

3:31-32

Then His brothers There have been a number of suggestions: 1. These are really Jesus' cousins and Mary remained a virgin (this seems unlikely because Mark has a term he uses for "cousins"/"kin" in chapter 6)¹; 2. These were children born to Mary with Joseph after Jesus' birth; 3. These were children Joseph had before his marriage with Mary (previous wife had died or he had been divorced). **and His mother came**, Was Mary really questioning Jesus' sanity (3:20)? We have other places in John's Gospel where His brothers were rather antagonistic to Him, but the two Gospels with birth narratives (Matthew and Luke) leave no room for Mary to not be aware of Jesus' Personhood and mission (let alone His origin).² **and standing outside** of the house (3:19) in which the multitude found Him, keeping Him from eating (3:20) **they sent to Him**, Probably a Mark 2:1 scenario where they couldn't get in.³ **calling Him. 32 And a multitude was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are outside seeking You."**

3:33-35

But He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother, or My brothers?" Jesus did not sever identification from His brothers, and sister, and family. He is still known as one of the family members of Joseph and Mary (Mark 6:1-3).

Jesus did not drive the audience to believe they should dishonor their parents. As a matter of fact, Jesus takes great issue with people who were finding ways around the honoring of their parents (Mark 7:9-13).

Jesus did not ignore his family outside the house. It is here where some have gone outside the text and said things like "Mary, who had nursed and dressed Jesus and love him all the way into his magnificent manhood, and now had come for him in loving concern, was crushed. His brothers were likewise shocked and perhaps angered."⁴ The only problem, of course, is that the passage doesn't say that. As a matter of fact, the next time we see Jesus...in the very next verse, He's outside the house (Matthew's version confirms it was "the same day", 13:1). So, for all we know, Jesus got up to go outside to meet them and Mark is simply showing us that flesh and blood family doesn't get the final say on everything.

This is not the first or second time Jesus "distanced Himself" from His mother: 1. He did so at the age of 12 in the temple (Luke 2), and 2. He did so in John 2 with his response at a wedding. **34 And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! 35 For whoever does the ^zwill of God is My brother and My sister and mother."** This seems pretty saintly of the disciples until you think of who we're dealing with here, and "despite all their failures, Jesus acknowledged them as those who did God's will and therefore his true family."⁵ Maybe we should remind ourselves that this, for conversation sake, includes Judas.

¹ "G4773 - syggenēs - Strong's Greek Lexicon (KJV)." Blue Letter Bible. Web. 8 May, 2017. <<https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G4773&t=KJV>>.

² More comments under 3:21.

³ Luke 8:19 removes all doubt.

⁴ R Kent Hughes *Preaching the Word (Mark): Jesus, Servant and Savior* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2015), 96.

^z1 John 2:17

⁵ James A. Brooks, *Mark*, vol. 23, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1991), 74.

Jesus stressed “faith” over maternity: Jesus’ salvation of Mary was no different than anybody else. Jesus gave His life for His mother (10:45). Imagine saying something like “Mary is no closer to Jesus than any who ‘do the will of God’.”⁶ “Mary was more blessed in receiving the faith of Christ than in conceiving the flesh of Christ...Mary’s [bearing Jesus upon her bosom would have carried no benefit] for her salvation if she had not borne Christ in her heart” [Augustine].⁷

Jesus stressed his Heavenly Father over his earthly mother. “Every beat of Christ’s heart was given to performing his Father’s will.”⁸ Your precious children are given to you so that they can please the Heavenly Father. Let’s not make it hard on them. “The truth is, many of the psychological problems in our families can be traced to parents whose affections bind rather than release and liberate.”⁹ The “mission field” seems like a great idea...as long as it’s somebody else’s family going.

a. Faith family over flesh and blood

“Many Christians and non-Christians alike have made the family [virtually] everything. Every moment of every day, every involvement, every commitment, every engagement is measured and judged by the question, how will this benefit my family? While this is generally commendable, it can degenerate into familial narcissism where the four walls of the home become a temple and only within and for those walls are any sacrifices made. Thus we commit domestic idolatry!”¹⁰

The reality is that these sort of “bravado” whiplashes usually happen when one is picking, out of a guilty conscience, a family function instead of family worship at the family church. No, they rarely happen on “hobby day” or “spoil yourself day” or “you deserve it day.” No, we....

I’ll say it like this, I’ve been in this rodeo a day or two. I’ve seen 10 or 20 marriages get back together and immediately, the man will—after dereliction of duty for years and years—decide rather than owning his mess and leading his family in worship at their current church, he strangely feels led to change churches. I’ve seen it numbers and numbers of times. While the spirit of this passage stresses the ideal of having your flesh and blood family in a right relationship with Christ.

- i. Not to the exclusion of general stewardship.**
- ii. When priorities collide long-term.**
 - 1. They think differently.**
 - 2. They plan differently.**

⁶H.H. Halley *Halley’s Bible Handbook, New Revised Version* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1965), 439.

⁷Thomas C. Oden, ed. *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, New Testament II –Mark* (Downers Grove, Ill: Intervarsity Press, 1998), 48.

⁸Hughes, 97.

⁹Ibid., 98.

¹⁰Ibid.

3. **This is also dwelt upon in Mark 10:28-30.**
 - a. **These realities are shown in the way we priorities to “rejoice with those who rejoice” and “weep with them who weep” (Romans 12:15). Weddings and funerals. They become a priority. We take vacation days or PTO’s to attend these. Why? Because of stories that will be told about us? Perhaps, but more because of stories we can tell (to our children and grandchildren).**