minneapolis in 1989. I was standing outside a Planned Parenthood clinic hoping to be able to “rescue” someone from the steady stream of young women going in for their abortion appointments.

You may ask why I would put myself in such a vulnerable and awkward situation. It was just several months earlier someone handed me Dr. Bernard Nathanson's video “Eclipse of Reason”. Dr Nathanson was one of the leading abortionists in the U.S. in the 1970's working out of New York City. He “repented” and now was on the pro-life side. He put together a video of a real live abortion, which broke my heart, and I was never to be the same again. No longer could I ignore the fact that there were 4,000 abortions daily in the U.S. and that the women themselves were silent victims of this great holocaust.

There were no young women that day even remotely interested to talk or receive any pro- life literature. Feeling the weight of discouragement and sense of failure I found myself asking the Lord, “Why won't they listen? Why don't they care? Why do their hearts seem so hard?”

It was at that moment that I heard what I would call the “internal audible” voice of the Lord. It was as clear as if you were standing right next to me and speaking.

“YOUR HEART IS NO DIFFERENT THAN THOSE WOMEN HAVING ABORTIONS.”

I replied back in my heart, “What do you mean Lord?”

“YOU DON'T WANT A BABY JUST AS MUCH AS THEY DON'T WANT THEIRS”, was the reply.

*It was a Hebrews 4:12 moment for me. **“The Word of God is living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. It penetrates even to dividing of soul and spirit and joints and marrow. It judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”***

There I stood, my heart's attitudes, thoughts and self-righteousness exposed. I was no different than those women and I had to find out why. As a Bible believing Christian I had only one place to go – His written word.

That “God-encounter” changed my life and sent me on a search that I am still on today. What does God say in His Word about marriage, family and children? I found out that even though the evangelical church claims to believe the Bible, the teachings on the foundations of family were mysteriously absent.

*What about the original mandates God gave to the family, initially to the husband and wife in Genesis? So this is where my journey began. I discovered in Genesis 1:28 that the very first commandment in the Bible is **“Be fruitful and increase in number.”** The second command immediately follows, **“Fill the earth and subdue it.”***

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My mind was swirling and in great turmoil. Does this ancient scripture passage still hold true for me today to live and obey? It certainly did not fit with my current view on family. I was raised in the “choice” generation. I had all the options to stop having babies and choose what kind of life style I wanted to live. When I went in to the doctor before my wedding day the question wasn’t if I should use birth control, but “what is the most effective means to keep away all the unwanted babies.”

In my mind it just wasn’t responsible to have a bunch of kids – and for that matter who could afford a large family – let alone want one? Extending the family income over multiple children rather than just a few seemed a fearful prospect. And what woman wants her body stretched out of shape and be home with whinny, fussy kids who make messes and keep you up all hours of the night?

I had long ago decided that my limit was 2 kids. That fit in with the current “population control” teachings that were popular in the education system at that time. So we had 2 girls and I was done. My husband Mark wanted more, being from a family of seven, with multiple extended family members. But I was raised in the culture of “choice” – so I could choose what I wanted, never even considering that God or His Word had anything to do with this area of my life.

Here I was raised in the church all of my life – yet had an incomplete Biblical worldview of family. I mostly inherited the secular humanist worldview from my public school upbringing with some Bible verses and Sunday school classes thrown in on the weekend.

I furiously studied the scriptures and found things never preached in the pulpits of America. I certainly had never heard a message on obeying the first commandments God gave to Adam and Eve for mankind. I went through every scripture I could find on children, marriage and family. Reading through the Old Testament I found that having children was always considered a blessing and prosperity to the family.

“Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior is a son born in one’s youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate.” Psalms 127:3-5

In fact the blessing of children and family is deeply rooted throughout scripture through the New Testament. In Mark 10:13-15, Jesus himself told the disciples to not forbid the children to come to him.

After spending many weeks and months studying and reading testimonies of women who were challenged like me and having children, I came to this conclusion. I needed to make Jesus Christ Lord in every area in my life, including my fertility. I wanted to live my life in alignment with truth in His Word and do things God’s way. It was in this place that our family would get his full blessing. I said yes to the Lord – He turned my heart to once again have children.

At the time we already had 2 beautiful daughters Christelle (12 yrs old) and Lindsay (9 yrs old). It didn’t take long and we had another little girl – Kirsten.

Following Kirsten came Jonathan, Cori and Josiah. We have 6 children and now have 9 grandchildren. My husband has calculated that if each of our kids had 6 kids and they continue to have an average of 6 kids for 12 generations that our descendants would equal the current population of the earth.

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I believe the Genesis 1 mandate to be fruitful and multiply is part of the end-time mission's strategy of God. If Muslims continue to have 6-7 children and Christians 1-2 then Islam will spread rapidly as it is right now in post-Christian Western Europe. Our children are the warriors that are part of God's end-time army to fulfill His purposes on earth.

I look at our 6 children as not just 6 kids but 6 generational lines of thousands that follow, helping to bring Genesis 1:28 and Matthew 28:19-20 into fulfillment. Our children, and the generations that follow are all eternal beings that we will one day spend eternity with, (if they are followers of Jesus Christ). They are our lasting inheritance and true heritage from the Lord.

My husband Mark and I are only 54, but we are already reaping the rewards of God's blessing. When you look at our latest family picture (minus 2 grandchildren waiting to be born) you can see the beauty and blessing of family. What a reward it is to us to be a part of something so beautiful and eternal.

Sometimes I think about what life would have been like without Kirsten, Jonathan, Cori and Josiah. I almost did not have them. I am so grateful for the Lord's mercy and intervention that day outside the abortion clinic 22 years ago. This is why I am the richest woman in the world.

Because this story is so personal and goes counter cultural with views of family and children many of you may experience a lot of emotions. I remember initially feeling anger, then fear and unbelief, when confronted with my own heart issues. Personally, it was a real struggle as I searched the Bible for myself. I urge you to go to the Lord and study the scriptures and struggle yourself to get answers to the questions or emotions you may be feeling. Don't just rely on what I or the world and the surrounding culture may tell you. Study God's Word and know for yourself.

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.” Romans 12:2

-Karen Anderson

I am so thankful for my Mom being obedient to wrestle and being obedient to the Lord, even when it was hard. I witnessed change in our home and in her heart and it has taught me to have a YES to whatever the Lord shows me.

III. FEMINISM CHANGED OUR CULTURE by Christelle Baldovinos

“America needs no words from me to see how your decision in roe vs. wade has deformed a great nation. The ‘so-called’ right to abortion has pitted mothers against their children and women against men. It has portrayed the greatest of gifts- a child- as a competitor, an intrusion, and an inconvenience.” – Mother Teresa

- A. The woman's liberation movement in the early 1900's started out good. The fight began for increased freedom for women and rights for things like voting, freedom from the oppression of slavery and equal and fair treatment across the board.

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- B. As time progressed, a woman named Margaret Sanger and many others began to bring about a distorted view of what “women’s rights” truly were. Soon, lectures on “Population Control” and “Family Limitation” began to erupt all over the world, presented in front of government officials, universities and other spheres of influence. These lectures contained much of the different forms of birth control and the need for abortion. This started the downscale of childbirth rates.
- C. A direct result of these “Population Control” lectures was the wide scale use of the newly introduced birth control pill and the increasing availability of abortion, which were often taught on together. In the name of freedom and equality, women on a global scale were also encouraged to have sex with multiple partners; this encouraged promiscuity that created the perceived need for abortion.
- D. In 1926 the penalty for having an abortion was execution; in 1936 the penalty for having an abortion was changed to life-imprisonment. **Today the government pays for it.**
- E. By the 1960’s, a stay-at-home mom was looked down on as a lesser and weaker choice for women. Countless articles, books and lectures were written against the idea of mothers staying home to raise a family. As a result fewer and fewer women were having children and those who were; were choosing a full-time job over staying home with their little ones.
- F. Hatred toward men rose to record heights as they were continually painted as the “adversarial”, “dominant male” who women must prove themselves to be as strong as. A direct result of the continued hatred toward men has been the growth in lesbianism and the deterioration in family structure.
- G. The negative effects these ideals have had are almost immeasurable. The decline in morality and the absence of the biblical framework for marriage and family are hard to come by. Even in Christian circles many theological stances were altered to fit this way of thinking.

IV. OTHER RELIGIONS

- A. If you look at the statistics today they are staggering: In order for a culture to maintain itself for more than 25 years, there requires a fertility rate of at least 2.11 children per family. With anything less than a 2.11 fertility rate, the culture will die.
- B. In countries with a 1.9 children average it probably will not reverse, 1.3 is impossible to reverse. Here is child birth rates from various nations:
 - 1.8 France
 - 1.6 England
 - 1.3 Greece
 - 1.3 Germany
 - 1.2 Italy
 - 1.1 Spain

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- A. In the European Union the fertility rate is 1.38, these numbers are impossible to reverse. But Europe is not decreasing in population; it is growing by immigration, **Muslim Immigration. Their average birth rate is 8.1.**
- B. By 2027 1 in 5 Frenchman will be Muslim. Currently 1 in 5 Russians are Muslim. Germany will be a Muslim state by 2050.
- C. **Canada’s fertility rate is 1.6, and again 2.11 is the required fertility rate to maintain a culture. Canada, however, is growing in population; from 2001-2006 population increased by 1.6 million. 1.2 of those million were by immigration, most of them were Muslim. The number of Muslims in Canada is predicted to triple in the next 20 years.** United States has a fertility rate of 1.6. Fortunately, due to Latinos they will have the bare minimum of 2.11 fertility rate required.
- D. The Muslims have a real plan to subdue the earth and take over, do we? We must get a vision to “subdue” the earth, and one way is by actually having children, raising them rightly and evangelizing the world with true Gospel.

V. LIES OF THE ENEMY

- A. The enemy has worked hard to get us, women, indoctrinated with many lies in regards to children.
- B. Here are some of the lies the devil whispers to us, regarding children:
 - 1. Kids are too much work.
 - 2. They are too much money.
 - 3. I am not ready.
 - 4. I cannot handle anymore kids, I can only handle ___ (whatever # you’re comfortable with)
 - 5. I lost my freedom.
 - 6. I lost my career.
 - 7. I’m losing my body.
 - 8. I’m losing my best years.
- C. I have gone to many places with my children and have seen many older women give looks of joy or sadness at the sight of my children. I have had countless women longingly say, “I wish I would have had one more”. Never have I heard one woman ever say, I wish I would have had less. Why is this? I have often asked myself. I do not want to get to the end of my life, finally realizing what really matters, and have regrets.
- D. We must recognize the preciousness of femininity over glamour, of homemaking over careerism, and of mature motherhood over perpetual youth.

VI. ATTITUDE OF THE HEART

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“A person may think their own ways are right, but the Lord weighs the heart.” (Proverbs 21:2)

- A. It is not about the number of kids we have, it is about the attitude of our heart. Do our motives and attitudes regarding kids line up with what the Bible says? Or are we in line with what the world thinks? Is God really Lord of everything? Are we willing to search our hearts and honestly evaluate our motives? Do we see children as inheritance and rewards? Or do we see them as burdens? There may even be residue that we don't even know about from past generations that has become our “normal” view point today.
- B. We must long to please the Lord in every area of our lives. It is He that gives us the desires to do what pleases Him. (Phil. 2:13) When we submit each area of our heart to Him, His desires become ours. I think that as we do this, we will find that we will be so grateful for deciding to do it His way.
- C. Let us be women who pray daily for “dependence” on God not “independence”. ***“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight.” (Proverbs 3:5-6)***

VII. VALUE OF CHILDREN

- A. Time and again throughout the Bible, children are equated with wealth and blessing. God gives children to us as rewards.

“Children are an inheritance from the Lord. They are a reward from Him. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, are children born in one's youth.” (Psalm 127:3-4)

- B. It's the only time we get to create with God: partner with Him and affect eternity through our lineage. Every time a child is born they are forever. They are eternal beings. This is truly mind-boggling. We play a part in affecting eternity!
- C. We must get a vision of eternity in regards to children. We have the responsibility and the joy of molding and shaping young lives and shooting them out like arrows into the world.

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.” (Colossians 3:1-2)

VII. PARADIGM SHIFT

As I end part 1 of this teaching, I want to encourage you as you continue in your journey of embracing motherhood. I am amazed at how God has structured His kingdom it is designed on the concept of a family. Jesus referred to God as his father, and he knew that he was his son. The success of Jesus' ministry came from this place of being a son in right relationship with his father and our position his bride of Christ. Women are called to be sons of God, so men are called to be the Bride of Christ. Both describe a position of great privilege before God for the redeemed. God obviously views the family as something of great value.

I encourage you not to believe something just because you want to, and don't embrace an idea just because you have always believed it. Believe what is biblical! Test all your assumptions against the words God gave us in

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the Bible. My heart, in expressing this, is to allow us to experience ALL God has for us on this side of eternity. Our “currency” in eternity will be the love that we cultivated for Him and our families on this side of heaven. I am still on this journey; I long to experience God’s heart in everything and for others to, as well. Ask the Lord for His heart and join me in this searching, wrestling and working through what God reveals to us. Jesus is filled with delight and gentleness towards us. He takes pleasure in believers who seek to obey Him and treats us with tenderness. Jesus shares His heart with us because He wants us to be with Him where He is and to work together with Him in building the kingdom and ruling the earth forever.

I would like to end with this quote from the great Scottish American preacher Peter Marshall, who stood before the United States Senate in 1950:

“The modern challenge to motherhood is the eternal challenge — that of being a godly woman. The very phrase sounds strange in our ears. We never hear it now. We hear about every other kind of women — beautiful women, smart women, sophisticated women, career women, talented women, divorced women, but so seldom do we hear of a godly woman — or of a godly man either, for that matter.

I believe women come nearer fulfilling their God-given function in the home than anywhere else. It is a much nobler thing to be a good wife than to be Miss America. It is a greater achievement to establish a Christian home than it is to produce a second-rate novel filled with filth. It is a far, far better thing in the realm of morals to be old-fashioned than to be ultramodern.

The world has enough women who know how to hold their cocktails, who have lost all their illusions and their faith. The world has enough women who know how to be smart. It needs women who are willing to be simple. The world has enough women who know how to be brilliant. It needs some who will be brave. The world has enough women who are popular. It needs more who are pure. We need women, and men, too, who would rather be morally right than socially correct.”

If you have any thoughts or questions please email me at christelle@globalprayerhouse.com. Look out for Part 2, coming shortly!

Blessings,

Christelle Baldovinos