

Mother's Day Sermon

Mums. We all know them. We may have one, be friends with one or even be a mother ourselves. One thing I hope we can all agree on is that mums are worth celebrating. The time, dedication and sacrifice required to raise a child is not to be under-estimated and we're so grateful for all the mothers in the world.

The saying goes that being a mother is the greatest job in the world. But it can also be one of the toughest. A 2018 US survey found that the time mothers spend on parent-related tasks equates to a 98-hour work week - which means being a mother is equivalent to 2.5 full time jobs!

I'm sure many of the mums here can remember those difficult times of sleepless nights, nappy changes and unexpected changes of clothes. But being a mother is not just a job. It's a blessing and a responsibility. It's a role that often requires tough decisions and strength beyond what you thought you had.

Proverbs 6:20-21 says, "My son, keep your father's command and do not forsake your mother's teaching. Bind them always on your heart; fasten them around your neck."

A mother's teaching helps to guide their child through life, to raise them up to be everything God intended them to be. Here in the UK, we're privileged to have access to training and resources to help us on our journey through parenthood, from a range of government services to free medical care and mother/baby groups.

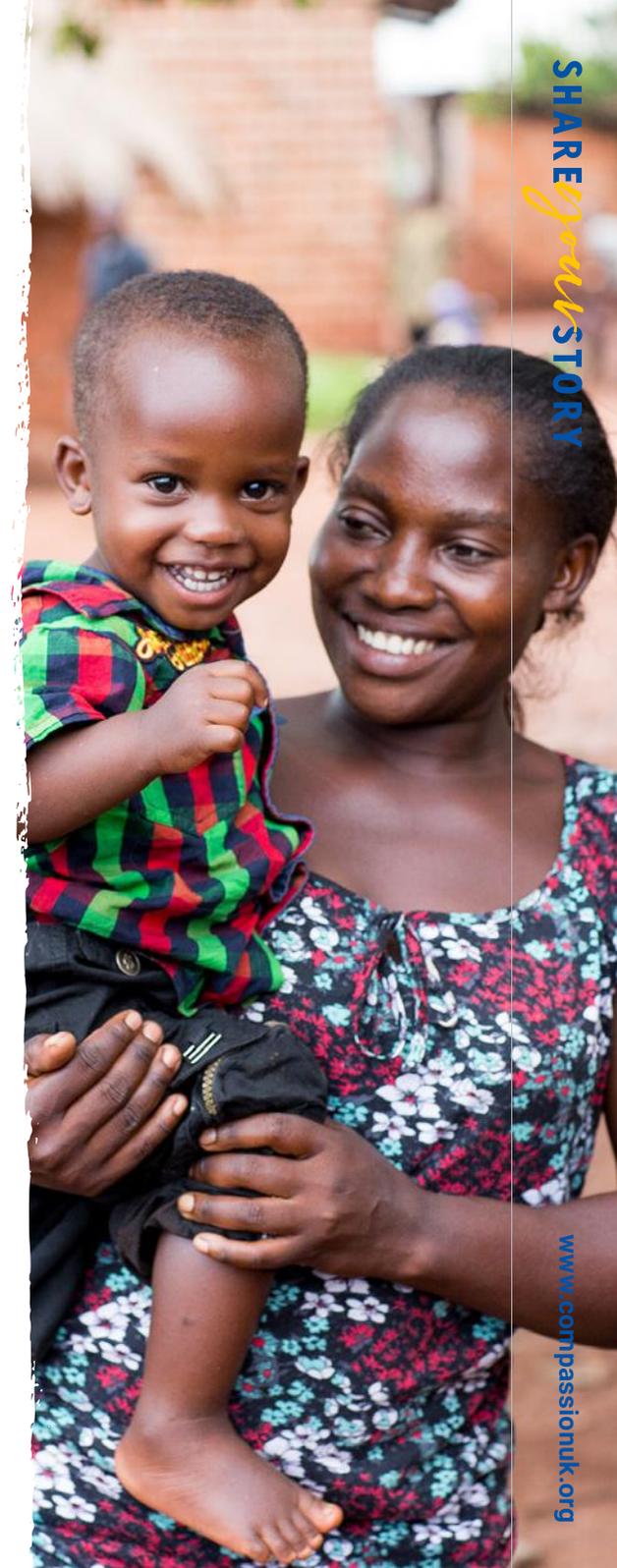
Yet even with all the support on offer, being a mum can still feel lonely, exhausting and challenging.

Now imagine being a mother trapped in extreme poverty. Imagine not knowing how you will be able to feed your child each day. Imagine fighting a daily battle to provide for your child, surrounded by contaminated water sources and a lack of basic necessities.

Being a mother can be tough, but being a mother in extreme poverty can be unbearable.

Poverty places many obstacles in the path of mothers. Women tend to bear the brunt of the effects of poverty as they have access to far fewer resources. Cultural traditions often result in women missing out on vital education at a young age, limiting their employment options and preventing them from obtaining well-paid jobs.

Kadzo from Kenya never had the opportunity to complete her education. With 14 children to care for, Kadzo spends



her days at a stone quarry with her youngest strapped to her back, shattering stones with a hammer to earn barely enough to feed her family, let alone keep them all in school.

This hard-working mother says, "I do not wish to bring her to the quarry with me, but if I miss a day, we all sleep hungry and that breaks my heart." But for Kadzo, there is hope. Thanks to Compassion, her teenage daughter Salama is attending school and getting the education Kadzo never had. UNICEF research shows that each year of schooling increases a girl's individual earning potential by up to 20%. Children – especially girls – born to educated mothers are more likely to attend school, resulting in opportunities that extend across generations, lifting them out of the cycle of poverty.

TANIA SHARES WHY SHE SPONSORS TO HELP A MUM IN ANOTHER COUNTRY.

"We all need a little help – or more than a little in my case! And 'grateful for the help' is an understatement. My wish is to help mothers at home and abroad, and that's one of the reasons I sponsor a three-year-old boy from Uganda – it's a practical way that I can support a mother living in the

vulnerability of poverty by helping to lift some of her burdens.

"My hope is that my small contribution will open up a world of opportunities for my sponsored child, opportunities every child deserves. I always smile when I tell people his name – our little boy is called Gift and that's exactly what he's been to our family."

In a world where nearly a billion people will struggle today to find food and clean water, one way we can personally come alongside a mother trapped in the grip of poverty is to sponsor a child with Compassion. When you sponsor a child, you help to lift a mother's burden. Your sponsorship will send her child to school, provide nutritious meals, give access to medical check-ups and relieve the family's financial pressure.

The reason I personally chose to sponsor was... *[share your story].*

1. As we honour mothers this Mother's Day, please remember all the mothers around the world. It takes a village to raise a child and sometimes that village is global. I want to encourage you to sponsor a child with Compassion and change the life of not only a child but a mother as well.

2. I have several children with me who need a sponsor. I'll be around after the service to talk to anyone who is interested in sponsoring and can be found *[let them know where you will be].*

To close, I'd like to pray for all the mums here today and across the world as they are so worthy of celebration. *[Feel free to share your own prayer or the one below].*

"Father God, today we want to honour every woman who has been a mother to someone. We thank you for all their hard work and the love they pour out into their sons and daughters. We thank you for the teachings and wisdom they pass on and pray you continue to strengthen them in all they do.

We think of those mothers who might struggle or feel the pain of loss. We ask they would know your unconditional love and that you journey with them. We thank you for the work of Compassion that looks to support mums and their children. We thank you for all the volunteers and staff that support this programme and pray it continues to grow and reach those who need it the most. We pray this all in Jesus name, Amen."

