

All in the family!

Jesus' first disciples became his very close friends, and confidants. Simon Peter, James and John, and on occasion Andrew were witness to events and explanations that the others were not.

The "Three", Peter, James and John were selected by the Lord to see the raising of Jairus' daughter from the dead (Mk. 5:21-24, 35-43), and they got to witness the Lord transfigure into his Glorious state on the mountain (Mk. 9:2-13), and were trusted to stand watch while Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane before he was betrayed by Judas (Mk. 14:32-42). Jesus spoke privately to the three along with Andrew and explained to them the signs of his coming and destruction of Jerusalem and final judgment (Mk. Chapter 13).

The Lord was particularly close to James and John because he knew them well and they were his first cousins. John was referred to as "the disciple whom Jesus loved", and their mother Salome, Zebedee's wife was Jesus' mother, Mary's, sister. We know this from comparing the same event as written by Matthew and Mark.

Mar 15:40-41, 'There were also women watching from afar, among whom were both Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; who, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and served him; and many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem.'

Mat 27:55-56 'Many women were there watching from afar, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, serving him. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.'

So, Salome was one of the women who would support the Lord's work financially and see to their needs. We now can understand perhaps why James and John put their mother up to asking Jesus for a very special request of letting her sons sit on Jesus left and right side of his throne in heaven, seeing there was a need to oblige this request because of family ties of closeness and financial support. Though it wasn't within the Lord's purview to grant such a request, he asked the men if they were willing to drink the cup that I drink, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? To which they answered, "We are able." Jesus said they would indeed go through the same trials and those words rang true nearly fifteen years later when king Herod Agrippa had James killed with the sword. So sadly, Salome experienced the same grief over the loss of a son as her sister Mary had. It must have been comforting and amusing for Jesus to have family so close that such a request could be asked.

So close were John and Jesus that Jesus committed the care of his own mother to the apostle John while he hung on the cross to redeem mankind. And what love was shown to his mother in that while he was in such pain and agony, he still had the presence of mind to make final care arrangements for his mom. Mary lost and gained a son that day. We can confidently say that Mary and her sister Salome and all the other women who attended to Jesus needs, along with Jesus brothers who were now believers because of the resurrection, were with the eleven apostles and disciples totaling 120 believers in that upper room on the day of Pentecost.

And from all of those they won the world for Christ, whom now we are part of that family too! Jim