

When You Serve Your Children, You Serve Christ

There was a time earlier on in my mothering when I felt pretty sorry for myself.

I had two children then. Ellie was about two, and Kenny would have been about six months. As you know, there is a lot of work involved in raising two little people, especially as young as my little people were at the time. And I was getting burnt out on it.

I knew that being a mom mattered, that building character into my children's lives mattered—the big things. But what about the little things? What about all the diapers, the jars of baby food and the endless loads of laundry? Toys all over the place, diaper bags to pack any time I went somewhere, car seats to adjust and wiping sticky hands and faces? Not to mention bath time, bedtime and more diapers. Do these things matter?

To make matters worse, I told myself that anybody could do what I was doing. After all, making a PBJ sandwich doesn't take any particular skill. Neither does changing the bag in the diaper pail or running a bathtub full of water. Is this what my life has come down to? I wondered.

Tasks that anybody could do, that nobody notices or cares about? Unless, of course, I don't do them? Maybe you can identify with me. Maybe you've had these thoughts, as well as the resultant feelings of discouragement and frustration. If so, you know it's not fun to feel that what you do doesn't really make a big difference, that all the time and effort you put into your mothering is like throwing money down a hole—you do it, and then pfft! it's gone, with not much to show for it.

You can tell that I was not in a good place, emotionally or

spiritually, at least in terms of this issue. I had begun to deal with the issue of God's love for me and accept that He really did love me. But I had no idea how much He also appreciated me.

Until, that is, God got tired of listening to me whine and complain, and He broke into my pity party. You're wrong that what you do doesn't matter, He said. Remember what My Son said about "that which you do for the least of these?"

I once heard Oprah say that when a child walks into a room, he or she should see a light go on in his or her parents' eyes. And that always stuck with me. How if children don't receive validation of their worth from their parents, how will they ever believe that they are truly worthy as human beings?
-Megan D.

In my desire to know more, I looked in my concordance for some clue as to where the longer passage was located. I found it in Matthew 25:

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left.

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.'

Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink?

And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Matt. 25:31-46).

All of a sudden, I realized what God was trying to tell me.

My children were "the least of these"—not because they are worthless, but because children are the least able to help themselves and the least able to adequately repay what you do for them. And Jesus said that whatever I do for the least of these, I do for Him.

He didn't say, "Whatever you do for the least of these, I appreciate it." Nor did He say, "Whatever you do for the least of these, you earn a gold star on your heavenly chart." No, He said that whatever I do for the least of these, it's the exact same thing as doing it directly for Him.

Wow! So if that's true (and because Jesus said it and it's recorded in the Bible, we know that it is true), then what I do has incredible significance!

Everything I do for my children, even the little, mundane

“nothing” tasks I do as a mom, I do for Jesus! And if that’s true . . . well, then today I fed Him. I clothed Him. I took care of Him. Not, “I took care of my kids on His behalf,” but, “I took care of Him.”

I wrote a poem at the time to try to capture the beautiful truth God had shown me. Although I’m a writer, I’m not usually a poet, but I simply wanted to get down on paper what I had learned. I never realized that anyone beyond my husband and perhaps my small group at church would ever hear the poem, much less love it. But God sent it out all over the world, making something of it far beyond what I expected. I think its truth will resonate with you as well.

Loving Jesus

I started my day early,
Before the room was light.
I lifted my son from his crib
And wished it was still night.
But as I held him close and said,
“Hi, Kenneth, precious one,”
I knew that as I greeted him,
I greeted too God’s Son.

When my daughter woke up later,
Calling, “Mommy! Mommy! Down!”
I picked her up and hugged her
In her worn Elmo nightgown.

I know she felt the closeness
That a mother's touch affords.
I welcomed not just Ellie,
But so, too, the Lord of lords.

That day, I mixed some formula
And opened jars of peas.
I fixed some "pizza butter" bread
When she grinned and said, "Pleeeeeease."
I heated up some leftovers;
I had to nuke them twice.
And when I fed my children,
I was feeding Jesus Christ.

I made some funny faces,
And "played puzzles" on the floor.
I dressed kitties, ran around outside,
And played with them some more.
We laughed and jumped and tickled,
Making memories to be stored.
When I spent time with my children,
I spent time with my Lord.

I wiped up sticky cereal
And washed the dishes clean.
I straightened, picked up, put away,
And dusted in between.
I did six loads of laundry
And folded it like new.
When I cleaned for my children,
I cleaned for my Savior, too.

When my children were both crying,
I held them in my arms.
I cuddled them and whispered
That I'd keep them safe from harm.
I told them how their Father saved them
With His perfect Lamb.
When I comforted my children,
I comforted I AM.

Later on that evening,
I put them in the bath.
I washed their little bodies
As they kicked around and splashed.

I dried them in soft towels
And put their jammies on.
When I had washed my children's feet,
I'd washed the Holy One.

I cooked and cleaned and rearranged,
Made beds and taught and played.

I made sure that we had food to eat
And that we often prayed.

I died to self. I made a home
From ordinary things.

But when I served my children,
I served the King of kings.

To some, I have done nothing,
But to two, I've done the world.

I made eternal difference
To my precious boy and girl,
And to the One who watches over
Every pathway that I've trod.

For when I've loved my precious children,
I've loved Almighty God.

Precious mom, this is for you. God wants you to know that when you cared for your children today, you cared for His Son. You didn't just do nice, Christian things on God's behalf; you did them to and for Christ Himself.

*Adapted from Well Done, Good and Faithful Mommy (Regal Books) by **Megan Breedlove**. Megan is an author, blogger and a stay-at-home mom with four children. Visit her web site [Manna for Moms](#).*