IT'S ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIP
(Matt. 12:46-48)

The Jews made it all about REFORMATION, but Jesus made it all about RELATIONSHIP. Jesus illustrated that a life swept and clean through self-reformation, in the end, can result in the last state being worse than the first. And from there He went on to emphasize personal relationship with Him!

Matthew 12:46 (NKJV)
46 While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him.

The cross-references to this text in Matthew 12:46-50 are found in Mark 3:31-35 and Luke 8:19-21. The setting is found in Mark 3:21.

> **Mark 3:21 (NKJV)**
> **21** But when His own people heard about this, they went out to lay hold of Him, for they said, **"He is out of His mind**."

During Christ's ministry, His half-brothers did not yet believe in Him, and perhaps His mother was also still uncertain about some things (cf. Jn. 7:3-5). Whatever the exact nuances involved, it would seem that they were attempting a family intervention at this point.

Jesus was the oldest child in the family, having been born first of His mother while she was still a virgin. Joseph is not mentioned – probably because he was already dead. After Jesus was left behind at the Temple at the age of 12, we never hear about Joseph again (cf. Lk. 2:41-51) – so it is assumed that he probably died sometime after that, prior to Jesus entering into His public earthly ministry.

"Jesus' family may have been trying to bring him to his senses (cf. Mk. 3:21); as the eldest son, Jesus would have been responsible for the care of the family after Joseph's death." – ***ESV Study Bible***

The family was seeking to do an intervention – perhaps because it seemed kind of crazy that Jesus would be in such tension with the most esteemed of the religious leaders in the holy land.

It seemed one would have to be ***"out of their mind"*** to do this, and especially the oldest child and the one who was to be the leader of the family. This called for a family intervention. Throw in the masses following

Jesus out of fascination over His miracles, His ceaseless activity, and His Lordship claims, and the family was concerned about where this was going.

But Jesus took advantage of this occasion to instruct the people that the thing that really matters is not ultimately physical family relationships but rather spiritual family relationships.

> "*Participation in the Messianic kingdom is not merely based upon a claim to Abraham's family, [as so many Jews assumed] but it is contingent upon a spiritual relationship to Christ (Matthew 3:9).*"
> -***Stanley Toussaint***

> "In the Gospel record of the ministry of Jesus there are only two occasions (prior to the crucifixion) when Mary appears (here and in John 2:1-4). Both times she seeks to have a say in His affairs and both times she is reproved by Him." – ***John Phillips***

So much for the errant theology that says Jesus will listen to His mother and therefore the attempt to seek Mary as a mediator. The Bible is very clear: Mary is NOT a mediator, and she cannot help you at the hour of your death.

> **1 Timothy 2:5 (NKJV)**
> **5** For there is one God and **<u>one Mediator</u>** between God and men, the Man **<u>Christ Jesus</u>**,

> "Such passages as these in Matthew 12 and John 2 anticipate and repudiate Roman Catholic dogmas that exalt Mary to the status of deity, teach the bodily assumption of Mary into Heaven, and make Mary redemptrix with Jesus." – ***John Phillips***

I would remind us that while Mary was honored and blessed, she is not sinless. In Luke 7:46-47, Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior." Thus, Mary recognized that she too needed a Savior. Only sinners need a Savior; hence, by Mary's own confession, it is clear that she was a sinner in need of a Savior!

In Matthew 13:55-56, four half-brothers of Jesus are named, namely, <u>James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas</u> (also known as Jude). He also had half-sisters who are mentioned, but they are not named (cf. Ps. 69:8; Mk. 3:31-32; 6:3; Jn. 7:3-5; Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 9:5; Gal. 1:19).

After the resurrection, Jesus' brothers came to believe in Him, with James becoming the key leader of the Jerusalem church (cf. Acts 15:13-22), and

author of the NT book of James. Jude went on to write the little letter called Jude in the NT. After the resurrection, we find Mary and the brothers of Jesus assembled with the believers in the upper room as recorded in Acts 1 (cf. Acts 1:14).

Matthew 12:47 (NKJV)
47 Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You."

This verse is quite similar to verse 46, but it is not found in the older manuscripts. It is noteworthy that there is no indication that Christ's family ever did manage to talk with Him on this occasion. Jesus in effect put them in their place.

They sought to "straighten Him out," but He, as the Lord, showed His Lordship authority over them. They were still thinking in physical terms as the earthly brother who had been around the home for 30 years. Jesus was now functioning as Messiah Lord, and they needed to realize this – and eventually they did.

Matthew 12:48 (NKJV)
48 But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?"

On the face of it, this question in isolation comes off as either insulting or insane. Obviously, Jesus did know who His physical mother was and who His half-brothers were. The question is rhetorical, as Jesus is wanting to make a spiritual point. Jesus is putting the emphasis on spiritual family at this point and not on physical family.

It's not that Jesus didn't care about His physical family. His last instructions from the cross involved the ongoing care for His mother (cf. Jn. 19:26-27). And through His gracious intervention, His brothers also came to believe in Him, as already noted. Again, Jesus is using this occasion to emphasize that the most important issue is having a spiritual relationship with Him – and not a physical one.