

Love and Obey on Mother's Day

Welcome on this Mother's Day. Someone has made a list of things a Mother would never say. See if your Mom would ever say these things:

1. *"Let me smell that shirt Yeah, it's good for another week."*
2. *"Well, if Timmy's mom says it's OK, that's good enough for me."*
3. *"The curfew is just a general time to shoot for. I'm not running a prison."*
4. *"I don't have a tissue with me . . . just use your sleeve."*

When you asked your Mom if you could get out of one of your allowance jobs she would always say, *"I don't want to hear any more about it. Just Do it"* and you would whine *"WHY?"* she would always say, *"Because I said so."* I can't imagine a better lesson plan for Mother's Day than Jesus message for his disciples and for us: *"If you love me you will obey my teaching. My Father will love you, and we will come to you and make our home with you."* Obedience is important in our spiritual lives but also important for a family life.

There is an undeniable link between love and obedience. We can threaten or punish a child to try to make them obedient and they wind up sneaky liars. But the best way is to get a child to obey is to let the child know you and them are tied together forever in a eternal bond of love that cannot be broken. So it is in our relationship with God who is our parent, both Father and Mother of us all. We are called to obey God's commands, not out of fear but out of love.

Mother's often give us little lessons for our own good: *"Don't sit too close to the TV."* or *"Don't chew too much gum"* or *"Be sure to put a jacket on."* or *"Be home by midnight."* You know down in your heart, she's doing it out of love. You are at the very center of her world and she wants you to be safe. She wants you to be happy. She knows that this is a dangerous world. There are some things that might bring us a few moments happiness that in the long run of life can spell ruin for us. She's not really being mean. Overly protective, perhaps, but not mean. Moms are human. They make mistakes, but 99% of the time, they make those mistakes in love. The only difference between God and a loving mother is that God doesn't make mistakes and God's love is limitless. God desires that His children shall all live healthy, fulfilling lives. God's love never ends. God is there when we fall even when we refuse to follow those instructions, but these commands grow out of God's unlimited love for us.

I remember a story about Hank Aaron playing at the Atlanta Braves' baseball home opener on April 8, 1974. It was a night game against the Dodgers and it was a complete sellout. He was batting to break Babe Ruth's record of 714 career home runs. An African-American player was about to topple the great Babe Ruth and a lot of people in

the country didn't like it. Aaron got 930,000 letters, far more than any other person in the country. Most were fan letters but about 100,000 of them were hate letters, some containing death threats. Dodgers pitcher Al Downing hurled the ball toward the plate. Aaron swung and connected. The crack of his bat echoed through the stands. The ball was gone. Home run. Babe Ruth's record was shattered. The ballpark went nuts. As Aaron rounded second base a couple of teenagers jumped over the wall and ran onto the field, chasing Aaron. For a moment, no one knew what they had in mind, but then it became clear: they were celebrating and cheering Aaron on. As Aaron crossed home plate, the dugout emptied as the Braves streamed onto the field to surround him, cheering and whooping it up. But amid all those ballplayers around Aaron was a short, sixty-eight-year-old black woman. She latched onto Aaron and wouldn't let go of him. Aaron turned and said to her, 'Mom! What are you doing here?' "Baby," said the mother of the new home-run king, 'if they're gonna get you, they've gotta get me first!'" That is love only a mother could have for her child. "If they're gonna get you, they've gotta get me first!" It is, however, only a pale reflection of the love God has for each of us. Do you really think that God would give us any command that was not for our best good? *"If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."*

A Newborn 's Conversation with God:

A baby asked God, *"you are sending me to earth tomorrow, how am I going to live there being so small and helpless?"* God said, *"Your angel will be waiting for you and will take care of you."*

The child asked, *"But here in heaven I don't have to do anything but sing and smile to be happy."*

God said, *"Your angel will sing for you and smile for you. You will feel your angel's love and be happy."*

The child asked, *"How am I going to understand when people talk to me if I don't know the language?"*

God said, *"Your angel will tell you the most beautiful and sweet words you will ever hear, and with much patience and care, your angel will teach you how to speak."*

The child said, *"What am I going to do when I want to talk to you?"* God said, *"Your angel will place your hands together and will teach you how to pray."*

The child said, *"Who will protect me?"* God said, *"Your angel will defend you even if it means risking its life."*

The child said, *"But I will always be sad because I will not see you anymore."* God said, *"Your angel will always talk to you about me and teach you the way to come back to me, even though I will always be next to you."* At that moment there was much peace in Heaven, but voices from Earth could be heard and the child hurriedly asked, *"God, if I am to leave now, please tell me my angel's name."* **God said, you will call her, "Mom."**