

Pride and Joy of My Family

by

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I fell asleep early that day. However, the sound of rain drops woke me up. Soon I realized that it was not rain drops but the voice of my mother's sigh and prayer. I was pretending to be sleeping and trying to learn more about what she was praying about. If mother knew that I was awake, she would stop praying. My mom was praying for me; I thought I was not doing anything especially wrong lately, but my mom seemed to be in agony because of me. The fact is, I did not really understand my mom. More often than not, I receive compliments from other people, but I tend to receive criticism from my mom. But when I think a little more deeply, I seem to have committed wrong against my mom.

My mom often tells me, "I do everything for your own good." Sometimes, just sometimes, I think my mom doesn't know that just leaving me alone is best for me. I'm a person who does not meet my mother standard, but my mother still does not know that. Her expectations are just too hard to reach. I just feel that it is just too heavy of a burden for me to meet her great expectations. Does she know that her extremely high expectations are like heavy burdens placed on my shoulders? I have been known to be a great child. But recently I have been acting a little different. I started to cross the line that my mom has drawn; the limit has been reached. To be honest, I felt really good. I felt better every time I crossed the line. At first my mom looked shocked and surprised, but she started to get angry. And eventually she hasn't responded; she seemed to be indifferent.

Through my mom's prayer, I realized why she was acting this way. "Lord, I don't know why my precious daughter, who has been so good, is acting this way lately. Maybe I have raised her wrong. Maybe I was wrong to think that she was my daughter. I ignored your plans that you had for her since the beginning. I raised her according to my plans to satisfy my own pride and desires. I forgot that she was a gift from you. Now she's not rebelling against me but

only expressing herself and her thoughts. I did not try to understand her. Please allow me infinite patience. Allow me to truly love and care for her. Let my child grow in the Lord's will. Lord I was wrong.... "

The words of my mother came to me as a shock. At first, I thought she finally realized that she was wrong, but part of my heart whispered the painful truth; she didn't do anything wrong. Why is she saying this? I felt uncomfortable, but I fell asleep again. But her words remained in my mind for days.... A few days had passed when my mom said, "Do you want to lie down next to your mom? You can use my arm as a pillow; do you want to talk to me? You did everything well beyond what I expected since you were a small child. That's why I expected so much from you. You are no longer a small kid. I did not ask or care about your view, and I'm sorry for trying to control you. I guess I expected you to understand and follow me without any further detail and explanations. Because you are a kind and smart daughter..."

"First, I want to tell you I'm so proud of you, and I am really thankful. Thank you for always helping me, and your caring heart brings me joy. I apologize for not expressing my gratitude any sooner. Secondly, I am sincerely apologizing to you. Your sister was born just one year after you were born; you became a big sister little to soon; you were also a baby. You brought me diapers for your baby sister as a one year old. From then on you always lived as a big sister. You were always given the responsibility to take care of your sister. I was wrong to believe if the first child turns out good, then others will follow. Well I was foolish. Can you forgive your mom? Third, now I have decided to nurture you with biblical values. I don't know it's because I have become so worldly over the years. My internal struggles have had a negative impact on you. In the meantime, thank you for growing up under the grace of God under an imperfect mother. In the future, I will pray for you more and more on my knees."

That day I cried a lot in my mom's arms. And I felt something being erased in my heart. I guess I felt the wounds being healed. Maybe a feeling of getting closer with my mom? Clogged barrier between my mom and me just melted away. I thought I had overcome that little conflict between us. My mom's heartfelt apology has won me over. What seems to be very fundamental but very important thing to miss in the family are expressions of respect,

appreciation, gratitude, and beauty. For the first time, I learned that. After my conflict with my mom has been resolved, I began to think of all the great things about my family. I'm happy because I have my family. I'm glad because my mom is mine. I also began to think about great things about my mom.

Our family worships every day. I and my sisters take turn to pray, praise, read the Bible, and my mom preaches and prays, and my dad concludes in a prayer. I love our family worship. In prayer, I can communicate with my parents during prayer and learn about God. And most importantly, because I can feel how much mom and dad love God and us through sermons and prayers. I learn how very precious I am before God. I'm grateful because I am a member of this family.

Another reason I like my mom and dad is because they always show their actions, not just by their words. My parents have always dedicated, devoted, and sacrificed for me. I know most parents sacrificed themselves for their children, but my parents have given their life for us. My parents have always given us all the mental and psychological support we need. Sometimes they nag, but objectively, I know they are not mad at me. They read before telling me to read; they pray before telling me to pray.

Before telling me to love your neighbors, they try to set an example. And the most importantly, they know how to admit their mistakes and weakness. For me, I know that it is not easy for me to admit my wrong in front of my younger sisters. But mom and dad can do so. And they speak to us. It is our purpose to live like Jesus in our daily lives, to glorify God. Our mission is to preach the gospel to our children and to our neighbors. I think that true filial piety is to recognize meaning of lives of our parents and to project their lives into my life and resemble them in my footsteps.