

## Extra Special Care

May 12, 2019

### John 19:25b-27

25b Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." 27 Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Well, this is Mother's Day. I would like to talk about my mother but I'm afraid that if I talk about her too much I will face some serious problems come judgment day. So I'm not going to do that.

I'm going to start with a question, not to get an answer, but to get you thinking. What is the hardest thing Jesus had to do? He had his power drained from him when a woman touched him unexpectedly. He had terrible opposition and powerful people plotted to kill him. His disciples often failed him. He had a tremendous crowd problem. During Lent and Easter we are especially reminded of the pain, suffering, and agonizing death on the cross. What do you think is the hardest thing Jesus had to do? We would all probably agree that the hardest thing Jesus had to do was to endure the suffering and agonizing death on the cross. But there is one thing that we don't often think about and it is definitely one of the hardest things ever - to willingly allow your mother to lose her child. I imagine that of all the things he lamented over this is one of the most excruciating.

Jesus had multiple distractions but he did not let anything stop him from his divine mission. Several times his teaching was interrupted. Imagine teaching a group of people and having constant interruptions from opposition and from people who want something from you. Imagine teaching a lesson and in the middle of the lesson someone cuts a hole in the roof of the building and starts lowering someone down, expecting you stop in the middle of the lesson to heal this person. He not only had the interruption but also had certain demands expected of him. Imagine you are teaching a crowd that is so huge you are unable to take care of their needs, people can't hear, and always there are people pressing around you. You want to teach because you have so much to give and the people have so much to learn but people want you for your healing ability instead of your knowledge and expertise. Imagine trying to do your ministry and people keep shouting out at you seeking help, attention, and healing. Jesus had antagonists that tried hard to trap him instead of learning about the compassion and love that he was teaching.

You and I do not like interruptions but we live a life full of interruptions. Interruptions cause frustrations, take up our time, and cause us to lose focus and make mistakes. Interruptions are distractions, problems, deterrents from your daily routine. How should the Christian handle interruptions? To answer that let's take a look at Jesus. For Jesus teaching was very important. But even during the situation where men lowered a person into the thick of a crowd, interrupted his teaching, and expected Jesus to stop everything and heal someone, Jesus did not get bent out of shape. This is because even though it was a teaching moment, which was very important, Jesus knew that people are very important too. The lives of the people who wanted the healing, compassion, and love, were very important. They were on the fringes of society. So, they need extra special care.

In the Bible, we do not have the luxury of knowing all of the details so that we know exactly where Mary of Nazareth was all the time or what she saw and heard. What we do know is that she was there at the cross and that the women were followers of Jesus that came with him

from Galilee into Jerusalem. They were eyewitnesses to the arrest of Jesus. They know about the betrayal of Judas. Maybe they picked up on some of the prophetic connections. Most likely it was too emotional of a time to figure out those things. During the trial they were not allowed inside but they would have seen Jesus handed over and bounced around in the night between the priest Annas, the High Priest Caiphas, and Pilate's headquarters. They would have witnessed the mob demanding that Barabbas, the resistance fighter, be freed. They would have witnessed the flogging, the crown of thorns, hitting Jesus in the face. They were there during the crucifixion. John says "Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother." Imagine if you were Mary. That is the most heartbreaking thing of all. A mother watches in terror, shock, horror, a real life nightmare. If you are ever tempted to lose your faith, take a look at Mary. Jesus says to his mother "here is your son" and Jesus says to his disciple "here is your mother."

To understand the Scripture we need to know about the culture. It was strictly patriarchal, much more so than today. In the male dominated society the females supported the males. Women and orphans had virtually no means for survival without the male. If a husband passes, the responsibility to care for the widow fell to the oldest son. In the Bible Joseph has been out of the picture so Jesus presents his mother to the care of a trusted friend.

We Christians have a responsibility, it is not a pastoral responsibility, it is a Christian responsibility. To provide care in the image of Jesus. To provide care like Jesus teaches. To provide care like Jesus would. To provide care like Jesus did. This is extra special care. Care that extends beyond what is normally expected of humanity. There is one group of people that normally and instinctively provide extra special care. That is the mothers. They are unique in the giving of themselves for the care of another as soon as their child is born and throughout that child's life. Today we honor mothers. Today we do so in the name of Jesus. Let us provide extra special care to the world around us in the name of Jesus.