



Life Actually

By Kari Kampakis

Ten truths moms should know

It's May, and you know what that means.

Time to recognize and celebrate every unsung hero named mom.

Most moms don't give themselves enough credit. They might admit they're a good mom, but a great mom? I believe many would choke on the word. Women are too hard on themselves, and nowhere is this more apparent than in motherhood.

Following are 10 truths moms should know. I hope they serve as encouragement, hope and a well-deserved pat on the back.

- ▶ **Truth #10: While the world wants you at your best, your family just wants you.** In the workplace, there's little room for error. But in motherhood, there's more job security. There's more love, forgiveness and grace. Your family isn't looking to replace you because the truth is nobody can. Your family just wants you.
- ▶ **Truth #9: You're the perfect imperfect person to raise your children.** God matched you with your children for a reason. The gifts you possess are precisely what they need to thrive. So rather than berate yourself or wish you were like other parents, pray for guidance on how to channel your talents and experiences to impact your children's journey.
- ▶ **Truth #8: Your beauty is bigger than the number on your scale and deeper than your reflection in your mirror.** You're made in the image of God. This makes you sacred. Learn to see yourself through the loving eyes of your maker, not the harsh filter of your inner critic, and your true beauty will shine.
- ▶ **Truth #7: Sometimes your kids will thrive because of you. Sometimes they'll thrive in spite of you.** Before you take too much credit for your child's success or panic that your misstep will ruin their life, remember who holds the cards. It's God who gives your children their gifts and opportunities. It's also God who can turn your wrong into a right.
- ▶ **Truth #6: Raising holy kids is more important than raising happy kids.** The deepest joy possible comes through a relationship with God. So if you really want happy children, the place to start is holiness because holiness leads to happiness.
- ▶ **Truth #5: A healthy family begins with a healthy mom.** As a caregiver, you put others

first. But no one benefits when you run on fumes. When you nurture yourself as an individual, you have more to offer your family. It makes you happy to come home and them happy to see you.

- ▶ **Truth #4: No child has to fail so your child can succeed.** Parenting today is too competitive. But God has a plan for everyone to excel. And when you treat your children's peers as allies, not competitors, you build community. The more you help others, the more they'll help you. Because it takes a village to raise kids, couldn't we all use more help?
- ▶ **Truth #3: Every season of parenting is special.** When you open your eyes to that, you enjoy the present. I know babies are adorable, but there's also something miraculous about watching your child become a young man or woman. And when you remember that everything passes, even the awkward stages, you're more likely to enjoy what's in front of you instead of reminiscing back or looking ahead at the next chapter.
- ▶ **Truth #2: Children grow up and leave, but your husband stays.** Nurturing your marriage sets you up to enjoy your empty nest. Remember when you dated, how much time you had to connect? It could be like that again, only with more memories and a stronger bond.
- ▶ **Truth #1: The measure of a great mom is not productivity. It's obedience to God.** If the reason I'm unproductive is because I'm caring for my family, I'm following God's will. God doesn't measure my work or yours by worldly standards. He doesn't need hard evidence because he sees it all: the silent sacrifices, the broken hearts, the late-night care, the kisses, snuggles and loving words that vanish into thin air. You're building God's kingdom, after all, and what on earth could be greater than that?

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