

The Seven Words of the Cross (3)

The Seven Words of the Cross

The Third Word from the Cross

“Woman, Behold Your Son...”

Text:

John 19:26-27 NKJV

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*.

Reverse for Clarity — Gospel of John 19:26–27 (NKJV)

Concise Reverse Structure:

²⁶ From that very hour, the disciple took her into his own home. Because Jesus entrusted her to him. And He entrusted him to her.

²⁷ Saying to the disciple, “Behold your mother!” And to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!” When He saw His mother standing there, And the disciple whom He loved beside her.

Expanded Reverse for Interpretive Clarity

²⁶ Immediate obedience followed. The disciple received her into his own household. Because Jesus created a new covenant responsibility. He assigned a son to His mother. He assigned a mother to His disciple.

²⁷ He spoke intentionally — not sentimentally: “Behold your mother.” “Woman, behold your son.” He spoke after seeing them. He spoke while suffering. He spoke as the Redeemer securing salvation. Even at the cross — He fulfilled the Law, Honored His mother, And formed a new family.

Observational Emphasis in the Reverse Structure

- **“From that hour”** → Immediate obedience
- **“Took her to his own home”** → Love becomes provision
- **“Behold”** → A command, not a suggestion
- **“Saw His mother”** → Compassion precedes instruction
- **“The disciple whom He loved”** → Grace-formed relationship

This reverse structure highlights the movement:

Compassion → Command → Covenant Responsibility → Concrete Action.

I. Theological Introduction: The Cross as the Revelation of Ordered Love

The Seven Words from the Cross are not random utterances of a dying man. They are deliberate theological proclamations from the God-Man in the climactic hour of redemptive history.

Here at Calvary, we do not merely see suffering — we see fulfillment. At this moment:

The Lamb of God is bearing sin (**John 1:29**).

John 1:29 NKJV

The Lamb of God

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

The High Priest is offering Himself (**Hebrews 9:14**).

Hebrews 9:14 NKJV

¹⁴ How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

- The King is being enthroned through humiliation.
- The Second Adam is reversing the curse.

Yet in the midst of cosmic redemption, Jesus speaks about family. This is not incidental. It is profoundly theological. At the very hour when He is securing eternal salvation, Christ demonstrates that redemption does not abolish earthly responsibilities — it sanctifies them. The vertical work of atonement does not cancel horizontal obedience. The cross restores divine order.

Three Theological Observations

1. The Humanity of Christ

Jesus is fully God — yet here He acts as a Son. Even in agony, He honors the Fifth Commandment (**Exodus 20:12**).

Exodus 20:12 NKJV

¹² “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

2. The Reordering of Family Under Redemption

At the cross, a new family is being formed. Blood of the covenant creates bonds deeper than biological blood.

3. Love That Acts, Not Merely Feels

Christ does not merely love sentimentally — He provides concretely. The cross reveals a Savior who saves souls and secures mothers.

II. Modern-Day Introduction: Love Under Pressure

In our culture, stress exposes priorities. When pressure rises, what matters most is revealed.

- In hospitals, families fracture over responsibility.
- In crises, people withdraw into survival mode.
- Under pressure, love often collapses into self-preservation.

Yet here is Christ — suffocating, bleeding, mocked — and He is thinking of someone else. The question for us is not merely theological — it is pastoral: What does our love look like under pressure? When exhausted... When misunderstood... When suffering... Does our faith produce care — or self-absorption? Jesus models what Spirit-formed love looks like in crisis.

III. Exposition of the Text

1. “When Jesus therefore saw His mother...”

John 19:26 NKJV

²⁶ When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!”

Notice: He *saw*. He is not absorbed in Himself. He is attentive.

Mary stands there — the one who bore Him, nursed Him, raised Him, pondered prophecies in her heart (**Luke 2:19**).

Luke 2:19 NKJV

¹⁹ But Mary kept all these things and pondered *them* in her heart.

Now she watches her Son die. Simeon's prophecy is fulfilled:

Luke 2:35 NKJV

³⁵ (“Yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

The cross wounds more than Christ's body. It pierces His mother's heart. And Jesus sees her.

2. “Woman, behold your son!”

John 19:26 NKJV

²⁶ When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!”

The term “Woman” is not disrespectful. It echoes **Gospel of John 2:4** at Cana.

John 2:4 NKJV

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

From Cana to Calvary — the mission has been unfolding. Jesus entrusts Mary to “**the disciple whom He loved**” — traditionally understood to be John the Apostle.

John 19:26 NKJV

²⁶ When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!”

This is covenantal care. He does not delegate care to siblings (**Mark 6:3** mentions brothers).

Mark 6:3 NKJV

³ Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?” So, they were offended at Him.

He entrusts her to a believing disciple — to the family of faith. At the cross, spiritual kinship surpasses natural kinship.

3. “Behold your mother!”

John 19:27 NKJV

²⁷ Then He said to the disciple, “Behold your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her to his own *home*.

The command is mutual. Mary receives a son. John receives a mother. Redemption creates responsibility.

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And the text concludes:

John 19:27 NKJV

²⁷ Then He said to the disciple, “Behold your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her to his own *home*.

Immediate obedience. No delay. No committee. No discussion. Love acts.

IV. Three Scriptural Illustrations

1. Joseph Providing for Mary and Jesus (Matthew 1–2)

Joseph took responsibility for a child not biologically his. He protected. He provided. He fled to Egypt. Covenant obedience produces protective love. Just as Joseph guarded Jesus in infancy, now Jesus guards Mary in His death.

2. Ruth and Naomi (Book of Ruth)

Book of Ruth

Ruth’s declaration:

“Where you go, I will go...”

Ruth 1:16-17 NKJV

¹⁶ But Ruth said: “Entreat me not to leave you, *Or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God.*

¹⁷ Where you die, I will die, And there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, *If anything but death parts you and me.*”

Not blood-bound — covenant-bound. Faith creates family. Just as Ruth bound herself to Naomi, John binds himself to Mary.

3. The Good Samaritan (Luke 10)

Gospel of Luke 10:33–35

Luke 10:33-35 NKJV

³³ But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion.

³⁴ So he went to *him* and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

³⁵ On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave *them* to the innkeeper, and said to him, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.’

The Samaritan saw... and acted. Love is not proximity. Love is responsibility. At the cross, Jesus models Samaritan love from a place of suffering.

V. Three Modern-Day Illustrations

1. The ICU Son

A man sitting beside his mother’s hospital bed, exhausted after weeks of treatment. Work pressures, financial stress, emotional fatigue — yet he remains. Love shows up. Jesus, in greater agony, still “shows up” for Mary.

2. The Church Family That Steps In

A widow in a congregation loses her husband unexpectedly. Biological family lives across the country. The church arranges meals. Handles finances. Mows her lawn. Spiritual family becomes practical family. That is **John 19** in modern dress.

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3. The Leader Who Remembers Home

A CEO managing crisis in his company pauses to ensure his family is cared for. Responsibility at the top does not excuse neglect at home. If Christ, bearing the sin of the world, does not neglect family — neither can we.

VI. Pastoral and Theological Applications

1. Redemption Does Not Cancel Responsibility

Salvation is not escape from duty. It purifies it.

2. Spiritual Family Is Real Family

The church must function as covenant community — not religious spectators.

3. Love Must Be Concrete

Affection without provision is sentimentality.

4. Christ's Love Is Personal

If He cared for Mary in His agony, He cares for you in yours.

VII. Christological Depth

This word reveals:

- **His True Humanity** — He is a Son.
 - **His Perfect Obedience** — He fulfills the Law even while dying.
 - **His Covenant Authority** — He creates new family bonds.
 - **His Tender Compassion** — Majesty wrapped in mercy.
- The cross is not only where sins are forgiven. It is where love is defined.

VIII. Gospel Connection

Why can Jesus create a new family at the cross? Because He is losing His earthly security. He is being forsaken so that we may be adopted (**Ephesians 1:5**).

Ephesians 1:5 NKJV

⁵ **Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,**

Mary receives a son because the Son is giving Himself for the world. The cross births:

- A redeemed people.
- A reordered community.
- A covenant family.

IX. Concluding Exhortation

Church — what does your cross-shaped love look like? Do you see the hurting? Do you act without delay? Do you treat the church as family? If Christ, in unspeakable suffering, made provision for His mother — we who are redeemed by His blood cannot live self-absorbed lives.

Final Pastoral Appeal

At Calvary: He forgave enemies. He promised paradise. He provided for His mother. This is not weak love. This is sovereign love. And if this is how He loves at the moment of death — How much more does He love His redeemed people now that He reigns? May our homes, our churches, and our ministries reflect the ordered, covenantal, sacrificial love displayed in the Third Word from the Cross.
Amen.