

Willow River Parish: Clear Lake, Deer Park, and Faith Family

Title: Mothers' Love and God's Love

Lesson: 1 John 5:1-6 NRSV

5 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. ² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. ³ For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, ⁴ for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. ⁵ Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? ⁶ This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

It's Mother's Day. I can see there are many mothers in the service today. Today is for mothers. In South Korea, May is Family Month because it has Children's Day, Parents' Day, and Teachers' Day. Korea has Parents' Day instead of Mother's Day and every May 8th is the day for parents. It is a tradition for Koreans to put carnation flowers on their parents' chests on Parents' Day. I remember when I was a middle and high school student, I bought carnations for my parents at a flower shop on my way home after school and gave them to them with a letter. A few years later, when I became a college student, I opened the dressing table drawer at my parents' room and I saw the letter I had written. Do any of you still have letters from your children?

In Korea, Mothers are a byword of sacrifice. Korean society has been changed a lot in my generation, but my parents' generation and grandparents' generation were patriarchal. It was a time when men made money outside, and women were taken for granted to do housework and take care of their children at home. Nowadays, there are many women in Korea who work hard for their careers and dreams after marriage, as there are words such as working moms and career women, but in the past, it was common for Korean women to give up their dreams for their families.

Also, in Korea, Mothers are a byword of love. There is a word, "mother's instinctive love." Of course, there is a word, "father's instinctive love" though. I realized while taking care of Evan that parenting is endless and not easy. It's not easy to constantly talk to a baby and play with him. Isn't there a day when you're tired and want to keep resting? By the way, when I see my wife talking to Evan in

a bright voice and playing with him, I think motherhood is great. I respect all the mothers in the world.

Mother's love is great, but I'm not sure how many children know it. Since I was in my mother's womb, she has loved me and raised me with love. However, when I was a teenager, I took her love for granted because I could feel it every day like the air. I felt her love strongly when I performed military duties in Korea.

Most men in Korea have a duty to serve as soldiers for two years in their early twenties. Unlike in the United States, most Korean men are required to serve in the military, live in barracks, and usually have a vacation of 4 days to 1 week every 6 months. I'm so jealous when I see Americans respecting US soldiers because for Koreans, military experience is not special. Most Korean men have it and it is not a very pleasant thing for us because it is mandatory whether we want to or not, and it is a lonely period, disconnected from society. This is unimaginable in the United States, where individual human rights and freedoms are important. For most Korean men, military experience is one of the most difficult times in their lives. Long letters my mother sent me every week to cheer me up were a great help during the time, and it was a great opportunity to experience her love. When I look back on those days, it was thanks to my mother's love and the military church that I was able to endure that period.

In the Bible, Jesus uses many parables to explain the Kingdom of God, the time of God because people have never directly experienced what the kingdom of God is. If I asked you what love is, what would you answer? Some may say it's love with lover. Some may say it's mother's love. I cannot say God's love and mother's love are the same, but I think mother's love is an important key to understanding God's love.

Today's scripture reading, 1 John 5:1 tells, "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born from God." This is the principle of God's love. God has loved humans so he sent his son Jesus to us as a sacrificial offering. And those who believe in him as Christ become children of God. It is good news for us to be able to be children of God by believing in Christ. By the way, there's an extra sentence after that: "And everyone who loves the parents love the child." Not only did he become parents to those who believe, but he also loves them. God is the source of all love that allows us to love and live with each other. To respond to His love, people who love God love the family, the faith community, and all the relationships that God created. It is God's commandment to love God and to love

our brothers and sisters in Christ, the son of God. Because He poured out his amazing love to us, we can love our brothers and sisters in Christ, and it is not burdensome.

We are saved by believing in Jesus as Christ, which is not just a confession in words, but also a transformation in our lives when we embrace him as Christ in our lives. And when we believe in Jesus as Christ and embrace him in our lives, we can love God, ourselves, and our brothers and sisters in Christ.

God already showed us his love. He didn't just say he loved us, he really showed that love. How did he show us? The love God showed us was his son, Jesus Christ.

1 John 5:6 tells, "This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth."

Gospel John tells that "one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out." (John 19:34) Likewise, John emphasizes the water and the blood in Jesus' crucifixion.

The water and the blood mean the baptism and death of Jesus. The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, proves the fact that the Son of God became a true human being in Jesus and died for the salvation of the world on the cross through Jesus' baptism and cross. He proved his love to the world by becoming a human being. By believing this truth, we can conquer all temptation of the world with faith as 1 John 5:4 says, "for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith."

Love and faith, faith and love are inseparable. To believe in Jesus as Christ is to practice loving our brothers and sisters. Like this, if we love each other, we become children of God belonging to God.

Our greatest ability given by God is the power of love. The belief that we win over the world is love by the water and the blood.

Friends, I'd like to ask you, "are you children of God?" If so, practice love.

"Do you have the power to conquer the world?" If so, practice love.

"Do you believe in Jesus as your Savior?" If so, practice love.

There is a Jewish proverb, "God could not be everywhere, so he created mothers."

Each of us came into this world through a mother. The presence of mothers is the most beautiful example of God's love. Mother's love proves that no one in the world should be excluded from God's love.

Just as no creature in the world can sever our relationship with God, no situation in the world can sever our parents' love. Mother and God are the ones who gave birth to us. Mothers are the first coach and mentor in our lives. And God is the coach and mentor of our whole life, the beginning and the end of our lives. I hope you live as a child belonging to God. And, be happy to be that child. And practice that love.

I pray in the name of the Lord that God's grace binds you to the love of your family and unites you to the love of Jesus Christ. Amen