

Sermon for
Mother's Day, May 14, 2023
By Dick Butler

WHAT MOM SAID

There was a reason why no one knew who was delivering the message today. Cause if you knew it was me you would have stayed at home this morning. Youth Sunday or Not. But here we are so stay in your seat and the pain and suffering will be over soon. By the way, I have chain locked the doors to the narthex so you can't leave till I get finished.

At the April Board Meeting, Youth Sunday was mentioned, and Liz Bankson said she would be glad to put it together, but she was not going to here due o her son graduating from college today. We know where her priorities are. Liz said Michelle Lawrence will help out. So, Michelle got up early on Mother's Day to help with the service. Thanks Michelle.

Also, at the April Board Meeting we discussed who would deliver the message. No one stepped forward and we decided to see what happens. Well, for 3 nights in a row I woke up at 3:00 a.m. with the title, "What Mom Said" on my mind and I started processing what to say today. If that is not a sign, I don't know what is.

I want to touch base on the 4th lesson that John read. **And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—¹⁷ the Spirit of truth....**

Jesus not only promises us to be always with us, but He reminds us that His love should be appreciated and shared..... the way, the truth, and the life.

The Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Which brings me to the part of this message of "What Mom Said". See how I just slid right into the message. We all have something in common here today. We all have had at some time or another a Mother, Mama, Mommy or as I call mine "MOM." Mom is 22 days away from 98 years of age. Truly amazing. Especially all the grief I put her through growing up. You see, I am the youngest of 5 children. The loud one according to Pa-Pa my grandfather. I am twin, no we do not look alike. I got the looks and the personality, but this is about what Mom said not about me being the favorite child or as mom always said "You are special" whatever that means.

If you did the math, you figured out that Mom was born 1925. Her birth took place in Charlotte, North Carolina. She was 4 years old when the Great Depression hit. Popsie, mom's father, raised rabbits during this time period. Mom said they were not pets, but she cannot remember why they had them. Let's just say, "taste like chicken." She went to the movies to get the news about World War II because there was no television. Life without a television. Imagine that.

Mom finished high school, went to the Women's College in Greensboro, now UNC-G. Became the head dietitian at "The Baptist". Or the Atrium if you were born after 1980. The Winston-Salem Journal published an article about Mom being hired to as the head dietitian at "The Baptist." She shared the article with her mom who told her not to tell anyone one about the article. You see in the 1940's women did not have careers.

She met and married in her words a "Handsome Devil" who I called Dad.

Time goes on. Mom and Dad wanted to find a church where their growing family could worship. They believed that you should worship at the church where your children go to kindergarten. Back in the 50's the school system did not offer kindergarten. Several of the big churches in town that offer kindergarten said they could take my oldest sister Linda as long as Mom and Dad paid for a sitter to sit with her all day. Mom grew up in an Episcopal Church in Charlotte. So, she is quite knowledgeable on how the Episcopal Church works. When Mom visited St. Paul's Episcopal Church she met with the minister the church and the Bishop of the Church, which is a very big deal. They said, "We will be happy to teach Linda."

You see everyone thought Linda could not do anything for herself and couldn't learn like other kids. Linda was blind. A lot of people, back in the 50's, thought that because Linda couldn't see she had to be treated differently. Linda did everything I did growing up and more. We played checkers and card games, we went swimming, where we played games and held races. My grandparents in Charlotte lived on a golf course where we would go and walk late

during a summer's evening. We would always end up racing. We never finished a race because we would always end up on the ground rolling around and laughing because Linda would run all over the place in a zig zag motion thinking she was running straight line. Mom and Dad raised all of us kids, even Linda, like she did not have a disability.

There was two things Linda did not do that I did, she did not drive a car, at least not by herself and I will leave it at that, and Linda never got a spanking and I, well, I might of gotten couple..... of hundred. But we did not keep score.

Linda was the same as everyone else in our house, which meant a lot. The churches all thought Linda would be to difficult to teach since she was different.

They made a judgement call without getting to know the person or the family.

Now on to what Mom said. Jump forward from the 50's to the summer of 2015.

During those 60 years society changed. Blind people and others with different abilities were mainstreamed into regular classrooms. For some people it became acceptable for a man and a woman to live together without being married. The big controversy was same sex marriage, and it still is in a lot of churches.

Now, mom was 90 years of age in 2015. Mentally sharp. Driving, cooking, cleaning the house, doing laundry, playing bridge, attending Bible Study classes and worshipping at St. Paul's. So, one day I was with Mom, and we were discussing the controversy surrounding the Episcopal Church and other churches as well.

I asked her what did she think about same sex marriage?

Now she could have said any number of things that a 90-year-old may say about something so

different from how she was raised and what she was taught. She could have said that “This is a terrible thing that will ruin the world .” Or “Whatever, I will not be around long enough to see it ruin us. I would have been totally shocked if she said any of these things because that is not my mom. Remember, Linda was treated like everyone else.

What she said is still with me today, almost 8 years later.

What she said is how I am trying to live my life. Though I struggle at times to live this way. Plus, I am know where near the Saint that Mom is. What she said is a motto a lot of people could benefit from in today’s world if they would stop and think a minute or two.

It is something that I could imagine Jesus’s mother Mary, telling Jesus if he were to ask her opinion about this controversy.

What Mom said was 8 beautiful words.....

“Who am I to deny someone their happiness.”