

Third Saying:
The Word of Affection
John 19:25-27

INTRO: We notice here a small group of dedicated followers at the foot of the cross. This is a great contrast to the crowd of mocking, scoffing, railing, head wagging, taunting executioners, priests, rulers, and people. In this small group (vs 25), we find a few devout women and John the beloved Apostle (vs 26).

I. MARY'S ORDEAL AT THE CROSS VS 25

- A. There were three women at the foot of the cross, each listed here.
 - 1. There was Mary Magdalene out of whom Jesus cast out seven devils. She had lived for evil, now she lives for God and good (Mk 16:9; 8:2). She would not, she could not forget all that Jesus had done for her. "His love had rescued her, and her love was such that it could never die" (Barclay vol 2 229).
 - 2. There was Mary the wife of Cleophas. This Mary was Jesus' mother's sister, the mother of James and John. She is the woman who wanted her sons to have a chief place in the kingdom (Mt 20:20). She had accepted rebuke from Jesus and in humility and love we find her at the cross.
- B. One woman in the group especially touches our hearts. Her name is Mary and on the cross hangs her son, Jesus (vs 25).
 - 1. The arms that had once been clasped around her neck are now outstretched and nailed to the old rugged cross.
 - 2. His head that had laid upon her breast, now rests upon the tree with a crown of thorns. The oriental insects biting him.
 - 3. His bleeding wounds needed to be cared for, but she was helpless to do anything.
 - 4. His parched lips were in need of moisture, but Mary was helpless.
- C. Simeon's prophecy was fulfilled on that day. The prophecy is found in Luke 2:35: "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also."
 - 1. Someone has said, "The nails pierced her as well as Him; the thorns round His brow were a circle of flame about her heart, the taunts flung at Him wounded her likewise."
 - 2. On the cross, her son was dying the death of a criminal.

- Oh, what agony!
3. Oh, how the sword cut deep into her heart.
- D. Yes, Mary was suffering greatly, but on the cross hung one who cared. For on the cross, we see more than Mary's son, we see Mary's Lord.
1. He saw her standing near the cross.
 2. He knew her distress.
 3. He understood her condition.
 4. He made provision for His mother.
 5. From the cross, He spoke the words recorded in vs 26-27.

II. JESUS HONORS HIS MOTHER FROM THE CROSS

- A. "Woman....." is not a title of coldness or disrespect.
1. The one who had given birth to Jesus was dear to Him.
 2. Moyer says: "He loved her to the end, and tenderly provided for her."
- B. Jesus came to fulfill the law and do so in every detail.
1. Jesus honored the words of the fifth commandment, words that were engraved by the finger of God on Mount Sinai. That fifth commandment found in Exodus 20:12 states: "Honor thy father and thy mother....."
 2. The words of the fifth commandment are reiterated in Eph 6:1-2.
 - a. Pink says of honor: "It embraces love, affection, gratitude, and respect."
 - b. Honor also means to hold in high opinion. It goes beyond mere obedience to include affection, respect, and reverence. "Years of obedience may end, in a certain sense, when a man leaves his father and mother, to cleave unto his own wife, as the head of a new home and family, but the years of 'honor' never end" (Moyer).
 3. On the cross, Jesus exemplified the fifth commandment.
 - a. Any Christian who does not honor father and mother is a poor Christian.
 - b. The word woman, as used here, is a word of tender respect.
 - 1- "Woman" was the word that Hector used in the tenderest scene of the Iliad when he bade farewell to his beloved wife, Andromachen, on

the walls of Troy.

- 2- When Jesus said to His mother “woman,” it was a title of tender respect.

III. JESUS COMBATED MARY-OLATRY FROM THE CROSS

- A. Jesus used the word woman instead of mother to combat Mary worship.
 1. Bishop Ryle said: “I firmly believe that, even on the cross, Jesus foresaw the future heresy of ‘Mary worship.’ Therefore He said ‘woman’ and did not say ‘mother’.”
 2. Jesus never refers to Mary as mother in the Gospel record.
- B. Mary is not the mother of God or the Queen of heaven.
 1. The humanity of Christ is the limit of Mary’s motherhood.
 2. Isaiah 9:6 says: “Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.”
 - a. The child was born (humanity); the son was given (deity). This deals with humanity and deity.
 - b. As God, Jesus Christ was from everlasting; as man, Jesus Christ was born.
 3. Romans 1:3-4 tells us that as to His manhood, Christ was made; but His godhead was powerfully proved by the resurrection.
 - a. He was made of the woman according to the flesh.
 - b. His divine sonship always existed, and had not to be “made,” but only to be “declared.”
- C. Mary did not claim nor expect supernatural honor for being the mother of Jesus.
 1. She did not call herself the mother of God; others have done that.
 2. She was not prayed to, but joined others in prayer (Ac 1:14).
 3. She could not be saved, but needed a Savior, as indicated when she brought a sin offering in obedience to the Law (Lk 2:22-24).
 4. Mary sang: “My Spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour” (Lk 1:47).
 5. She stood by the cross, but she was not nailed to the cross.
 6. She needed the blood as well as any other lost soul.
 7. The blessings that have come to Mary have not come because she is related to Christ according to the flesh, but

because she believed on the Lord Jesus Christ unto salvation just like any lost sinner must do.

8. Moyer said: "Mary's Son was man, yet more than man; Mary was woman, but only woman."

IV. MARY COMMITTED TO JOHN AT THE CROSS VS 26

- A. Jesus is here indicating John not himself.
 1. He was not saying to Mary, "Behold me."
 - a. It was necessary for her to behold Him as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," to be saved.
 - b. She, as a sin bitten individual, had to accept the invitation given to all: "Look and live."
 2. Jesus was handing Mary over to the care of John.
- B. While suffering to provide for our spiritual needs, Jesus looked down in love and cared for His mother's temporal needs.
 1. Jesus lifts high our responsibilities to our own.
 2. I Tim 5:4, 8 Jesus provided for Mary.

V. JOHN COMMISSIONED WITH A SOLEMN TRUST FROM THE CROSS VS 27

- A. Rome says that John was committed to the guardianship of Mary.
 1. This perverts the truth.
 2. The Savior commended Mary to John; not John to Mary.
- B. The beloved disciple John was not to render reverence to Mary, but to provide a home for Mary. Barclay says: "There is something infinitely moving in the fact that Jesus in the agony of the cross, when the salvation of the world hung in the balance, thought of the loneliness of his mother in the days ahead. He never forgot the duties that lay to hand. He was Mary's eldest son, and even in the moment of his cosmic battle he did not forget the simple things that lay near home. To the end of the day, even on the cross, Jesus was thinking more of the sorrows of others than of his own" (299).
- C. Jesus commended Mary to the care of a friend.
 1. Jesus knew that John would care for Mary.
 2. Moyer says: "There was not arm upon which His mother could lean so confidently as on that of him who had leaned upon the bosom of her Son."
- D. Mary had other relatives, but in this case, the old saying that

“blood is thicker than water” gives way to “Spirit is thicker than blood.”

1. John 7:5 tells us that Jesus’ brothers were lost. “Neither did His brothers believe in Him.”
2. Thus, Jesus commended Mary to John, a believer.

CONCLUSION: Jesus is a tender, sympathetic, considerate Savior. He cares for His sheep as He cared for His mother. The heart that felt for Mary on the cross is a heart that never changes. Jesus never forgets any that love Him. Even when we are in the worst of circumstances, He remembers our need. This is why Peter could say: “Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you” (I Pet 5:7).