

**LETTERS FROM GRANDPA**  
**# 310**

Dearest grandchild,

Today we will consider the request of Jesus for the Apostle John to take care of His mother. Please consider: **“Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, ‘Dear woman, here is your son,’ and to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother.’ From that time on, this disciple took her into his home” (Jn. 19:25-27).**

John’s Gospel refers six times to the “disciple whom Jesus loved”. Most recognize that it was the Apostle John himself who modestly chose not mention himself by name. It is clear that from that time on “this disciple” took Mary, the mother of Jesus, into his own home.

It is generally accepted that Joseph, the husband of Mary, had died. He is not mentioned in the Bible after the incident in the temple when Jesus was twelve years old (Lk. 2:41-52). Jesus, as the oldest son in the family, therefore had the responsibility of caring for his mother. Since Jesus was dying, he passed on that responsibility to John. The question is, why John?

Contrary to the teaching of the Catholic Church, Mary was not a perpetual virgin. She was a virgin when she gave birth to Jesus, but He was her “firstborn son”, not her “only begotten” son (Lk. 2:7). After Jesus was born, Mary had four other sons and at least two daughters. Jesus grew up in Nazareth and the people there were familiar with His family. When Jesus spoke in their synagogue Mark wrote: **“Where did this man get these things?, they asked, ‘What’s this wisdom that has been given unto him, that he even does miracles! Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?’ and they took offense at him” (Mk. 6:23).** Hence, after the birth of Jesus, the Scriptures no longer refer to Mary as the “Virgin Mary”, but rather, “Mary the mother of Jesus” (Acts 1:14).

Why, therefore, didn’t Jesus assign the care of His mother to one of his four brothers?

Jesus, as you know, chose twelve apostles. Judas, betrayed Him, but He still had ten other faithful apostles in addition to John. Why didn’t Jesus ask one of them to take care of His mother?

While the Bible does not answer this question specifically, **IT IS CLEAR FROM THE TEXT THAT ONLY JOHN WAS THERE AT THE TIME! THE ANSWER TO OUR QUESTION THEREFORE MAY BE QUITE SIMPLE! JESUS DID NOT ASSIGN THE CARE OF HIS MOTHER TO ANYONE ELSE BECAUSE THEY WEREN’T THERE!**

Jesus once told a parable about a great banquet to which the invited guests were too preoccupied to come (See Lk. 14:15-24). One man had purchased a field and wanted to go see it. Another had purchased five yoke of oxen and wanted to try them out. Still another just got married and wanted to be with his wife. These men may have had great “ability” but they had no “availability”. They could have come to the banquet but deliberately chose not to. It is easy to not get involved when you don’t show up. The person who is good at making excuses is seldom good for anything else.

What about you and me? Are we so busy with our own agenda that the commands of Christ must be postponed until a more convenient season? This was precisely the attitude of Governor Felix.

(Acts 24:22-27). He refused to obey the Sovereign of the universe because it was not “convenient”. As far as we know that convenient season never came.

Another man “said” he wanted to follow Jesus, but “first” wanted to go home and bury his father (Lk. 9:59,60). Conventional wisdom is that his father was not even dead at the time. His aging father was therefore merely used as an excuse for not following Christ. There is something sinister about placing our own priorities first and asking the Creator of the Universe to wait.

God consistently uses people who are available regardless of their qualifications. Isaiah, for example, confessed that he was “ruined” and also a man of “unclean lips”. He may not have been the best or smartest, but he was at least available. He eagerly said to the Lord: “Here am I, send me” (Is. 6:8). The ministry of Isaiah lasted some sixty years and spanned the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. He played a key role in history and is known as the “Gospel Prophet”. Praise the Lord! God never calls us to do anything without staying with us until the job is successfully completed!

HOW LONG WILL IT BE BEFORE YOU ARE AVAILABLE TO SERVE GOD?

I love you

Grandpa Boyce