

# John 19:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

## Analysis

From the cross, Jesus addresses His mother Mary: 'Woman, behold thy son' (γύναι, ἵδε ὁ υἱός σου), then tells the beloved disciple, 'Behold thy mother' (ἵδε ἡ μήτηρ σου). The address 'woman' (γύναι/gynai) was respectful but formal, not the intimate 'mother.' Jesus uses this same address at the wedding in Cana (John 2:4), maintaining distinction between His earthly family relationships and His messianic mission. Even in His agony, Jesus fulfilled the fifth commandment to honor parents (Exodus 20:12). Joseph had apparently died, leaving Mary without male family support. Jesus' brothers (James, Joses, Simon, Judas—Mark 6:3) were not yet believers (John 7:5) and couldn't be entrusted with Mary's care. The beloved disciple, traditionally identified as John, becomes Mary's adopted son, and she his adopted mother. The statement 'from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home' (ἀπ' ἐκείνης τῆς ὥρας ἔλαβεν ὁ μαθητὴς αὐτὴν εἰς τὰ ἵδια) indicates immediate, ongoing care. This act reveals Jesus' humanity—even in His suffering, He thought of His mother's welfare. It also symbolizes the church as Jesus' new family, bound not by biological descent but by faith. Mary represents faithful Israel, John the new covenant community. Jesus creates a new family united by His redemptive work rather than natural kinship. This scene also confirms Jesus' deity—He retained sovereign awareness and authority even while bearing sin's curse on the cross.

## Historical Context

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This occurred at Golgotha during Jesus' crucifixion, likely after the three hours of darkness (Mark 15:33) but before His final words. John's Gospel alone records Mary and the beloved disciple at the cross; the synoptic Gospels mention women watching 'from afar' (Mark 15:40). Crucifixion was designed to maximize suffering and humiliation. Victims typically hung for hours or even days before asphyxiation or shock caused death. Roman soldiers guarded crucifixion sites to prevent rescue attempts and ensure the sentence was fully executed. That Mary stood near the cross demonstrates extraordinary courage and devotion—association with a crucified criminal was dangerous. Simeon had prophesied that 'a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also' (Luke 2:35), fulfilled as Mary witnessed her son's execution. In Jewish culture, caring for aged parents was a sacred duty, codified in both Law (Exodus 20:12) and wisdom tradition (Proverbs 23:22). Jesus' provision for Mary, even from the cross, demonstrated that His messianic calling didn't override but fulfilled familial obligations. Church tradition holds that Mary lived with John in Jerusalem and later Ephesus, where John ministered. This passage became significant in Marian theology—Catholics seeing it as Jesus entrusting Mary to the church's care, suggesting her ongoing maternal role. Protestants emphasize Jesus' filial obedience and the formation of the new covenant community transcending biological family. The passage's inclusion demonstrates that even Jesus' dying hours had redemptive significance, providing for both immediate practical needs and symbolic representation of the new covenant community.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does Jesus' provision for Mary from the cross demonstrate both His humanity and His deity?

2. What does the creation of a new family relationship between Mary and John symbolize about the church as Christ's family?
3. Why did Jesus entrust Mary to the beloved disciple rather than to His biological brothers?
4. How does Jesus' fulfillment of the fifth commandment even while suffering on the cross challenge or encourage your approach to honoring parents?

## Interlinear Text

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Ἰησοῦς	οὖν	ἰδὼν	τὴν	μητρί	καὶ	τὸν	μαθητὴν
When Jesus	therefore	saw	G3588	his mother	and	G3588	the disciple
G2424	G3767	G1492		G3384	G2532		G3101
παρεστῶτα	δὲν	ἥγάπα	λέγει	τῇ	μητρί	αὐτοῦ,	Γύναι
standing by	whom	he loved	he saith	G3588	his mother	G846	Woman
G3936	G3739	G25	G3004		G3384		G1135
ἰδοῦ	ό	υἱός	σου				
behold	G3588	son	thy				
G2400		G5207	G4675				

## Additional Cross-References

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**John 2:4** (References Jesus): Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

**John 13:23** (Love): Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

**John 21:24** (Parallel theme): This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

**John 20:2** (Love): Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

**John 21:7** (Love): Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

**John 21:20** (Love): Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

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