

Saying: No 3.

Scripture: John 19 v 26 & 27

When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, "He said unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then he said to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home".

We will consider the third saying of Jesus from the cross.

The sayings of Jesus from the cross are direct statements with each one relating to something important. We know that every word that Jesus spoke was important, and no word He ever said should be forgotten but must in some way impact our lives. It says in **John 7 v 46** "*No man ever spoke like this Man!*" the N.I.V says "*No-one ever spoke the way this man does,*" How true these words are.

Whilst on the Cross.

He speaks to His Father, "*Father, forgive them*" "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me*"? "*It is finished*". "*Father, into your hands I commit my spirit*".

He speaks to a sinner, *To day you will be with me in paradise.*

He speaks to His mother and to a disciple, *He said unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!*

Then he said to the disciple, Behold thy mother!

He speaks to the soldiers. "*I thirst*"!

As we look at the scene at Calvary need to consider. The People Present if we are to get a clear picture of what went on, I want you to notice that.

1. His Foes were there.

The Priests were there and no doubt continued their criticism and condemnation of Jesus and all that He did. The soldiers who had been responsible for the execution were there ready to confirm His death and then remove the body which must have been gruesome to see. They were also casting lots to see who would win His garments, which indicates that He had been stripped of anything valuable and of any worth.

Matthew 27 v 54 refers to what the soldiers said, "*Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, truly this was the Son of God*".

Those who had been responsible for the release of Barabbas the man convicted of murder were there, and probably Barabbas himself was there also. It is clear from what we read about the crucifixion and what transpired, that there were many who were antagonistic against Jesus present that day. Those who opposed Him, those who could find no fault in Him, but were His enemies because of envy, and who engineered His arrest. The works that God did through Him they never did, and so their envy was used to as a tool to bring about the death of Jesus, which God allowed to secure redemption for the whole of humanity.

Then I notice that

2. His Faithful were there.

There were individuals there who had been ministered to by Jesus during His ministry whose lives had been deeply affected. We will note who they are as we proceed, although it is worth mentioning that there was an obvious absence of most of the men disciples of Jesus. We know that Peter followed him to the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end. We don't have any reference to him or any of the others except John being present at the Cross.

It appears the men at cross apart from John were the priests perhaps Barabas or even Judas, the soldiers and whose responsibility it was to see that the capital punishment of the three who were executed reached its conclusion.

When things got tough for the immediate disciples of Jesus, we notice they were conspicuous by their absence. There were some who were faithful and these in the majority were women.

3. His Family were there.

Those present were Mary the mother of Jesus and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas. It must have been very traumatic for the family of Jesus. Jesus was aware of the hurt that His family must have been feeling and takes the situation in hand and becomes involved in the future of His mother.

Jesus makes provision for Mary to be looked after, and at the same time as doing this makes provision for the world to be taken care of by reconciling the world back unto His Father.

It must have been very hard for Mary to look upon the **Son she birthed. The Son she loved. The Son she consulted.**

I want us now to look at this thought of **The People Present at the Cross** a little more and consider the following. At the cross there were.

1. The Determined Followers.

Mark 15 v 40 *There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome.*

When it seems that many of the other followers of Jesus were absent during the actual crucifixion of Jesus. We are given no explanation as to why the whole contingent of disciples were not present, it can only be assumed that because they were followers of Jesus and would have been recognised as such, feared in case they were also accused and would then suffer the same end.

However, there was one very small group who regarded Jesus as being more important to them than anything or anyone. One of them was Mary Magdalene, who had experienced a change of life and direction because of Jesus. Jesus removed from her some evil spirits these had previously influenced her life took complete control of her actions and activity. Jesus set her free from them.

2. The Devoted Disciple.

We can conclude from what we know, John one of the disciples of Jesus was present at the cross and witnessed the whole crucifixion of Jesus, reference is made of this by John himself. He does not name himself, possibly thinking his own name was not worthy to be preserved in these records; we know he followed the Lord he closely and it is perhaps the reason why he was one of the inner three, who witnessed the Transfiguration, the raising of the daughter of Jairus, and was present in the garden when Jesus prayed if it be possible let this cup pass from me. He was the disciple, whom Jesus loved.

John 19 v 26. *And the disciple standing by, whom he loved.*

We have further reference that John was loved by Jesus in **John 21 v 20** *Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one, who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, "Lord, who is going to betray you?)*

3. The Devastated Mother.

I cannot imagine anything more harrowing for a mother than to see her son being executed when He was t totally innocent of any crime.

If the mothers of the other two were also present they would have felt the pain of parting, but their pain could not have been classed as the same as that of Mary who knew her son had been wrongly accused and condemned to death.

During these distressing moments when looking up at the disfigured face of Jesus, with blood running down His cheeks, blood dripping from His outstretched arms, and blood soaking His feet as it flowed downwards, Jesus picks up His head He has seen his suffering mother and needs to comfort her, so with words, which must have taken any energy He had left, He then begins to speak. Hendriksen says “He suffered, because of her suffering”

He says “*Woman, behold thy son*” Then he said to the disciple, “*Behold thy mother*”.

As Jesus speaks, he began to take the necessary steps to fill the vacuum He knew that was going to be left in the life of Mary, at the same time He was dealing with the void John was going to experience.

By His death Jesus was illustrating the fact that we should care for each other. He was showing that the love that flowed from the cross was a love that was to be **dual directional**, clockwise, and anticlockwise. The love that flows from the cross reaches me and you; it then flows in both directions.

It is usually difficult to get anything to flow in two different directions at the same time along the same channel. If two elements flow in an opposite direction along the same channel, there is conflict. When this happens there is a blow back.

The amazing thing about the love of God is this. The dual directional flow of God’s love will never cause turbulence but calm, never conflict but peace, never harm but healing, never separation but unification, never a dangerous blast but a delightful blessing.

Mary takes care of John, John take care of Mary.

The lesson from this third saying from the cross is. Let’s make sure we take care of each other. Let’s not leave a void in people, **let the dual directional love of God flow from each of us to the other and all will be well in our Christian community.**