

Harris Creek Baptist Church  
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Series: Uncommon Family  
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### Uncommon Mothers

Matthew 15:21-28

Well, Happy Mother's Day to all the moms here! We are so grateful for you and all that you do. Happy Mother's Day to you! And here's just a fun fact about Mother's Day, that the few hundred people in the lobby have already figured out, Mother's Day is actually the third highest attended Sunday in America, It's Easter, it's Christmas Eve, and it's Mother's Day. And it's because we have so many moms in this country, and in this church, who do such a great job of leading their family to Jesus. We are so thankful for you. We're proud of you and we want to celebrate you today. Another fun fact, I didn't say this at the 9:00 AM, Father's Day is one of the lowest. So men step up and do your job.

But I also just want to acknowledge that for a lot of people, Mother's Day is a hard day. There are people in this room or watching online, or you were getting ready this morning and you did not want to come to church. You didn't want to watch church this morning, because Mother's Day brings a lot of baggage with it. Maybe for you, you want to be a mom, but you are still in the season of singleness. Or maybe you want to be a mom, but for whatever reason you're struggling at getting pregnant. Or maybe you have lost your mom. Or maybe you had a mom, but like, you didn't REALLY have a mom. Or maybe you are a mom and you've got a strange relationship with your kids. Or maybe you are a mom, and you are an empty nester right now and you're longing for the days when your kids were in your home. Or maybe you are a mom and you've lost your child. I just want to say, as your pastor, I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry. I can't imagine how hard that is. But I also want to say I'm so proud of you. I'm so proud of you for still choosing to come or log in today and worshiping in the midst of your wounds. I'm so proud of you for that.

Today we are starting off a brand-new sermon series called Uncommon Family. I want to start it off by telling you about a guy named Dick Fosbury. Now, Dick Fosbury, you probably have no idea who he is because he was a failed high school high jumper. But the only problem was all he wanted in his life was to be a high jumper. This was the only place in his life where he fit in was on this track team. Really, high schoolers, all they want is to fit in and the only place where Fosbury fit in was on the track team. To make his life even more difficult, his parents had gotten a divorce, and his younger brother had actually recently passed away. He just didn't really have anything going for him except this track team. The only problem was he wasn't good at track. He was going to be cut from the team because he couldn't jump over the high jump. That was the one thing he was asked to do. So he desperately wanted to stay on this team.

Dick Fosbury would eventually become a civil engineer; he has an engineer's brain. So, he tried to figure out the best way to do the high jump. How can he get his body over the high jump? And

typically, in that day and age, this was back in the 1960s, people would go either headfirst over the bar, or they do this thing. I looked at stuff on YouTube, so I think I know how to do it. It's called the scissor kick. And they do this. (Nate displays the scissor kick on stage.) How was that? Come on. Thank you, I appreciate that.

But Dick Fosbury was like, 'I don't actually think that's the best way to get my body over this bar, and he started doing something ridiculous. He started doing what's now called the Fosbury Flop. And people saw this back in the 1960s, and they're like, "Dick! What are you doing? You look ridiculous!" In fact, even the newspaper started to pick on this high school kid. They said, 'He looks like a fish flopping in a boat.' While another newspaper named him the world's laziest high jumper. In fact, his coaches even told him to stop. They're like, 'Dick, you need to stop doing this. We look ridiculous because you do this. We're going to lose our job because people are going to think that we're telling you to do this. We would never, ever tell you to jump like this.' The only problem for them was he just kept winning. He went from losing every event, to winning and winning and winning and winning and he won so much that he eventually won his way to the 1968 Summer Olympics in Mexico City.

And when he showed up that day, he walked into the arena and no one there that day had ever seen him jump this way before. All they knew was the headfirst or the scissor kick type jump. And apparently that day there was a buzz in the arena when people saw him do the Fosbury flop. He wasn't just a spectacle because he looked weird, he was a spectacle because he not only won gold, but he set an Olympic world record for how high he jumped that day. And here's what's fascinating about Dick Fosbury. He won the gold medal in high jump. Meanwhile, he almost certainly was not the highest jumper in the world. He just figured out a better way to jump. So although he looked ridiculous to the world around him, he simply produced results, and that's where we're going in this sermon series

As we're in this brand-new sermon series called Uncommon Family, we were in a room a few weeks ago, just trying to plan and figure out what the best title for this sermon series would be. The number one title that came to mind for us was Modern Family. That's a catchy title. It's a relevant title. Let's name it Modern Family. But the more we talked about that we were like, "Wait a minute! That's the exact opposite of what we want to be teaching our people." We do not want to be a Modern Family! Because the Modern Family is not going very well.

Let me give you some statistics. About 50% of marriages end in divorce. Right now, 40% of births happen out of wedlock. In 1960 it was 5%. 1/4 of kids are raised without a dad present in the home - 1/4 of kids. The average age for marriage right now is 29 for men and 27 for women. Not that marriage is the goal, and not that young marriage is the goal. But there's two primary reasons for that: the first is that this next generation has seen their parent's marriage, and they don't want anything of it. And the second thing is there's just a greater acceptance of sex outside of marriage in today's day and age. Two other stats. About 70% of college students leave the church after being raised in the church. And just 42% of millennials are members of churches. By comparison, 20 years ago 62% of members of Gen X belonged to a church when they were about the same age as millennials today.

So at Harris Creek, we do not want modern families. We want an uncommon family who will look ridiculous to the world around them, but who will produce results. In Scripture, it sets a high bar for a God honoring family. If we're going to get up and over that bar, we're going to have to do some uncommon things. Today, what we are going to do is we're going to look at what do uncommon moms do. What do uncommon moms do?

This week, as I was preparing this message, I had a really, really hard time finding a scripture to teach on. There is just like an added pressure to Mother's Day. I want to make sure I'm communicating the right things; it's challenging and uplifting. That it speaks to everyone and not just moms. It was Wednesday morning, and I still didn't have a text, which is a big deal. It's a problem. So I was like, 'Lord, would you please just show me what to teach our church? What should I teach? Would you just show me?' I immediately picked up my Bible and started flipping through to look for another text. But on my way to another text, I found this one. It was like it stood out from the page.

As soon as I read it, it was God's kindness to me. This is why we pray. Sometimes stuff like that happens. It doesn't always, but sometimes we ask God to show up and He shows up. He's always there, but sometimes, man, He answers your prayer right away. That's how it felt like to me. As soon as I read Matthew 15, this story that we're about to read, man, it absolutely blew me away. Because I've read this story before, but I don't know exactly what it was, maybe it's because my wife is now a mom...but man, I read this story in a new way. This mom, in this story, is now a hero to me.

It's funny, this passage didn't show up on any of the websites that I looked up that said, 'Best Passages to Preach on Mother's Day'. It wasn't listed in any of those, which is somewhat confusing to me. In this story, we're going to read about an uncommon mom doing uncommon things and getting uncommon results. But I also really do want to make this clear, I'm not just speaking to moms today. This message, at its core, is a discipleship message. It's a message about how to follow Jesus and how to help other people do the same.

So, we are going to be in Matthew 15 - starting in verse 21. I just want to give you a heads up. In this passage Jesus says, I would argue, the most shocking thing He says in all the Gospels. Initially, it's the most off-putting thing Jesus says in all the Gospels. I'm going to explain that. I'm not going to leave you hanging. But in order to understand it, I need to set up where they're at in the story right before this passage. Right before verse 21.

Jesus and the disciples are around the Jewish people, specifically around the Pharisees, who were the religious leaders at the time. Jesus was sharing the good news about God with them, and it wasn't landing. In fact, it said they were so offended by Him that Jesus left their region and He traveled 50 miles north. We've got a map of it up here. 50 miles was a long journey in that day and age. But it wasn't just uncommon to make that long of a journey, it was uncommon to make this specific journey. He left the Jewish region and traveled 50 miles up to Tyre and Sidon to the Gentile region. Now the Gentile region was the land of the people who apparently did not know God. So keep in mind, He left the people who know God and is now traveling to the land of people who do not know God. We are going to see Jesus encounter a Gentile woman. As we do,

as we read this story, this was helpful for me. Read this through the lens of a mom who loves her daughter. As I read it that way, it brought this into new light for me this week.

So let's do that starting in verse 21. It says this: **Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly." Jesus did not answer a word. So His disciples came to Him and urged Him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." But the woman came and knelt before Him. "Lord, help me!" she said. He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs." "Yes, it is, Lord", she said. "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table." Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment.**

This is what uncommon moms do. You see, there wasn't a single thing this mom did in this story that was considered normal at all. Although she seems strange to everyone else around her, her perceived strangeness was really just her faithfulness. And this is the heart of this sermon series. She's doing uncommon things, and it's leading to uncommon results. And I want to point out a couple of different things that she does in this story. The first thing I want you to know.

*1. Uncommon Moms have an uncommon pursuit of Jesus.*

You have to understand that in this time it was scandalous for not only a woman but for a Gentile woman to approach Jesus like this. Because for the Jewish people, they regarded the Gentiles as unworthy, dirty, and dogs. That was perhaps their most common used phrase to talk to Gentiles. But in spite of all this background and baggage, this woman still pushes through, and she still approaches Jesus - in spite of all the cultural norms. She goes after Jesus anyway. And I don't just want to point out that she pursued Jesus, but how she pursued Jesus. Because as she approaches Him, she comes up to Him and says, **"Lord, Son of David. Have mercy on me."** Right after that, she is seemingly ignored four times. The first is that Jesus hears her and then He doesn't respond to a word that she says. Which is surprising. And then the second thing, the disciples said, **'Just send her away to get rid of her.'** And then thirdly, Jesus said, **"I've only come for the lost sheep of Israel."** Even in spite of those three sleights in a row, she still moves closer to Jesus. She kneels down before Him and says, **"Lord help me."** And then the fourth thing, is that Jesus said, **"It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."**

Can you imagine how discouraging and demoralizing this must have felt? This woman has found the Lord of the universe. The person who she believes is God Incarnate, and she has found Him. She's pursued Him. Only to be seemingly ignored and slighted four times in a row! I don't know about you, but I would have given up far sooner than what she did. But here's what I've realized and what I've noticed. I think just through Adalee just becoming a mom this last year and reading this passage. What I see, from uncommon moms, is that when uncommon moms know that something is best for their family nothing is getting in their way. Not a single thing is going to stop them. That's what we see from this mom in this passage.

I don't really know why, but she pushes through a number of different times where she was ignored and slighted. She had incredible resilience. And again, I don't know why. There's not a great explanation for it. Maybe she was around Jesus a separate time and she heard him speak before. Maybe she just had the Holy Spirit inside of her. I don't know why. All I know is that she trusted Jesus profoundly. And what we need to understand is that Jesus knows this. Jesus knows her faith, but the disciples do not. In the disciple's mind, this one was just a dog who should be tossed aside so they could get on to the more important work. But what you need to hear is that Jesus has come here to attack this notion. This is a cultural critique from Jesus here. What He's doing is, it's really just the setup. He's doing what He does in so many parables when He would tell a story.

He would tell a story that would have all the religious insiders nodding along until the very end, because the tables would turn at the very end of the story. Something would happen that they weren't expecting to happen. It's what's called an inversion. And this is how Jesus taught. This is what He does here. He's talking in a way that all the disciples are listening along only so that He could critique their cultural narrative.

Let's read again. It says this in verse 26, **He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."** If it makes you feel any better, He actually says puppy here. He really does, He says Little Dog. Which is different from the typical term that the Jewish people used for the Gentile. They would use a word that was more like junkyard dog, like a dirty dog. A nasty dog that no one wanted. Jesus says little dog, more like puppy here. But as He says this, the disciples are nodding along. 'That's right. This woman is not worth our time. Let's move on.'

Then she says this in verse 27. **"Yes, it is, Lord", she said. "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."** Boom! Right there. Upper cuts their theology. Jaws are on the floor because this woman is not supposed to have such faith, resilience, and humility. And yet she does. As soon as she says this, Jesus holds her up in high esteem and says, "Woman, you have great faith!" We have to understand the context here. Because remember, right before, Jesus was just with the religious leaders and the Pharisees and they were pushing Him away. The people who knew God were resisting Jesus. Meanwhile, this woman who seemingly did not know God was embracing Jesus. What Jesus is doing here is He's teaching the disciples. He's saying, "What it looks like to follow me, is not to have a title and a long flowing robe. It's to have desperation and dependence - like this woman. She's the goal."

I read a commentary this week on this passage that said the most important word in this story is not dog, but rather bread. Bread here stands for Jesus. Jesus would frequently refer to Himself as the bread of life. John 6:35, He referred to Himself as the bread of life. So here, when He says, **"It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."** What He is saying is, 'it's not right to take me, the Messiah who came for the Jews, and toss Him to the Gentiles. But then, when this mom replies by saying, 'Yes, it is. Because even the dog gets to eat the crumbs from the master's table.'" What she's saying here is, 'I believe there's enough of you to go around. And more than that, I believe that you want to make yourself available to me.' She has great faith and out of this great faith, Jesus moves in her direction. We realize that what He was saying before isn't what He actually believed or meant because He moves in her life and heals her daughter.

And you see her uncommon faith produced uncommon results, and it changed her daughter. It heals her daughter. It changed the disciple's mindset as well. This is what an uncommon pursuit of Jesus does every single time. It changes the people around you, not just with moms, with anyone. Anyone who has an uncommon pursuit of Jesus, changes the people around them.

This week I was talking with some staff members. We were talking about some uncommon moms here in our church body and someone mentioned a name of someone who I was actually going to be eating dinner with her and her husband that night. So, I took note of that, and I wanted to ask her what she does to become such an uncommon mom. What does she do to be a fantastic mom to her kids? So, we were sitting around eating dinner and I asked that question. I set it up that same way and I said, "So what do you do?" And her husband replied first. He said, "I can tell you exactly what she does that makes her such an uncommon mom. She gets up every single morning at 5:30, sits in the same chair, and spends time with Jesus every single day." But then she said, "Yes, I do that, but our kids have never seen it. Our kids have never been up at 5:30 in the morning. They've never seen me in that chair spending time in the word. So, they can't be impacted by it because they simply haven't seen it." And I was like, 'Man, she's right. Her kids can't be impacted by it because they have not seen it.' I left and I just kept thinking about that interaction. And the more I thought about it, the more convinced I am that her kids absolutely see it. They absolutely see it!

What's interesting to me is that someone, the person who mentioned her name, mentioned something that she does around the dinner table; the conversations that she has with her kids around the dinner table. And I am absolutely convinced that what she does with Jesus at 5:30 AM affects how she treats her kids at 5:30 PM. So while her kids might not see it actually in action, they see the results of her time with Jesus all throughout the day. Because when you have an uncommon pursuit of Jesus, it changes the people around you.

And you might be thinking, 'Man, 5:30 AM? This is so encouraging. Just what I want to hear on Mother's Day, just more stuff for me to do. Just the Proverbs 31 type of discouragement. Thanks, Nate. I appreciate it. I also just want to say, 'Hey, 5:30 AM is not necessarily the goal. That's not necessarily the goal.' I would just say that the goal is to look like this woman in Matthew 15. Again for all of us, not just moms. The goal is to look like her. She pushed through so many things that could have kept her from Jesus. She pushed through cultural norms. She pushed through being seemingly slighted, and yet she still pushed into Jesus. Do you still have that same resilience in your walk with Him? What were you pushing through to spend the time with Him? Are you waking up early? Are you giving up time with your phone? What are you giving up to spend time with Him? That's the goal. And it might be 5:30 AM. It might be 5:30 PM. Whatever it is, spend time with Jesus because when you have an uncommon pursuit of Him, it will change the people around you.

But I've got another thing I want to point out about this mom in this passage. It's about why she pursues Jesus the way that she does. So let's read part of the text again in verse 22. It says this, **A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to Him, crying out, "Lord, son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly."** So why is she

pursuing Jesus so fervently? It's not because she wants a selfie with the Messiah. She's desperate for Jesus because she's desperate for her daughter. The second thing I want you to notice...

## *2. Uncommon moms contend for their children.*

Her daughter was demon-possessed, which is fitting coming after our sermon series on spiritual warfare. But I just want to point a few things out here. One, this mom loved Jesus and her daughter was still suffering. Some of you moms need to hear this. You may love Jesus and your kids might not yet and it's not because you've messed them up. The second thing I want to point out is that with this daughter being demon-possessed, man, it's easy to just kind of read that and gloss by it. But what that really meant was that her family was likely a societal outcast. People distanced themselves from this family because of this daughter, and it would have been so easy for this mom to either distance herself from her daughter or to simply give up. But she doesn't. And the thing we can take away from this mom is that she takes personal responsibility for her daughter to be impacted by Jesus. She doesn't just hope that Jesus will find her daughter. She doesn't just hope that her daughter has nice Christian friends who will introduce her to Jesus. She takes on the responsibility for her daughter to be impacted by Jesus and she contended with Jesus for the health of her child.

Some of you might know of a guy named Tony Evans. He's a pastor in Dallas, but he is not just a pastor in Dallas. He's a pastor who had a global impact during his time in ministry. And I've got a friend who knows both him and his wife, Lois. His wife Lois has since passed away, but they raised four kids who know and love Jesus with a passion. One of them is Priscilla Schreier. She's an amazing teacher of God's word if you know who that is. But I asked his friend. I was like, 'Man, how did Tony and Lois raise four amazing kids to know and love Jesus? How did they do this?' And she said, 'Well, that's interesting. I actually asked Lois that exact question. I said, Lois, what did you do to raise such four godly kids?' And Lois said, 'Man I can tell you exactly what I did. I prayed for them every single day of their life.' My friend kind of rolled their eyes and they're like, I know. I know you prayed for them every single day, but what did you actually do? Did you let them watch Disney movies? What music did they listen to? What books did you read? When did they get an iPhone? What did you actually do? And Lois said, "No, you're not listening to me. I prayed for them every single day of their life, and as I contended for my kids, Christ changed my kids."

This is what this woman does here in Matthew 15. She's pursuing Jesus with a passion, and in that pursuit, God changed her kids. In fact, every single parable that Jesus teaches on prayer is really one headline. It's diligence. He says, "Come to me again and again and again and again. And when you do, your prayer will change things - because prayer works." This is what we see from this woman here in this passage. She wasn't going anywhere until Jesus moved. She wasn't going to leave it up to chance. She was going to do all she could to create a situation where Jesus would change her daughter's life. She took the responsibility personally in her life.

As I was writing that part of this message, I was actually in my backyard writing the message for part of it. And in our backyard, we've got this hanging potted plant that's kind of right outside of our house. And my wife and I had recently noticed that a bird had made a nest in the potted plant

and had recently given birth to a bunch of eggs in the nest. And as I was writing this message, the momma bird came swooping in with a live worm hanging from her mouth, perched up on the potted plant, and fed her chicks as they were making sounds - whatever sounds chicks make - and fed her kids. Then she flew off to go find some more food. It was like the most National Geographic my life has ever been. It was crazy. I wish I had it on video to show you, but I didn't.

And I have never claimed, nor will I ever claim to be, Mary Poppins. But I think I know what that bird was thinking that day. And I know this is probably way too charismatic for some of you Baptists, but I feel, I really do feel like the Holy Spirit impressed on my heart what that momma bird was thinking. And if that sounds crazy, you take it up with Jesus because me and Him, we're having a great time! I really, I feel like the Holy Spirit was impressing on my heart what that momma bird was thinking. I think she was thinking, 'Nobody else is going to feed my babies. Nobody else is going to feed my babies. If I don't feed my babies, nobody else is going to.'

I can't take them to church and hope the youth pastor feeds them an hour a week. I can't cross my fingers and hope they have godly friends who can feed them. No! If nobody else feeds my kids, they're not going to get fed. I think that's what was going through this mom's mind in Matthew 15. Nobody else is going to fight for my baby. Nobody else is going to fight for my daughter. The only way she's going to be healed is if I fight for her and if I feed her.

Here's where the analogy breaks down. If you don't feed your kids, somebody else will. And if you don't feed your kids, it's more than likely that the world's going to feed your kids. And if they're not eating spiritual food, they're going to be eating worldly garbage. And if you're not intentionally feeding your kids, let me tell you TikTok will feed your kids. Netflix will feed kids. The garbage music that their friends listen to will feed your kids. And then here's what happens. They will grow up to not love Jesus and will be confused. Why shouldn't they be? They were raised on a diet of the world. No wonder they love the world. They haven't learned to love the taste of the things of God, because they haven't been fed the things of God.

Now let me also say, my daughter is one. I have no idea what I'm doing as a parent. I've heard from a lot of you, that you never really know what you're doing as a parent. But I do pray every single day that my daughter Jaycee would come to know and love Jesus at an early age. But I also know good and godly parents who have raised kids and not all of them know and love Jesus. Because we can't control our kids and we can't save our kids. It doesn't mean you've messed them up.

But also as the college pastor here, I've gotten the opportunity to interact with thousands of college students. I've really sensed the pattern, it's a profound pattern, and it's the most godly, the most mature, the most faithful people in our ministry, are people who came from families who know and love Jesus. Families who fed their kids; with parents who prayed for their kids and who prayed with their kids. Parents who shared with their kids about how Jesus saved them. Parents who shared what they're learning about in God's word. Parents, who, when they're with their kids, they share their faith with the people around them. Parents who bring their family to church. In other words, they grew up in homes where their parents just made sure Jesus was



around their family so much that eventually their kids bumped into Him and met Him. That's what we see here in this passage from Matthew 15.

This momma took on her daughter's situation with personal responsibility. And while we don't know what ended up happening with this daughter years later down the road, we don't know if she ended up following Jesus for the rest of her life. I'm convinced that for the rest of her life, her momma told her daughter how much Jesus changed her.

Because point number one - the first thing we can learn from this story - uncommon moms have an uncommon pursuit of Jesus. The second thing we can learn is that uncommon moms contend for their kids. But let's look at one other thing we can learn from this passage, and it comes at the very end of the passage. Jesus says this in verse 28, **Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment.**

Here's something interesting. Jesus only commended two people in the Gospels for their faith. Isn't that interesting? He was around religious leaders a lot. He was around his disciples a lot. He only commended two people for their faith. Interestingly enough, they both happened to be Gentiles; one was a Roman officer, and the other was this Canaanite woman. In this instance, Jesus saw her great faith and then He said it. He acknowledged it. He honored it. Which is the third thing we can learn from this passage.

### *3. Jesus honors uncommon faith.*

As I'm sure you know, I'm not a mom - which can present some troubles preaching on Mother's Day. I want to teach what would be helpful for moms to hear. So I talked to a bunch of moms in this church. I just asked them the same question over and over again. What do you feel like the moms of Harris Creek need to hear? And it was almost like y'all were talking to each other. I heard the same thing over and over and over again. I heard this same line multiple times this week. I said, 'What do you feel like the moms of Harris Creek need to hear?' And I heard over and over and over again, I just want to feel seen. I just want to feel seen. And I heard that enough times this week that I think I can say confidently that we have a problem here. Men, we have a problem here. Kids, we have a problem here. We have moms who are pouring themselves out for their family and they don't feel seen. And I get it.

I do because every family has different roles in different seasons. Right now for us, my wife is working part time and then caring for our daughter full time. She's a great mom. She's a great employee. She's a great wife. I often take it for granted, until she leaves, and I have to do her job. That's what happened this Tuesday. She went up to visit some family in Dallas, so I took Jaycee from PDO here at Harris Creek and brought her home. I had her go down for a nap and tried to work on some work while she was sleeping. And then she woke up. I tried to play with her for a while and then I eventually got her dinner ready. What I mean by got her dinner ready, is I mean I warmed up the food that Adalee had already made for her. But it's hard to warm stuff up while I'm playing with my kid! Then I'm trying to feed my kid while trying to feed myself. Then I'm trying to put her down for a bath, all the while I need to make sure that her milk is ready and that she's not crying, that we do lotion and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Then I put her down to sleep at 7:00 PM. I was exhausted and I realized, Adalee does this all the time!

Now, I promise I'm not a deadbeat dad. When I'm there, I'm engaging and I'm helping. But just with my job, I'm not there at night all the time. In fact, every single Sunday night I'm up here. So she's having to do that by herself. And I just forget. Which let me say clearly is sinful and selfish and I repent of those times when I don't see what she does; let alone say to her face what she does.

And I know, as I said before, different families in different seasons have moms with different jobs. Everyone's got a different season of their life right now. But no matter what season you're in, I'm confident that your mom or your wife, who is a mom or a person who has become like a mom for you, she's probably doing more than what you realize. She's not doing it for applause, but it would sure help to be appreciated. I think it would help her. I think it would honor her if we could take the lead from Jesus and see what she does and then say it. I think that would fill her up. But let me also say to moms, you might not get that. And not just moms, everybody here - you might not get that. You might not feel the appreciation that you feel like you need from the people in your life. You might not feel appreciated by your spouse. You might not feel appreciated by your kids. You might not feel appreciated by your boss or your coworkers, or your friends, or your roommates, and it's okay. Because Matthew 6:4, Jesus says ... **but your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.**

This is not a consolation prize. This is why we do everything that we do. We do everything we do to honor God and in turn, Scripture says that He will honor us. He will reward us. Psalm 139 says, **If I sit or if I rise, you see me. If I go up to the heavens or go down to the depths, you are with me.** So moms, if you were on the floor picking up Cheerios or if you were working your full-time job, God sees you in all of those places. And if you are doing things out of faith, God will honor you for that. He sees you. He knows you. He loves you. He honors you.

So in summary, three things we can learn from this passage. 1 - uncommon moms have an uncommon pursuit of Jesus. 2 - uncommon moms contend for their kids. 3 - Jesus honors uncommon faith.

On Mother's Day, I think of five different people in my life. I think of my wife, who is now a Mom. I think of my mom. I think of my mother-in-law. And I think of my two grandmothers. And this year specifically, I'm specifically thinking about one of my grandmothers who this is our first Mother's Day without her. If I could, could I just share with you about the best gift she ever gave me?

Every year at Christmas, I've got a bunch of cousins and, what she would do is we'd all get the same exact thing. She cared so much that we would all feel loved equally. So we'd all get the same thing, and it was always in a Macy's box. She always shopped at Macy's. So, one year it might be matching sweater vests and we take a picture while wearing our same exact sweater vest together; or maybe the same exact pair of slippers. But the best gift that my grandma ever gave me was never at Christmas. Towards the end of her life, she filled out this book where she answered a few questions about her life and different things she wanted to pass down to her grandkids. And I just want to show you one of them. Here's what she said in response to the question.

“As I look to the future, I have these hopes and goals for our family and for myself.” She wrote I treasure our family get-togethers and look forward to continuing to do so. I am thankful for the blessing of sharing in the lives of our grandchildren and watching each of you grow. I will continue to pray daily that the Lord will bless you and keep you, and that you will always be a blessing to Him. Always remember, God loves you so much! And we did to. You were very special to us, Nathan and Andrew. Papa and Grandma.

And here's what you need to know, she didn't just write that - she lived it. In recent years, I got to watch her interact with her great grandchildren. The first thing she wanted them to know was how to sing Jesus Loves Me. See the greatest gift my grandmother gave me is that she had an uncommon pursuit of Jesus. She contended for her kids and grandkids. And you can bet your bottom dollar that on July 11th, 2021, she heard the words, “Well done, my good and faithful servant.” The best gift that my grandma gave me was that she knew and loved Jesus and the way she pursued Jesus changed my family.

See my grandmother, she knew and loved Jesus, and she raised a son to know and love Jesus, who raised me to know and love Jesus. And I know this isn't true for all of you. On the other side of my family, I could say the same thing. I've got another grandma who knows and loves Jesus, who raised a daughter to know and love Jesus, who raised me to know and love Jesus. On this Mother's Day, I am so grateful. So profoundly grateful for God's kindness to me in providing these women in my life who got up every single day and pursued the Lord with all they had. They contended for their kids and grandkids, and they're deserving of honor for that.

And the reason why I share that story is that Mother's Day is a reminder that we're all gifting people with something. We are all passing on a legacy. For you, some of you, your Mother's Day is filled with wounds because that's what your mom left you. Some of you, you're left with only great memories because that's what your mom left you. But it's not just moms who are passing on a legacy, all of us are passing along a legacy. My question is, what is yours? 10 years from now, what will your family; what were your friends; what will your coworkers be saying about you? Will they say, “Man, my mom, she only cared about what I looked like. What I did. My grades or my sports team?” Or will the people in your life say, “Man, he was one of the most negative people I was ever around. No one ever gossiped like him. No one ever brought a room down like him.” Or will they say, “Man, he only cared about being rich and having a lot of money. She only cared about being in that certain neighborhood.” What will your legacy be?

My challenge to you, my hope for you, is that 10 years from now, 15 years from now, 20 years from now, people might say of you, “Man, they weren't perfect. But I tell you what, they knew and loved Jesus! And they pursued Him with such diligence and joy that I wanted to know Him too.” I pray that that would be true of our church. Let me pray that it would be true of us today.

Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of moms. They're better than we deserve. God, thank you - specifically for me - that the women in my life have directed me towards Jesus. But God, I also acknowledge that there are so many people here who that's not their story. Mother's Day just brings up wounds and pain and frustration, even frustration towards you. God, I pray that right now today you would be the God of all comfort as Scripture says you are. Be near to my friends

who are hurting. Whether it's because they want to be a mom or because their mom is no longer here, or because their mom had maybe failed them. Whatever it is, God, would you be near to them. And I just want to thank you for this example in Matthew 15 of a momma who loved her baby. I pray that all of us parents would take this message to heart and that we would pursue Jesus with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. That we contend with Him for our kids. That she would be an example for all of us of what it looks like to follow you and to help other people follow you as well. More than anything, I know that regardless of what season the people in this room might be in, we all came here with one purpose. It is because we're so thankful for Jesus; that He's alive, and with us, and for us. We want to worship Him now. It's in Jesus' name we pray, Amen.