



Struggling to Keep Up in Motherhood? Let the Spirit Set Your Pace. by Aimee Joseph

Make no mistake about it, motherhood has always been a massive job. I love how G. K. Chesterton captured its staggering scope: "A woman's function is laborious, but because it is gigantic, not because it is minute." While motherhood's scope hasn't changed much over time, its pace has. Aided by technology, compelled by memes, and informed by influencers, modern motherhood feels like a frantic race. The amount of things a mom and her family are expected to do in a day, a week, or a year make our days so full that I've often had to double my desired pace to barely keep up.

Before the dawn of social media, the temptation to set our schedules and to-do lists by other mothers was limited to neighbors, peers from church, or fellow carpool moms. However, social media tempts us to keep up with mothers all around the globe as we compare our realities to their curated clips.

Thankfully, as believers, we aren't left to ourselves or to influencers to set our pace in motherhood. We've been graciously given a helper and internal pacer in the Holy Spirit.

How the Spirit Helps

Paul told the saints in Galatia, "Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16). Rather than trying to keep up with everyone around us, when we walk by the Spirit, we look to him to pace us from within. The Spirit proceeds from the depths of the Godhead and dwells within the depths of each believer (1 Cor. 2:11). As we seek God in his Word, the Spirit guides us "into all the truth," just as Jesus promised the disciples he would (John 16:13). As he illuminates the Word, the Spirit sets our pace for motherhood in at least two ways: He exposes our motives and he guides us to good works (Ps. 139:23–24; John 14:26; Eph. 2:10).

When we slow down long enough to invite the Spirit to shed light on the Scriptures and to search our souls, he helps us sort through the desires informing our schedules. Are we operating out of faith or fear? Are we seeking to please peers, or are we serving the living God? Have we even paused long enough to pray about the pace of our lives in this season?

In addition to this gentle work of exposing our hearts, the Spirit uses God's Word to nudge us toward the good

works that God has prepared beforehand for us to walk in (Eph. 2:10).

Is there a particular verse that keeps coming to your heart and mind? Are there people that God keeps putting in your path or on your heart? Do you have specific concerns for your children that you can't shake? The Spirit sovereignly uses such things to steer us and shape our pace as mothers. And the Spirit sets our pace as one fully informed about God's plans and purposes for us and our children. Our job isn't to determine the pace but to do our part to keep in step with God's Spirit.

How We Keep in Step

Practically, for me, this has often looked like slowing down—even when college counselors, athletic coaches, or my flesh say that doing so will leave us behind schedule. If our hectic pace is keeping us from spending time with the Lord in his Word and prayer or from gathering with God's people, slow down we must.

On the other hand, there are times when the Spirit nudges me to pick up the pace in a way that feels uncomfortable and unsustainable. In different seasons of motherhood, God has stretched me by inviting me to say yes to things I'd rather decline for the sake of our family or ministry. In a culture currently obsessed with boundaries, sometimes keeping pace with the Spirit seems off-trend.

Following his lead might mean making time to visit a hurting church member or making an extra meal when we barely have enough time to feed our own family. But if the Spirit nudges, God will provide the grace for us to walk in obedience.

How We Check Our Pace

Seeking to walk by the Spirit won't necessarily make our lives simpler and easier, so how can we tell if we're following his lead? We consider what kind of fruit our lives are bearing.

Keeping pace with the world will result in the fruits of the flesh (Gal. 5:19–21). Attempting to keep up with other mothers will not only foster comparison and competition but will also likely lead us to sins like pride, idolatry, and envy (depending on the day).

However, keeping in step with the Spirit produces the fruit of the Spirit in our lives—love, joy, peace, patience, kind-

ness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (v. 22). The more we rely on the Spirit and keep in step with him, the more his fruit will be evident in our lives.

When we take our cues from the indwelling Spirit, we may not have the affirmation of the world, but we do have the consolation of obedience. In a world shackled by autonomy, we'll experience the true freedom of liv-

ing under the right authority. Our lives are not our own, so it makes sense that the pacing of our lives isn't our own either (1 Cor. 6:19). As we keep pace with the Spirit in the marathon of motherhood, we'll experience the true freedom of being God's daughters—even as we're mothers (Gal. 4:6–7).



Relatable Moms Tour

Friday, October 3

7:00 - 10:00pm | RiverLakes Community Church | Main Auditorium

Join us for an evening for REAL moms in all ages and stages for laughter, games, teaching, music, encouragement, and pure fun. Bring a friend (or your whole mom group!) and come laugh, worship, and be reminded that you are not alone. Tickets are available on the women's page of the website.



Women's Bible Study



Draw close to the Lord and other women, find support and grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ in a small group environment. You may choose Thursday mornings or Tuesday evenings for fellowship, discussion, prayer, and encouragement. Join us as we walk through the books of 1 & 2 Corinthians. A children's program is avail-

able for both morning and evening groups.

*Space is limited because group size is small.
Online childcare registration is highly encouraged.*

RiverLakes Women – Tuesday PM

Begins September 9
Education Bldg. – Room 210/212
Tuesdays @ 6:00 -8:00 pm
Contact: Women's Office 589-9733
Registration Fee: \$25
Childcare provided

RiverLakes Women – Thursday AM

Begins September 11
Community Center
Thursdays @ 9:30am-11:30am
Contact: Women's Office 589-9733
Registration Fee: \$25
Childcare provided

Embrace Grace



Wednesdays, 6:00 - 8:00pm

Embrace Grace exists to love and encourage single and pregnant young women and their families. Women experiencing unexpected pregnancies receive practical, spiritual, and emotional support through this 13-week pro-life support group. Contact Carol Edwards (661) 619-0261 to sign up.

*The Lord your God is in your
midst, a mighty one who will
save; he will rejoice over you
with gladness; he will quiet you
by his love; he will exult over
you with loud singing.
Zephaniah 3:17*