

**JESUS AND MARY – PART 2**  
**(SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2013)**

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**SCRIPTURE: ISAIAH 53; LUKE 2:41-52**

**INTRODUCTION**

Last week our focus was on Mary and the undeserved grace of God that was sovereignly given to her in her salvation and also the glorious calling given to her that she would be the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I think we can well understand why Scripture pronounces Mary to be the most blessed or joyful among women. This joy has to be connected with her salvation and the joy of being part of God's glorious plan of salvation by giving birth to Jesus Christ and having the privilege of being His earthly mother. Can you imagine being the mother of Jesus Christ?

And yet as we noted last week from the prophecy of Simeon, a long sword or spear would pierce through Mary's soul. Jesus would not just remain her precious little baby or child. The life of Mary would not be an easy life because Jesus Christ Himself was not called to live a life of ease and pleasure. Mary, though given God's undeserved grace, would have to know the pain of Jesus dying on the cross for her sins.

Today we will be considering three passages about Jesus and Mary. What will we see in these passages?

We see testimony of how Jesus is the God-man. He is the eternal Son of God who took on human flesh. There is no conflict between the two natures of Jesus, and yet we see clearly that even as child, Jesus was focused on the will of His Father.

Further we see how Jesus was a faithful son. In no way did he neglect His duty to Mary. And yet we see that what was most important for Jesus was not His physical relationship to Mary but His calling as the Son of God to die for our sins.

The call of our passage is to rejoice that our Savior was faithful in all things and focused on bringing redemption. What we most need is found alone in Him. Mary needed to grow in her understanding of this as do all believers.

Our first passage is from Luke 2:41-52; we will then consider two passages from John's gospel – John 2:1-12 and John 19:25-27.

## 1. LUKE 2:41-52 – I MUST BE ABOUT MY FATHER’S BUSINESS

What is unique about this text? One answer would be that this is the only text we have that gives us a description of Jesus as a young man. All the other texts that we have in the gospels besides those of his birth and early life come from the time of His ministry. What we see from this text bears testimony as I said earlier that Jesus is the God-man. He is the Son of God and the Son of Mary.

As the text describes, this account importantly took place in Jerusalem at the time of Passover. We are correct in seeing a foreshadowing here of that most important Passover celebration about 21 years later.

Jerusalem was not a large city in terms of population. Some estimate its normal population at the time was only around 25,000. During the celebration of Passover the number of people in Jerusalem greatly increased, with an estimated 60-100 thousand visitors.<sup>1</sup> Joseph, Mary, and Jesus obviously did not just travel in their own mini-cart but would have come with what some call a pilgrim caravan.<sup>2</sup> Since Jesus was essentially an adult at 12, we can understand why Joseph and Mary were not constantly with Jesus. I don’t think we can blame them for poor parenting. Joseph and Mary I think we can say were very good parents. But there was much more that they needed to learn about their Son.

When the 8-day celebration of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread had concluded, Joseph and Mary started back. Jesus stayed behind. Was there a lack of communication? We are treading on the ground of speculation, but I think we are correct in believing that Joseph and Mary assumed that Jesus would simply also return after the Passover celebrations had concluded. They did not grasp that he might well have reason to stay in Jerusalem.

After traveling for one day and not finding him with other family and friends, they traveled back another day to Jerusalem. Some time later on the third day, they found Jesus where they should have first looked.

Jesus is described in verse 46 in three ways. He was sitting in the midst of the teachers. He was listening to them and asking them questions. These verbs are significant. Jesus was

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<sup>1</sup> *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*, ed. D. A Carson et al., Accordance electronic ed. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 984.

<sup>2</sup> This is the term used by the ESV Study Bible.

not teaching them directly. He was not yet preaching. He was certainly preparing the way for His later ministry.

This is what we see in verse 47. All who heard Jesus were astonished or amazed. There is emphasis in the original on this response of astonishment. The verb has the meaning of wonder mingled with fear.<sup>3</sup> Appropriately this same verb is used later in the gospels to describe those astonished by the power of Jesus to heal. This is no wonder, because they were in the presence not just of a child prodigy but the eternal Son of God who took on human flesh. What other response would be appropriate?

Mary and Joseph were also amazed. Here a different but related verb is used. This particular verb is used always in reference to Jesus – His teaching and works. Joseph and Mary had raised Jesus for 12 years but here they appropriately were overwhelmed.

I don't think it surprises us to see that Mary was the first to speak to Jesus about their concerns for him.

Why have you done this to us? Why have you stayed behind in Jerusalem rather than returning with the others?

Your father and I have sought you anxiously, that is with great worry. I think we can appreciate the feeling of Joseph and Mary. If you are a child or a parent and somehow you get separated – at the mall, the park, in some large, crowded and confused place. You know that feeling you get in your stomach as it were. Where is my child? Where is my dad or mom?

The response of Jesus was in no way disrespectful to his parents. It is not like the response of a child who tells his parents, you know that I was going to be in the gym. Where else would I be?

The response of Jesus was not an excuse but the setting forth of His person and work as the Son of God.

Jesus used in his question the same verb used by Joseph and Mary. They were seeking Him. Jesus says, why did you seek me? No search was necessary if you more fully understood who I am.

Did you not know that in the things or the business of my Father I must be? Some versions translate as, “Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?”

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<sup>3</sup> See BDAG.

The verb translated as **must** is a little verb that has the idea of something not optional. **This is how it has to be.**

We see here the absolute priority of Jesus Christ even as a young man. The work of His Father was absolutely essential.

As I was thinking about this text this past week, I thought how this response of Jesus would be an excellent theme for each of us in this new year. Now it must be said that Jesus did not say this simply to inspire us with a good example of goal setting. For Jesus, His response is essential for our salvation. However, as we are to be conformed into the image of Jesus Christ, is it not right that we also seek to be much more focused on eternal, kingdom important matters than just our normal, earthly affairs?

As you think about the year 2013, what are some of the things that were major distractions in terms of being faithful in the callings that God gives to you – as parents, children, members of Christ’s kingdom, as members of this local church?

What are distractions that you need to put away in this coming year so that you more sincerely can say, I must be about my Father’s business?

As parents, how can you be helping your children to have this focus, especially since we live in one of the most distracting ages of all time?

Let the response of Jesus be continued meditation and encouragement for you in this New Year.

Verse 50 says that they, Joseph and Mary, did not understand the statement or word which He spoke to them.

John Calvin wrote:

Though they were not wholly unacquainted with Christ’s heavenly origin, yet they did not comprehend, in every respect, how he was intent on executing his heavenly Father’s commands: for His calling had not yet been expressly revealed to them.

The response of Joseph and Mary was essentially the same response that we see from others during Jesus’ ministry. For example after Jesus told His disciples about His coming betrayal into the hands of men, we read in Luke 9:45.

**Luke 9:45** But they did not understand this saying, and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this saying.

In fact it was not until after the resurrection that the disciples were able to really understand the ministry of Jesus and the absolute necessity that He suffer and die.

Joseph and Mary were given the great privilege of parenting and teaching Jesus. Jesus a real child would learn from them. Jesus as the Son of God would also have to teach them even as a young man.

This is the great testimony that ends this chapter. Jesus was properly subject to his parents. The verb subject used in verse 51 is used in other parts of the NT that teach the proper submission of wives to husbands and children to their parents, and even the proper submission that we mutually show to each other.

Verse 51 as we commented last week also is important in showing that Mary was an important witness to the life and ministry of Jesus. The same word in verse 50 which is translated as **statement** is used in verse 51 in the plural where it is translated as **things**.

John Calvin commented on this response of Mary.

Let us learn from this, to receive with reverence, and *to lay up* in our minds, (like the seed, which is allowed to remain for some time under grounds) those mysteries of God which exceed our capacity.

Mary was mightily used by God as part of His wonderful plan. But this text also shows us that Mary and Joseph both needed to grow in their understanding of the purpose for which Jesus was born. In no way can Mary be identified as a co-redeemer or as the one who offered her son on the cross. She had to become a disciple and follower of her son and fully rest in Him for salvation.

## **2. JOHN 2:1-12 – IT IS NOT MY HOUR.**

**John 2:1** On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. **2** Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. **3** And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.”

**John 2:4** Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.”

**John 2:5** His mother said to the servants, “Whatever He says to you, do *it*.”

**John 2:6** Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. **7** Jesus said to them, “Fill the waterpots with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. **8** And He said to them, “Draw *some* out now, and take *it* to the master of the feast.” And they took *it*. **9** When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. **10** And he said to him, “Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the *guests* have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!”

**John 2:11** This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

**John 2:12** After this He went down to Capernaum, He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days.

There are only two passages in John in which Jesus and Mary are described in conversation. The other passage is in John 19 which is connected with this passage by the word Jesus used in speaking to Mary, *woman*.

Our focus today is not on some of the interesting and important details of this passage. We are familiar with some of them. This passage is frequently referenced at weddings because it was at a wedding where Jesus performed the first of His miracles or signs.

It is possible that Mary played some role in the wedding feast based on her concern that the wine had run out and then her words to Jesus that we see in verse 3. “They have no wine.”

Was Mary looking for Jesus to work a miracle? It almost might seem to be the case except for what reason? The miracle or sign described in this chapter is called in verse 11 the beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee. It is more likely the case that Mary, who

probably for a number of years had depended upon Jesus for help in all sorts of matters, was looking again for His assistance.<sup>4</sup>

The response of Jesus in verse 4 is important. Though the situation here is quite different from what we see in Luke 2, I think there is much in common. Mary, the most blessed of women, still had to learn about the person and work of Jesus Christ. Jesus was a most faithful and obedient Son, but His primary focus was not to His mother or earthly matters.

The word *woman* in verse 4 is a literal translation from the Greek, but we really don't use the word *woman* in English in the way that Jesus used this word. D. A. Carson says it is a difficult to find an English expression that captures how Jesus used this word.

What is important is to see that Jesus did not use a term that would be commonly used by a son in speaking to his mother. This is significant. Jesus was a Faithful Son but He is much more. Mary was the mother of Jesus, but she also had to be more than that.

The words of Jesus that follow are also somewhat difficult to express in modern English. What does your concern have to do with me? Jesus was not being rude but certainly this was an abrupt or unexpected response we could say. What do you and I have in common is the basic meaning of the question.<sup>5</sup>

I think the comments of D. A. Carson here are very helpful.

We must not avoid the conclusion that Jesus by rebuking his mother, however courteously, declares, at the beginning of his ministry, **his utter freedom from any kind of human advice, agenda or manipulation.** He has embarked on his ministry, the purpose of his coming; his only lodestar is his heavenly Father's will (5:30; 8:29). This must have been extremely difficult for Mary. She had borne him, nursed him, taught his baby fingers elementary skills, watched him fall over as he learned to walk; apparently she had also come to rely on him as the family provider. But now that he had entered into the purpose of his coming, everything, even family ties, had to be subordinated to his divine mission. She could no longer view him as other mothers viewed their sons; she must no longer be allowed the prerogatives of motherhood. It is a remarkable fact that everywhere Mary appears during the course of Jesus' ministry, Jesus is at pains to establish distance between them (*e.g.* Mt. 12:46-50). This is not

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<sup>4</sup> D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, Pillar New Testament Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 170.

<sup>5</sup> Carson, 170.

callousness on Jesus' part: on the cross he makes provision for her future (19:25–27). **But she, like every other person, must come to him as to the promised Messiah, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.** Neither she nor anyone else dare presume to approach him on an 'inside track'—a lesson even Peter had to learn (Mk. 8:31-33). For no-one could this lesson have been more difficult than for Jesus' mother; perhaps that was part of the sword that would pierce her soul (Lk. 2:35). For this we should honour her the more.<sup>6</sup>

The final words of verse 4 are also significant. “My hour has not yet come.” The word hour is used 13x in John. The word *hour* refers to the death of Jesus on the cross and his exaltation connected with his suffering and death.<sup>7</sup>

Now interestingly we see that Jesus did perform an incredible miracle. He more than fulfilled the concern of Mary. Jesus ended up making what I think we are safe in saying was the best wine ever had been tasted. The ministry of Jesus was not irrelevant. His relationship to Mary was not unimportant. But it is essential to see that Jesus was focused on the cross and His exaltation in completing His work of redemption.

**John 17:1** Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, **2** as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

### **3. JOHN 19:25-27 – WOMAN, BEHOLD YOUR SON!**

**John 19:25** Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. **26** When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!” **27** Then He said to the disciple, “Behold your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her to his own *home*.

Appropriately the final account of Jesus and Mary in conversation takes place at the cross.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 171.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 172.



How many names or people are listed in verse 25? Answers range from 2 to 4. It probably makes the most sense to see four women noted who watched Jesus Christ suffer and die. Mary, Salome, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene were all important witnesses. The reference to His mother's sister refers to John's mother, Salome, which is likely the reason she is not listed by name.

The words of verses 26 and 27 are very powerful, aren't they? In the midst of His most intense sufferings, physically and spiritually, Jesus also fulfilled His duty as a faithful son.

As I observed earlier, Jesus used the same word, *woman*, as he did in John 2. There was a separation between Jesus and Mary but there was still the love of a faithful Son. There was great tenderness but also a realization that Mary needed someone else to care for her. John, the beloved disciple, would take on the role of Jesus in providing care for Mary. And in this context, Mary would be John's mother.

I should point out that this text is used by the Roman church to proclaim Mary as being the Mother of the Church.<sup>8</sup> But surely this is not the meaning of the text but something read into the text. Mary is here not held up as our mother, but certainly we do see in her a testimony of one who was given the gift of saving faith. Her soul truly was pierced with a sword. Her salvation would come not simply because she was the mother of Jesus Christ but rather because she was born from above.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Let us again rejoice that our Savior was faithful in all things and focused on bringing redemption. What you most need is found alone in Him.

#### **Focus and Faithfulness**

#### **Prayer**

#### **Hymn 480**

#### **BENEDICTION – 1 COR. 15:57-58**

But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

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<sup>8</sup> D. A. Carson and John Calvin both interact with this false claim of the Roman church.