

Those Who Took Care of Jesus

By Kent Heaton

“Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities--Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance” (Luke 8:1-3).

The ministry of Jesus was not without the demands of everyday living. For nearly three years the Lord journeyed throughout the countryside and cities preaching, healing and teaching His disciples. Lost in the busy activities of the day are the common needs of all men for nourishment and care. The Son of God was a man who needed to eat, revive Himself with drink and sleep. Jesus could have miraculously produced all His food as He did with the feeding of the multitudes. His life as a man among men was like others requiring supplies to be bought and needs met. He needed a place to lay His head. His body needed to eat and keep fluids flowing allowing the demanding schedule He kept daily. Behind the scenes of what we read in scripture a group of women (and others) daily filled His needs.

It must have been quite a chore to keep up with the frantic pace of Jesus. Mary His mother was often with Him. As the disciples grew around Him people took their place in providing whatever needs Jesus and His disciples required. It seems that many of these helpers were those who out of a heart of gratitude owed Jesus their lives. Being healed of evil spirits would be life changing. Having the infirmities of the flesh removed was filled with such joy. Taking care of Jesus was their way of saying ‘Thank you’ for a gift they could never repay.

As the scene at Golgotha unfolds with Jesus being crucified on a cross, the camera turns to the crowd where standing with startled eyes Mary His mother, her sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, Mary Magdalene and many other women who followed Jesus from Galilee. They had ministered to Him taking care of all of His needs but now could do nothing but watch Him die. How sad. Jesus spoke to John asking him to care for Mary His mother. How the tears must have flowed that day as these kindly women watched their friend and Teacher suffer. The heart of Mary was nearly bursting. But she knew it was God's plan.

The group of ladies who served Jesus reminds me of the many in the Lord's church today that quietly work behind the scenes doing so much for the kingdom of God. They go unnoticed and unrewarded by men but God sees them. Jesus sees them and must remember those beautiful people who cared for His needs when He walked among men. Thank you ladies for what you do. God bless you men who silently go about the Lord's work. Young people who shine as examples of godliness in their simple ways bring blessings to the work of the Lord. These people – these wonderful people – now that is a great story.

Breaking Ranks

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves” (Matt. 7:15) “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them” (Acts 20:29-30).

The May 1987 edition of the National Geographic included a feature about arctic wolves. Author L. David Mech described how a seven-member pack had targeted several musk-oxen calves who were guarded by eleven adults. As the wolves approached their quarry, the musk-oxen bunched in an impenetrable semicircle, their deadly rear hooves facing out, and the calves remained safe during a long standoff with the enemy. But then a single ox broke rank, and the herd scattered into nervous little groups. A skirmish ensued, and the adults finally fled in panic, leaving the calves to the mercy of the predators. Not a single calf survived.

Both Jesus and Paul warned of grievous wolves. Wolves cannot destroy the local congregation as long as each member holds rigidly to the truth. It is only when members break ranks that many become easy prey.

The First Day of Light By Kent Heaton

"Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness" (Gen. 1:3-4).

Worship on the first day is a day of LIGHT.

We worship God because He divided the LIGHT from the darkness. (Genesis 1:4)

We worship God because He is our LIGHT in the darkness. (Nehemiah 9:12)

We worship God because He is our LIGHT and we trust Him. (Psalm 18:28-30)

We worship God because He is our LIGHT and salvation. (Psalm 27)

We worship God because He is LIGHT and our guide. (Psalm 90:8)

We worship God because He is the LIGHT to my path and a LAMP to my feet. (Psalm 119:105)

We worship God because His law is LIGHT. (Proverbs 6:23)

We worship God because we are His LIGHT. (Matthew 5:14)

We worship God because His Son is the LIGHT and the LIFE. (John 1:4)

We worship God because Jesus said; I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. (John 8:12)

Today is a day of LIGHT.

A Moments Wisdom

--"Human beings judge one another by their external actions. God judges them by their moral choices." (C. S. Lewis, Christian Behavior, 1943)

--"It is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon." (Abraham Lincoln, Proclamation, March 30, 1863)

--"No cross. No crown." (Thomas Fuller, Gnomologia, 1732)

--"A little boy playing on the deck of a ship in a mighty storm was asked by a passenger if he wasn't afraid. 'No, I'm not afraid. My father is the captain of the ship.'" (Rufus M. Jones, The Radiant Life, 1944)

--"The woman was made out of a rib out of the side of Adam; not of his feet to be trampled on by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arms to be protected and, near to his heart to be loved." (Matthew Henry, Exposition of Genesis, 1725)

--"The body of a man is not a home but an inn – and that only briefly." (Seneca, Epistulae morales ad Lucilium, c. 63. A.D.)

--"Someone has said that the only Bible which millions of people read today is the daily example of Christians – your example and mine." (James E. Murray, Address, March 31, 1948)

--"The New Testament is the history of the life and the testimony of common men who rallied to the fellowship of Jesus Christ and who by their faith and preaching remade a world that was under the thrall of a Roman army." (Woodrow Wilson, Address, May, 1911)

--"Courage is never to let your actions be influenced by your fears." (Arthur Koestler, Arrow in the Blue, 1951)

--"There is a God. The plants of the valley and the cedars of the mountains bless his name; the insect hums his praise; the elephant salutes him with the rising day; the bird glorifies him among the foliage; the lightning bespeaks his power, and the ocean declares his immensity. Man alone has said, 'There is no God.'" (Vicomte de Chateaubriand, The Genius of Christianity, 1802).