

Compassion

God's New Family

Foundation

Bible passage : John 19.26-27

Of Jesus' seven sayings on the cross the middle one is recorded in John chapter 19 verses 26 and 27. This is the first of three sayings recorded by John and typically he rather than name himself he simply refers to "the disciple whom Jesus' loved" as love is a rich theme in this gospel. Jesus said first to his mother, Mary, "woman, behold your son" and then said to John "behold your mother".

John understood this to mean firstly that he should care for Mary, and he proceeded to do so. Therefore, as Jesus hung dying on the cross, he showed compassion both to his mother who was losing her firstborn child, and to a grieving disciple, whom Jesus loved even to death.

There are many people who are lonely and some organizations, including churches, that try to offer help in practical ways and to visit. Similarly, the children may have older relatives whom they visit, or who value a visit.

The Bible speaks about Jesus having brothers and sisters and not long afterwards we find some of them along with Mary praying with the other disciples after the resurrection. But here at the cross none of them seem to be present. John

"woman, behold your son"...
"behold your mother"

therefore took Mary into his own home and so he too showed compassion to her in her loss. Of course, although Jesus was then raised, after 40 days he ascended to heaven and therefore was no longer with Mary in person.

Father,
forgive
them, for
they know

not what they do. Truly, I say to
you, today you will be with me
in paradise. Woman, behold,
your son! - Behold, your mother!

My God, my
God, why
have you
forsaken me?
I thirst.
It is finished.
Father, into
your hands
I commit
my spirit!

But the words of Jesus to Mary and John also point to something deeper which we find in the New Testament. The followers of Jesus were part of God's big family, the church. There are several places which speak about this including when Jesus said that though his followers might lose much they would gain "brothers and sisters and mothers and children". The early Christians tried to look after one another and though churches today will similarly try to show compassion and to "do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6.10).



The disciples of Jesus, including Mary and John, were to treat each other as God's family and care for each other.