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Preface

I live in Minnesota, the land of eternal snow and cold. Brrrr! But I grew up in Virginia and Rhode Island, and in Ecuador. Norfolk, Virginia is a place of endless beaches, sun, and warmth. Quito, Ecuador is nicknamed the land of eternal spring. Let's forget about Rhode Island. I was a child then anyway.

I love warm weather. So here I am in Minnesota enduring the cold, waiting for winter to be over. Like a bear in its den, I hibernate in winter, piling on blankets, sitting in front of the fireplace, dreaming of warm spring days when I can emerge from hibernation. Though I have survived 36 Minnesota winters, I do not consider myself a Minnesotan or a lover of snow and cold weather. I endure winter.

Many native Minnesotans are not like me. They ski, ice skate, play ice hockey, and go snowmobiling and ice fishing. Minnesotans enjoy winter. One Minnesotan even remarked to me upon learning that I went to secondary school where it was spring year round, "Oh I would miss the seasons."

Miss the seasons? Miss winter? Miss snow and ice, snow banks and slippery roads, cars in the ditch, and frostbitten fingers? To me, this sounds like a piece of insanity.

So, what is the difference between me and native Minnesotans? Perspective. I see winter as something to endure. They see winter as opportunity—something to enjoy.

Perspective makes all the difference in how we navigate life and the challenges it brings. I must admit, to see winter as an opportunity brings more joy than seeing winter as a problem. It would serve me to have a change in perspective.

Perspective makes a profound influence on our mothering as well. How we look at our mothering will influence how we mother and, to some degree, the outcome of our mothering. Consider the perspective of these three mothers:

Three Mothers

Once a woman came upon three mothers at work.

"What are you doing?" she asked of them.

"I'm doing the weekly washing," answered the first.

"I'm doing a bit of household drudgery," replied the second.

"I'm mothering three young children who someday will fill important and useful spheres in life, and wash-day is part of my grand task in caring for these souls who shall live forever," replied the third. Only she had caught a vision of the great work she was doing.²

Mothering is a great work; a God-given opportunity to influence the next generations to put their trust in God. Do we see it as such? Do we awake each day with the anticipation of the opportunity God has given us to impart the words of life, to nurture budding seeds of faith, to lead our little ones to the Savior?

My prayer is that this booklet will challenge you to look on your mothering with a biblical perspective, to seize the opportunities God gives you each day to encourage faith in your children, and to rely on Him as your Sin-bearer and Enabler to do the great work He has called you to do.

For His glory and the joy of the next generations,

Sally Michael

2. Beall, Elizabeth, and Ed Phillips. *Verses of Virtue: The Poetry and Prose of Christian Motherhood*. (San Antonio: Vision Forum, 2002), 49-50.