Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Mom's Week, Part 4: John Mark's Mother
Scripture: Acts 12:1-11; Acts 15:38; 2 Timothy 4:11; 1 Peter 5:13
Code: A210

An extraordinary mother quietly appears in the middle of one of the most dramatic stories about the fledgling church. You've probably read the story many times without noticing her.

The setting is Peter's imprisonment by Herod, and his seemingly imminent execution. Luke records Peter's miraculous escape (by an angel) in Acts 12:1-11,and then in verse 12 we read this:

"When [Peter] had considered this, he came to the house of *Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark*, where many were gathered together praying" (emphasis added).

This is the only time that the Bible mentions Mary the mother of John Mark, but we can glean quite a bit of information about her:

1. She probably was a widow. The house is referred to as hers, not her husband's.

2. Because John Mark was the cousin of Barnabas (Colossians 4:10), we know that Mary was Barnabas's aunt.

3. She must have been a prominent supporter of the early church, because Peter knew he could go to her home to receive help and reassure the church.

4. She must have been brave. The church was enduring persecution — James the brother of John had been martyred recently, and Peter seemed about to share that fate — but Mary still welcomed the church into her home at great personal risk.

We also learn about Mary's extraordinary nature through what we know of her son, who is called both John and Mark. Though not without his faults (Acts 15:38), John Mark persisted as a devoted fellow worker in the gospel and was used by God to write the Gospel of Mark.

Mary raised a believing son who loved the work of God, even to the point of being useful to both Paul and Peter (cf. 2 Timothy 4:11; 1 Peter 5:13). Without question, his life reflects the faith-filled influence ofhis extraordinary mother.

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