

**2025-05-11 Elder Mike Hood**  
**Sermon - "A Mother's Wisdom and Forgiveness"**  
**Sermon Study Notes**

<https://www.youtube.com/live/1SAMijz9Af0>

<https://www.livinghopebranch.org/sermons/2025-05-11-elder-mike-hood-song-and-worship-service/>

**Clickable Time Stamps**

**05:12** Family Worship with Joy Cain and Madelyn Clark

**27:33** Praise Reports with Elder Ivan Bird

**44:29** Welcome - Elder Scott Eastin

**47:02** Special Music - "When Earth In Bondage" - Eva Cartwright, Kenese Cartwright, Havilah Bruder

**50:40** Call to Worship - Elder Scott Eastin

**01:04:07** Sermon - "A Mother's Wisdom and Forgiveness" - Elder Mike Hood

**01:31:10** Special Music - "O Blessed Day of Motherhood" - Eva Cartwright, Kenese Cartwright, Havilah Bruder **01:35:02** Testimony of Motherhood - Sarah Smith

**01:43:37** Closing Comments - Elder Scott Eastin

**Summary**

Elder Mike Hood opens by honoring his late mother on Mother's Day, reflecting on her resilience, wisdom, and the important role mothers play. He emphasizes the irreplaceable value and selflessness of a mother's influence, illustrated through personal anecdotes and well-known sayings about motherhood. Transitioning to a spiritual and biblical theme, Mike delves into the Beatitudes from Matthew 5, unpacking each blessing and their deeper meanings related to ultimate well-being and spiritual joy. He highlights the countercultural nature of Jesus' teachings on humility, mercy, purity, peace, and forgiveness, explaining how these values lead to spiritual fulfillment and eternal reward.

The sermon then moves to the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6, with a particular focus on the necessity of forgiveness. Mike stresses that God's forgiveness is contingent upon one's willingness to forgive others, linking forgiveness directly to personal spiritual health and happiness. He narrates the parable of the unforgiving servant from Matthew 18, illustrating the dangers of holding grudges and the moral imperative to forgive infinitely, as Jesus commanded.

Throughout, Mike reiterates that forgiveness is not only a divine command but essential for emotional freedom and preparation for eternal life. He also reminds the audience of Jesus' compassion, even in his suffering, and the importance of caring for family, exemplified by Jesus entrusting his mother to John's care while on the cross. Ultimately, Mike's message is one of love, mercy, and letting go of bitterness for both this life and the next, urging listeners to embrace the teachings of Christ to live fulfilled lives and find peace.

**Highlights**

1. **Tribute to the enduring strength and wisdom of mothers**, especially the speaker's own mother.
2. **In-depth exploration of the Beatitudes**, revealing their spiritual depth beyond mere happiness.

3. **Emphasis on humility, mercy, purity, and peace** as keys to spiritual well-being and eternal reward.
4. **Forgiveness as central to Christian faith**, linking God's mercy to our willingness to forgive others.
5. **The parable of the unforgiving servant** as a powerful lesson on infinite forgiveness.
6. **Jesus' example of compassion and forgiveness**, even during his crucifixion.
7. **A call to release bitterness and practice forgiveness** to achieve peace and joy in this life and beyond.

## Key Insights

1. **The Multifaceted Role of Mothers:** Mike illustrates motherhood as an irreplaceable and tireless role that encompasses love, sacrifice, and teaching legacy. His mother's example of adapting during hardship (learning to reweave to support the family) highlights how mothers often quietly bear immense responsibility, shaping the moral and practical foundation of their children's lives. This sets the stage for appreciating maternal wisdom as a form of divine grace that echoes into adulthood.
2. **Beatitudes as Spiritual Principles for Life and Eternity:** The Beatitudes (Matthew 5) are presented not as mere platitudes but as profound statements about the character and conditions that lead to "blessedness" — a deep, spiritual joy that transcends worldly happiness. For example, being "poor in spirit" is not about poverty but recognizing our dependence on God. Each Beatitude embodies a virtue necessary for personal transformation and participation in God's kingdom, laying out a roadmap for spiritual maturity.
3. **Mercy and Compassion as Divine Attributes to Emulate:** The parable of the Good Samaritan and other biblical examples stress that mercy is active compassion, not just feeling pity. The merciful person imitates God's unconditional love by responding to the needs of others selflessly, an essential quality for Christians. This notion challenges social norms that often prioritize self-interest or resentment over kindness.
4. **Purity of Heart and Being Peacemakers:** Purity of heart is depicted as undivided, unconditional love, a state that enables intimate spiritual communion ("they shall see God"). Peacemakers are identified not just as avoiders of conflict but proactive agents who seek reconciliation and harmony, reflecting God's nature and being recognized as "children of God." This elevates interpersonal peace as a spiritual identity marker, rather than a mere social nicety.
5. **Forgiveness: The Spiritual Gatekeeper:** Forgiveness is underscored as a prerequisite for receiving God's forgiveness, making it the crux of Christian spirituality and emotional well-being. Holding onto grudges harms the one who refuses to forgive more than the offender. Mike's reflections make clear that forgiveness is not optional; it must be practiced continuously and infinitely, mirroring how God grants grace without limit. This insight links theology directly to psychological health — bitterness steals joy and spiritual progress.

6. **The Unforgiving Servant Parable as a Moral Mirror:** The story of the servant forgiven a huge debt but who refuses to forgive a minor one exemplifies the danger of unforgiveness. It reveals human hypocrisy and a failure to internalize God's mercy. The parable condemns grudges as a "greater sin," emphasizing how divine grace demands a transformed heart that freely forgives others to remain in God's favor.
7. **Jesus' Example of Forgiveness at the Cross:** The sermon culminates with Jesus' plea for forgiveness for those crucifying him, showcasing the ultimate model of mercy and compassion. Even at the worst moment of suffering, Jesus embodies forgiveness and entrusts the care of his mother, signifying the importance of love and responsibility in relationships. This act teaches that forgiveness and care are fundamental to Christian living, transcending grievances and personal pain.

## **Conclusion**

Through personal reflection, biblical teachings, and practical application, Mike weaves a profound message about the importance of mothers, spiritual virtues from the Beatitudes, and the immense power of forgiveness. The overarching theme underscores that true blessedness and joy come from embodying Christ-like mercy, peace, and forgiveness, preparing believers for eternal life and enriching their present experiences. It is a call to live with grace, release grudges, and cherish relationships, all rooted in heartfelt faith and obedience to God's word.