

DISCUSSION IDEAS
MOTHERS and GOD'S CHARACTER

May 14th, 2017

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Key Truth:

God lets us see His character in a mother's love.

♦ **DISCUSSION POINT ONE: WHAT IS GOD LIKE?**

Look at the following list. Which items are characteristics of God, and which are those which can be seen in a mother?

	<u>GOD</u>	<u>A MOTHER</u>
Faithful	_____	_____
Steadfast	_____	_____
Patient	_____	_____
Empathetic	_____	_____
Caring	_____	_____
Gives comfort	_____	_____
Present when needed	_____	_____
Teacher	_____	_____
Wise Counselor	_____	_____
Servant	_____	_____
<i>Can you add some more?</i>		
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Look at these passages for ideas:

Phil. 2:3-8

Luke 12:37

Rom. 15:1

Gal. 6:2, and 5

Matt. 1:22-23

Micah 7:18

Exodus 34:6-7

1 John 4:7-21

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♦ **DISCUSSION POINT TWO: WE DO NOT ALL HAVE IDEAL MOTHERS.**

IF, your relationship with your mother was not what you would want to remember, what resources has Jesus given you to help deal with this?

How does our belonging to one Body of Christ apply to this?

What about cultivating relationships within the Body?

Who, or what kind of person would we seek out?

How would we go about getting to know someone?

How can we learn if they can be trusted?

What about getting to the point of becoming vulnerable with someone?

Am I willing to help someone else, flawed as I am?

How would I go about that?

What is the difference between giving advice and just being there for them?

♦ **FOR PRAYER:**

OUR GRACE CHURCH ELDERS: Pray for our elders as they continue to guide Grace Church, always seeking God's will.

SHELTER VALLEY: Continue to uphold the Shelter Valley believers, and the GCC team that serves there.

Pray for Scott and Leslie Stevens as Scott heads up this ministry.

Pray for the developing local leaders and for continued growth in understanding among those who attend about God's Plan and what it really means to follow Him.

HOME GROUPS: Pray for our home groups.

Pray for the leaders to grow in understanding and skill so that those in each group will truly grow in their walk in the Spirit and in true agape love.

Pray that more folks will take part in a home group and be encouraged as a result.

Pray that each one of us would seek to learn how to use our individual spiritual gift(s) to build up the Body of Christ.

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GETTISES: Pray for the Gettis family in San Jose, Costa Rica.

Praise:

- "We believe we have found a church! Please continue to pray as we get plugged in."
- We are in the process of buying a van from another missionary here. It is a 2003 Honda Odyssey in very good condition and for a reasonable price.
- We have found a good Christian school here that is going to try a test run with Nathan this week to see if he will be able to join the first-grade class even though it is mid-term. (Their school year runs Feb.-Nov.) We feel the Lord leading us to put Nathan in school-at least for now-to help him learn the language and make friends. Home-schooling is illegal for native Costa Ricans, so the home-school community here is small.

Please pray for:

- David is excited to begin his studies at ESEPA this week: Greek and the theology of the early church fathers. Please pray that God would use this time to prepare his heart and mind to teach others and that he would build good relationships with the professors and students.
- Please also continue to pray for God's leading in balancing work at ESEPA, studies at ESEPA, and family life.

PEARSONS: John and Bobbie's son, John Caleb, is on hospice care with advanced cancer. He is bedridden and on two meds for pain control.

John and Bobbie take a turn in the around the clock family schedule for sitting with him. They have learned wound care to assist the nurse with daily bandaging, and Bobbie prepares special meals for him.

Thanks for prayers during this stressful time.

BARANGONAN ISLAND: Let's continue to pray for the Lord's love and power to be seen in Barangonan Island.

Continue to pray for wisdom and encouragement for the Ingvoldstads and the Binders as they adjust to a changed way of life. Uphold the island church leaders in prayer. Remember, God wants YOU to be a part of what He is doing.

Pray the Elders in Training: Eddie and Ted, the teacher geeks, Jeremy who has the gift of discernment to protect the flock, and Sid

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who leads in outreach to other islands. Pray that the evil one will not attack them.

Continue to uphold the Tagbanwa believers who go to a neighboring island every Friday to teach about God. Pray too for the hearers to respond.

Continue to pray for strength and endurance for those who go, as well as understanding for those who hear.

Thank God and uphold in prayer the "TFG" (Time For God) group of children and young folks who meet every day!

Pray with the strong, self-motivated women's group as they study God's Word and grow to be mature believers.

PERSECUTED BELIEVERS:

Let's not forget to uphold our fellow believers around the world who are experiencing real and intense persecution for following Jesus.

THIS WEEK:

1. Sudan: Praise God for the release today of Pastor Hassan Abduraheem and Abdulmonem Abdumawla, two men arrested in December 2015 along with VOM worker Petr Jasek. The two men were set free from prison this afternoon (Thursday 5/11/2107, local time in Sudan) after a presidential pardon. The two men had each been sentenced to a twelve year prison sentence for their roles in helping Petr provide aid to an injured Sudanese Christian from a Muslim background.

2. Ethiopia: According to reports, Ethiopia's northern Tigray State is currently exploring the possibilities of adopting a new law that would limit Christian activities to within official church compounds. It is believed that non-orthodox Christians would be the most greatly affected as the new law would make it compulsory for any church seeking to own property to have a minimum of 6,000 members.

Ironically, this number happens to be greater than the total population of non-Orthodox Christians in Tigray State. Furthermore, it is reported that the new law would curb any evangelizing from taking place outside church compounds. Recently, a similar law was implemented in the neighboring Amhara State to the detriment of its Christian community

3. Arabian Peninsula: When Nazeera noticed the positive change in her husband after he became a Christian, she, too, placed her faith in

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Christ. But since they lived in the Arabian Peninsula, they had to keep their new faith quiet. After studying the biblical teaching on baptism, Nazeera and her husband decided it was time to be baptized.

Somehow, the photos of Nazeera's baptism made it into the hands of the Muslim Brotherhood – an Islamic extremist group founded in Egypt. The group routinely targets Egyptian Christians who get in the way of their goal of Islamic world domination. Through active cell groups in many Muslim nations, they have exported their terror against Christians to other parts of the Muslim world, including the Arabian Peninsula.

4. **“TWO RELIGIONS SHOULD NOT CO-EXIST WITHIN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA.”** These words of Muhammad were spoken almost 1,400 years ago. Extremist groups like al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula are still trying to fulfill his dying wish. Members have called for the killing or expulsion of all Christians and Jews in the Arabian Peninsula, which includes Saudi Arabia, Yemen and five other countries.