

Why Every Mom Has a Chance to Change the World With Her Courage

Mother's Day can be a hard holiday for many women whose arms ache to hold a baby or who long to be reunited with a child whose life has taken a drastic and wrong turn. This particular day, which celebrates all that is right and good about the heart and service of a mother, can turn into a day of pain for those whose mothers are in heaven or those whose children have been buried.

Especially on Mother's Day, I like to remind myself that I am not alone on my maternal journey but that the lives of millions of other women have paved the way as I endeavor to be the mother that my children need in every season of life. Not long ago, I learned of a vibrant young mother who, although she lived nearly 2,000 years before me, taught me a vital lesson of motherhood during the most difficult days of life. Perhaps her life will encourage you this year as you struggle with the challenges that Mother's Day presents.

Vibia Perpetua was a young woman of noble birth who lived in the first century A.D. She was well educated for a woman of her time and was known to be breathtakingly beautiful. Vibia Perpetua was one of the first converts to Christianity in North Africa and understood that her newfound and dynamic faith would inevitably cost her everything. She understood that publicly declaring her Christianity could require her to sacrifice her beloved family and her very life.

When the day came that Perpetua was arrested, she was first taken to prison to await trial before the tribunal. In prison, her spirit became burdened not for herself but for her infant son, whom she was forced to leave behind. Because this noble

Christian woman came from an influential family, they were able to prevail upon the political leaders in their town to bring the infant son to her.

These are the words written nearly 2,000 years ago by this precious mother:

"I suckled my child, who was already weak from want of nourishment—and then I obtained leave that my child should remain with me in the prison. Immediately I gained strength and being relieved of my anxiety about the child, my prison suddenly became to me a palace, so that I preferred to be there rather than anywhere else."

On the day of her trial, Vibia Perpetua refused to renounce her faith and was sentenced to death in the arena. She knew that she would be torn apart by ravenous, wild beasts and then beheaded by the gladiator's sharp and cruel sword.

Perpetua marched into the arena to meet her untimely and grossly unfair death while singing psalms of praise and worship.

My prayer this Mother's Day is that you will always remember this unforgettable and courageous mother whose prison became a palace and whose death became a grand symphony simply because she was a woman of unswerving and valiant faith.

I don't know what your circumstances might be like today, but I want to encourage you that no matter what you are facing to learn a lesson from this first-century mother. When life is hard ... worship.

When your circumstances are crumbling out of control ... sing louder.

When you feel your heart racing due to fear or frustration ... put your hands in the air and offer heart-felt praise God for the life you have been given.

Don't allow any challenge or any circumstance in life to take your song away from you. Sing louder. Sing anyway. Sing in spite of.

Every mother in every generation and in every circumstance should be known for her song in the night and her melody in the morning. If your children remember only one thing about you, let it be that they had a mama who refused to give up her song. {eoa}

Carol McLeod is an author and popular speaker at women's conferences and retreats, where she teaches the Word of God with great joy and enthusiasm. Carol encourages and empowers women with passionate and practical biblical messages mixed with her own special brand of hope and humor. She has written eight books, including *The Rooms of a Woman's Heart*, *Defiant Joy!*, *Holy Estrogen!*, *No More Ordinary*, *Refined*, *Joy For All Seasons*, *Let There Be Joy!* and *Pass the Joy, Please!* which releases on February 1, 2018. Her teaching DVD, *The Rooms of a Woman's Heart*, won the Telly Award, a prestigious industry award for excellence in religious programming. You can also listen to Carol's "Jolt of Joy" program daily on the Charisma Podcast Network. Connect with Carol or inquire about her speaking to your group at .