

Mothers have a hard job--Not just because the work they do is formidable (which it is), but also because we expect them to do it with love. Did you ever think about that? In most jobs it's OK to hate your work. In fact there's a certain nobility to disagreeing with the system that hires you. But mothers--and fathers too for that matter--are expected to love their family. And if they don't, they probably keep very quiet about it because every other parent seems to love their kids. Everyone wants to love, but sometimes we don't love as we want.

One reason this happens to us is the nature of love itself. When we love someone intensely, our own lives are caught up in that person. When that person's happy, we're happy; when that person's blue, so are we. But when we see a value in that person that's different now from a value inside us, that intense feeling of love changes. The intensity remains, but now it's not love--it's anger, or rejection, or hate. It's people we love the most who can hurt us the most.

Sometimes love as a feeling goes away. And people panic because the feeling is gone. It's natural. Our early experiences of love are feelings--When we're infants, children, teenagers. Adults give teenagers a hard time, but there's one thing they know well and that's love as a feeling. And we all long to have the feeling, but sometimes the feeling goes away.

The point is, of course, that love is more than a feeling. We sometimes perform our most loving acts when we don't feel like loving at all. Going to work can be a downer, cleaning the house is boring, giving in can be humiliating. The feeling may not be what once it was, but the love can still grow in actions.

Jesus left one commandment. "Love one another." He commanded love, which sounds great, till you realize you can't command a feeling. You can't command someone to like you. What you command is action. Jesus commands loving actions even when we don't have loving feelings.

Mothers of America, you can do it. We all can do it if we have faith in Christ and desire to obey his command. The strength to love comes from Christ alone. When we want to love, but cannot, Christ has already loved us, and love is there.