

**Parson to Person**  
**Mother's Day 2026**

Every year as Mother's Day rolls around, I experience a variety of bittersweet emotions: I am reminded of the fact that my own mother died in 1968 when I was still pretty young—age 8. I have only a few memories of her. My dad was a traveling salesman and away quite a bit. Therefore, my early childhood was a mix of live-in housekeepers and nannies who did their best to take on the responsibilities of helping raise my sister and me. My grandmothers on both sides died when I was young and I never knew my grandfathers—both died before I was born. Therefore, early family life was not something I remember experiencing.

My dad remarried when I was 12 years of age. That was especially difficult for me. I felt that a stranger had moved in and was trying to take charge of me—an early teen. Do I need to say more? I will say, I have learned how much a blessing she was/is to me—and my sister.

Brenda had a rough childhood with a dad who was a professing believer—but abusive in ways I can't put in print. Her mom was a beaten down, broken woman who battled understandable depression—only to find relief after her husband abandoned the family when Brenda was 16. A sad commentary indeed. None should wonder if family life and healthy motherhood was modeled for her. Her mom tried and loved the kids, but circumstances made family life arduous and unhealthy.

Brenda's mom also remarried, and the new “man of the house” proved to be a tremendous blessing. Therefore, via late start, both Brenda and I had good step-parents—who proved to be a blessing.

Brenda and I married when we were too young to know anything about life (ages 18 and 19). However, at the ages of 19 and 20 we began serving the Lord and began a journey of our own. We knew nothing about raising a family but nonetheless asked the Lord for children—seeking the Lord for children every month.

Four years passed before our son Paul Jr. was born—and during that wait Mother’s Day was of particular pain to Brenda. She wondered if she would ever become a mom—as much as it was her heart’s desire.

We now have four children who were raised in a Christian but insufficiently equipped home. Neither Brenda nor I knew much of proper parenting. Moreover, my newly forming Christian faith and pastoral calling (I began by-vocational ministry at 23) had not provided me the kind of training I wish I would have had. Even then, Brenda was fixed on being the best parent and wife she could be. Amidst my busy, distracted, and insufficient support, she was a consistent homemaker, wife and mother.

The good news, after all is said and done, is that all of our children were raised in a home filled with consistent love. Moreover, a father and mother who remain unfaltering in Christian and pastoral testimony. This does not suggest perfection (as if I need to say that), but Brenda and I celebrate the fact that God has been merciful to us and that our now 47-year-long marriage demonstrates that God is able to use the worst—even us!

All of our children are professing believers, but nevertheless, like Brenda and me, struggle with all that life throws their way. Our oldest daughter lives away and has scarcely spoken to us—for roughly 6 years. The reasons? We don’t fully understand. We pray every day for our kids. We now have 11 grandchildren and trust the Lord for their growth in the truth. We continue to watch and pray as they each navigate life. We love all our kids and grandkids alike.

Why, you ask, am I sharing this? Well, because Mother’s Day and Father’s Day prove bittersweet for us, and I am sure the same is true for most of you.

This said, we celebrate moms and dads (moms in particular today) but with tenderness to those who (like us) have bittersweet days—or even years. We are tender on behalf of those who want or have wanted children but have none. We are tender with those who have lost children (or

grandchildren), those who struggle in parenting, etc. This is a day of emotion—good and bad! We are not unaware—and neither is the Lord.

### Mother's Day Blessing

To those who are pregnant with new life—expected or surprised—  
we celebrate with you.

To those who welcomed a child this year—we rejoice with you.

To those who serve their kids each day—we appreciate you.

To women in waiting—we wait with you.

To those who walk the path of childlessness, tears, and disappointment—  
we hurt with you.

To those who've lost a child this year—  
we mourn with you.

To those who've adopted a child in need—we bless you.

To those who foster children, mentor kids, and invest in  
the spiritual lives of God's little blessings  
—we serve with you.

To those who have warm and healthy relations with your children—  
we celebrate with you.

To those who suffer heartache, or distance—we weep with you.

To those who've lost a mother—we mourn with you.

To those who parent alone, or in a blended family—we support and  
commend you.

We celebrate the life and blessings of a Holy God.

Whatever your circumstance—be it good or *what we perceive as bad*—  
we trust the Lord with you.

This Mother's Day, we send our deepest love—  
to mothers, to those in waiting, to grandmothers, great-grandmothers—  
to all.

We love you, appreciate you, and ask God's best upon you.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.