

## Mother's Day 2011 "The Raven"

Edgar Allen Poe, in his poem, The Raven, wrote, "Quoth the raven, nevermore." That's pretty much all I knew about ravens until I did some work on this sermon. Ravens are mentioned in different places in Scripture. Ravens are large, black birds with a wingspan that can reach 50 inches. They are considered quite intelligent and are scavengers eating everything from fruit and berries to rabbits and rats and the flesh of dead animals. Ravens were also considered unclean in the Bible. Because they will eat anything, when people are really hungry they are called; ravenous. A pretty girl with black hair is called a raven-haired beauty. What's really neat is that God had a purpose for these birds. He used them to faithfully do His will. We read in Genesis 8 that God's man Noah sent out a raven to check out the lay of the land after the flood. Noah knew that a raven could take care of itself. Later on in First Kings we read about the prophet Elijah. God told Elijah to go and rest by the Jordan River. God would command the ravens to come and feed him. We can only wonder how Elijah felt as these big, black birds flew towards him. Knowing what they ate, what could they be bringing for him to eat? It's kind of like scraping up road kill around the zoo and eating it? I'll have some fried raven and mashed potatoes? Again in the New Testament, ravens are used as an example in Luke 12 to teach us that we don't have to worry. Jesus tells us to look how even the ravens are cared for by our Loving God. If He cares for the ravens, God will certainly care for you.

What's the message out of all of this? The message for Mother's Day is that all women in our lives, like the raven, no matter how young or old you are, how pretty or plain you think you look, you are special to God. It doesn't matter what's on the outside; a heart on the inside that loves and faithfully serves the Lord is beautiful to God. Like a raven, no matter what others might think of you or say about you, you are special to our Lord. Like the story from CNN about the young man dying of aids. He was in great pain and weighed under 100 pounds. When asked how he handled it all, he responded that he would close his eyes and imagine that he was a little boy in his mother's arms. This was the comfort he needed,

Sad to say, there are many who treat their moms more like the unclean raven than the servant of God. Ladies, you might be "dissed" by others but you are always desired by God. He showed you that by sending His Son to die for you on the cross. God promised this in Joshua 1 when he said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." When the world tells you that you are useless, your Lord tells you that like the raven, you are useful to God's kingdom. When loved ones push you away, God pulls you closer. The world says that you're too old or crippled to be worth anything, your God tells you that like that raven, as you trust God's word, there is always work for you to do for Him. Romans 18 assures you that anyone who serves Jesus in faith is pleasing to God.

We know that God Is Good.. All The Time and He is there for each of us in a special way. Like the raven, God calls you to serve and to have value in His sight. So if Satan tries to make you feel lost and worthless, tell him that with Jesus, you'll feel lost and worthless "nevermore!" amen..pastor matthews