

**Mom’s Connect – The Balanced Life**

**January 6th, 2021**

**Balance in Authenticity**

*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15*

**What is balance? – Review**

Balance is an even distribution of weight enabling someone or something to remain upright and steady.

Life can certainly feel like a “Balancing Act” and that as women, we tend to balance many things on a daily basis. Placing God first and having the right priorities that follow, certainly helps us keep things in their proper order and allows us to keep more balanced.

**Balance in Authenticity**

What does it mean to be authentic?

* Authentic: of undisputed origin; real or genuine: not copied or false: true and accurate.
* Synonyms – genuine, original, real, actual, true, undisputed, the real deal, the real thing etc…

When I hear the word authentic, one example that comes to mind is art. Only the original piece of work from the original artist is truly authentic. No matter how good the copy, it simply is just that, a replica. Something that is authentic is valuable, you can trust it, count on it, you can bet on it.

Think of God, the Original Artist for a moment… He made us all different and unique – not one of us are the same. And going a level deeper, what an amazing thought that we should act/live up to the way He fashioned us to be.

James 2:18-22; 26 - But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works… For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

In 1 Thessalonians 2:13, Paul writes: And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is ***at work*** in you believers.

It takes both faith and action working together to show true authenticity as a believer.

**Mask Up!**

Wearing masks has an entirely different meaning in 2021. In addition to the physical face masks we wear every day, from a figurative perspective, we have a tendency to also mask up and disguise what we may not want revealed to others.

Being aware of who we are in public and private plays a critical part in our Christian walk. We need to always be conscious of the fact that we are servants of Christ and represent Him at all times. We should look the same, whether at church, home, work, interacting with friends and neighbors, at the store, driving etc… It is easier to be authentic in some circumstances more than others.

**Marks of Authentic Christianity**

As believers, it is clear that we are to look like Christ. Christ is living in us and our identity is in Him! When you look in the mirror – who do you see? Initially, you see the image of yourself, how God physically designed you. But when you look deeper from an internal perspective, what does your inner man/woman reflect?

2 Corinthians 5:17 encourages us that: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he/she is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come!

Paul also writes in Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

1. Fruits of the Spirit are evident

Galatians 5:22 - For the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

1. Thankfulness and Prayer

Colossians 2:7 - rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

Colossians 4:2 - Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.

1. Faith in Christ and gospel-centered living

Romans 1:16 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

1. Love

John 15:34-35 Jesus says: A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another.

1. Hope

Colossians 1:5 - because of the hope laid up for you in heaven.

**What does a genuine/authentic person look like?**

1. Their walk matches their talk
2. Transparent and honest
3. Have good, clear communication
4. Are consistent
5. Don’t compromise

**Staying Authentic**

Jesus says remain in Him!
John 15:4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

Put Off

* Worldly thinking

Romans 12:2a Do not be conformed any longer to the patterns of this world

* Selfish ambition

Philippians 2:3a Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit

* Dishonest/evil speech

[Psalm 34:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+34%3A13&version=ESV)

Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit.

Put On

* A transformed mind

Romans 12:2b but be transformed by the renewing of your mind through God’s Word

* Compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience

Colossians 3:12 Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience

* An “others focused” mindset

Philippians 2:3b-4 but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

* Clear speech

James 5:12 But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.

**Test Yourself!**

It is good to periodically do an inside checkup. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 13:5, “Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?”

So, ask yourself, “Is my Christianity authentic or am I faking it?” Here are some things to consider.

1. Am I marked by thankfulness and prayer?
2. Is my faith in Jesus Christ and His gospel?
3. Am I working at genuine love for all of God’s people, especially those I come in contact with every day?
4. Am I motivated in all I do by the hope laid up for me in heaven?

*So that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:7*

*And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. Philippians 1:9-11*

**Discussion**

1. What part of living a truly authentic life is challenging or feels risky?
2. What “masks” do you wear and why? Do you sometimes disguise yourself from others in certain circumstances?
3. What obstacles keep you from allowing your real face/self to be seen?
4. Galatians 5:22 says: For the fruit of the Spirit is: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Are these fruits present and flourishing in your life? Which areas need some attention?
5. In light of being a mom, what are you modeling to your husband and children?
6. Where do you need to grow the most: thankfulness, prayer, faith in Christ, love for others, or hope?
7. What is one thing you’ll incorporate this week as a result of this lesson? Will you remove your figurative mask? Will you cultivate a heart of thanksgiving and prayer?

**Resources**

ESV John MacArthur Study Bible

John MacArthur – online commentary

Blueletterbible.org

Bible.org