

# A salute to mothers everywhere – Vivienne Solomons



A monthly column by Vivienne Solomons who is a legal consultant who passionately believes that God wants His people to make a difference right where they are and to stand up for what is true and just. She is also passionate about encouraging young women to walk victoriously with God and she is engaged in a challenging faith journey as a parent of a child with special needs.

Motherhood. It is quite simply defined as “the state of being a mother”. Of course, there is nothing simple about motherhood or being a mother. It is marked by seeming contradictions. Overwhelming joy ... and with it, heartbreak. Pride that we are fit to burst ... and yet deep disappointment as well. What else could bring us such fulfilment one minute and frustrate us the very next? Motherhood is certainly an emotional rollercoaster and as such, it has a way of highlighting our flaws, revealing our insecurities and exacerbating our deepest fears. But it can also bring a smile to our lips that our faces often struggle to contain. As the author Elizabeth Stone famously said:” Making the decision to have a child -- it is momentous. It is to decide forever to have your heart go walking around outside your body”.

I believe that it is this very contradiction that causes us to

doubt ourselves and the way we mother. Are we doing enough? Are we doing it right? Many times, what we are really asking is: Are we enough? It doesn't help any that there is a deluge of information out there of conflicting philosophies and advice in regard to raising a child "well".

As someone who worked a very demanding job through most of my eldest's early years, where he was in aftercare until late five days a week, before I made the decision to quit so that I could give him the focused attention that he needed for various reasons, and now currently juggles flexible work hours with further studies and a busy toddler, I have possibly run the gamut of challenges and emotions in raising children while juggling the realities of life and work. The personal realisation that I have come to is this: The grass always seems greener on the other side. To the overworked and stressed out mom who can't keep all the balls in the air, quitting her job might seem like the best thing to do. But even as a so-called stay at home mom, it is possible, and more common than one would expect, to experience overwhelm and all too often it is just as easy to prioritise other people and the to-do's over the little ones who are under our noses, if not under our feet. Life happens. We all have other responsibilities and obligations that impact on our role as mothers, try as we might.

But whatever our unique situation I have found that being a mother is more about who we are to our children rather than what we do for them, and I am not for a moment suggesting that what we do is not important or necessary. Let's face it, there are some things only "mommy" may know how to "do" or to "fix". This is why I am a firm believer in the notion that if I take care of me, I can be a better mommy to my children. No, it is not selfish and yes, it certainly goes beyond how I take care of my physical needs; it reaches to my emotional and spiritual well-being as well. What I have found on my personal motherhood journey is that some days are easier than others

but every day I have to acknowledge my need for the wisdom and guidance only my Heavenly Father can provide so that I can do better the next day, and the day after that.

To mothers everywhere, I salute you.

Happy Mother's Day!