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How many times have you heard a woman say, "I'm not going to be like my mother"? Often it is spoken in haste, and usually with some distaste. We spend both mental and physical energy as women, on the journey of motherhood, trying to not be like our mothers. The protest may be as small as a chuckle about a particular mannerism, or a frustration with a worn-out possession. Then there are times when the aversion is directed towards an idea or value. We make efforts to clearly spell out goals to avoid repeating what they have done. Or in some cases we may fail to create a goal of any kind. Either way leaves us floundering for who we are as a mother.

I have a unique situation, in that my mother lives next door to me, but in the same house. I count this as a rich blessing. It has allowed me to realize how unproductive trying to not be like my mother, can be. I am learning that changing my attitude about carrying on in the next generation, and choosing not to dwell on the negative, is of great value to me. This also is honoring to my mother. How much better to seek out all of her positives, add my own reflective positives, and recreate myself as a new mother. One that she probably hoped I would become. In reality a mother, who with God's direction, I know I want to become.

In her lovely children's picture book entitled, *Just Like Mama*, Beverly Lewis states it so plainly, "I have a wonderful-good idea... Let's be more like the Lord Jesus...together." This recognizes the journey, however easy or difficult, each person has traveled. With this understanding we then can humbly extend grace and mercy more freely, and promote healing and peace wherever we go. 📖



Editor's note: This column is a forum for women to share perspectives on the current timbrel theme. It introduces women spanning their 20's-30's, 40's-50's, and 60's and above. If you are interested in writing for this column, please contact editor, Patricia Burdette, at <PattyB@MennoniteWomenUSA.org>.