

Lesson 14 Matthew 12 46-50

Jesus' zeal for the family of God- and for the Father's will

The mother & brothers of Jesus arrived. Jesus used this visit to apply his message to the informant who gave him that news-saying "Who is my mother and brothers?" ie Who is as intimate as that? The question of spiritual intimacy with the Lord is amongst the most pressing in a time of unparalleled commitment to the world around and its demands.

The devotional giants that were of old

Mrs. Cowman, Amy Carmichael, Francis of Assisi -even Martin Luther and Count Zinzendorf. Or go to the scriptures and find Moses-a national leader- on the mount for forty days, Daniel -a state official-in prayer 3 times daily -David though a king-in the very same mode. Then there are Wesley-Moody-the Taize brotherhood and so many more.

The listeners

As a boy I read of some ladies who spent time not just talking to God but listening to Him. Nowadays we dismiss the tele-evangelists very readily but some like Dr. Murdock (author of several "life-application" bibles whose specialty is *wisdom*-or "applying Christ's principles to life") put us to shame by their desire to hear the Lord speaking-and by their obedience to that inner voice of the Spirit or that vision God gives.

The rabble and the relatives

Matthew describes the crowd as a rabble (Greek *οχλος*) He was speaking quietly and animatedly as an intimate with them. In his 28th *visionary* lesson Matthew shows that Jesus desired a continuing intimacy with the crowd(Greek *λαλεω* is in the present tense as Jesus "speaks" and in the "aorist" as the family wait to "speak on a one off") It is striking how little the Master was appreciated at this point

The informant

We are not told who intervened-it may have been Peter but it could have been anyone. The story is carried in Mark (Peter's data) but not in the gospel of John. The informant was pressing for some action, "Behold your mother and brothers have been standing outside" He added-they keep seeking a chance to speak to you on your own-or intimately. Matthew adds that this statement was a classic one. Jesus replied in a similar classic mode (The Greek verb for their remarks in both cases is *ειπω*)

A Classic exchange

The informant spoke of those who were "waiting on the Lord." To them it must have seemed He did not care-He was not bothered. To Mary He was one who could be trusted to do things well-but there must have been more than a little irritation somewhere in the family group. The future elevation of Mary by men to a position and title not in their gift is quite out of place in the light of the scriptural background -but the comment here that "those who do God's will under inspiration are intimates" accords well with the Mary Matthew describes in Chapter 1.18-whom Luke also introduces in Luke 1 46-55. The family would have been content for just a punctuation of the teaching period but the Lord wanted more. The question of Jesus is not a denial of rich family ties; nor is it a preference for others. It is a statement that "obedience (such as could hardly be bettered than in Mary's servant heart) is what makes a disciple and an intimate"

A Classic gesture

Jesus must have deeply challenged His family when, pointing to His disciples, He said, "Behold my mother and my brothers!" He added some vital words which are in the future tense, "Whoever will do (*ποιεω* under the inspiration of the Spirit like Mary)-the will of My Father in heaven is my brother and my sister and my mother"

You will notice that the Lord changed the order of the informant's notice. Jesus was looking for the allegiance of His brothers-and sister(s) and aware of the great love and indeed the worshipful approach of His mother. He was also showing the crowd that it was through the heavenly Father that he enjoyed such a special intimacy with Mary and the family-this heavenly birth was and is the ground of such intimacy and the persistent prayer that thereafter accompanies it



From Paper to Practice

What is the Lord looking for in His relationship with You?

Where does the Spirit of God and the Bible figure in that relationship?

What resolution will you make to improve your future intimacy with Jesus?

Does it take **someone** to bring us to a closer walk with God?

Do you think the lord is aware that you are seeking to renew intimacy or just wanting a quick prayer?