

The Watford Word

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What's on

Sunday 21 May - service, 10:30AM. *Jesus and women 2. Malcolm Speaking*

Sunday 28 May - 10:30AM. *Leon speaking.*

The men's and women's discussion groups in May will focus on 1 Corinthians 11:1-16 and 14:26-40.

Sunday 25 June - 10:30AM. *Dr Douglas Jacoby speaking.*

Sunday 02 July - *Wellington Country park outdoor service with the Thames Valley churches of Christ.*

Jesus and Women

What will we learn as we continue our series, Men and women in Christ: A Divine Harmony? We started at the empty tomb, then dived into the Old Testament. Now we come to the gospels and specifically the way Jesus taught and treated women. We are asking the question, "What do we learn about how God views (men and) women from looking at what Jesus said and how he interacted with them?"

In my personal Bible study this week I have focussed on getting to grips with the big picture. Let me share a few observations with you here, with the caveat that I have no conclusions as yet, and my study is incomplete.

Teaching about men and women

The first surprising issue I noticed is that Jesus does not teach a great deal about men and women specifically. He tackles lust (Matt. 5:28) as well as divorce, marriage and remarriage (Matt. 19). Other than that I could find little else.

What does this mean? I wonder what you think?

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Women significant to Jesus' life

The second surprising matter I observed is that Jesus has a limited number of women who are described as playing a significant part in his life. That's not to say it was not connected to many other women, we'll come on to that, but only a few women had a direct impact on his life.

I would suggest two. His mother, of course, (Matt 1:18; Lk 2:48; John 2:4, and Anna the prophetess (Lk 2:36). Can you see others?

Women following Jesus

This is a much larger group including those who followed him to the cross (Matt 27:35; Lk 23:27-49; Jn 19:25-26), to the tomb (Matt 28:5-11; Mk 16:8; Lk 23:55; 24:1-24; Jn 20:13-15), and along the way:

Luke 8:2 and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) a from whom seven demons had come out; 3 Joanna the wife of Chuzza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.

Luke 10:38 As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him.

Women referenced by Jesus as part of his teaching

Jesus mentions women in teaching other people (Matt 22:24ff; Mk 12:40), and in illustrations (Matt 24:19; Matt 24:41; Jn 16:21). Most of all he highlights them in parables:

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Matt. 13:33 'He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough.'" Matt. 18:25 'Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.'

Luke 12:45 "But suppose the servant says to himself, 'My master is taking a long time in coming,' and he then begins to beat the other servants, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk."

Luke 13:21 "It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough."

Luke 15:8 "Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it?"

Luke 18:3 "And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'"Luke 18:5 "yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!" "

Women who encountered Jesus

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the bulk of references to women in the gospels are when they encounter Jesus.

- Woman bleeding for 12 years - all three Synoptics: Matt 9:20; Mk 5:25; Lk 8:43
- Canaanite woman - Matthew and Mark: Matt 15:22; Mk 7:25
- Woman at Bethany with expensive perfume - Matthew, Mark, possibly John: Matt 26:7-10; Mk 14:3; Jn 12:1-8
- Woman at Nain anoints Jesus - only Luke: Lk 7:37-50

- Woman crippled for 18 years - only Luke: Lk 13:11-16
- Samaritan woman at the well - only John: Jn 8:4-42
- Woman caught in adultery: Jn 8:3-10
- Women at the cross: Jn 19:26
- Women at the tomb: Jn 20:15
- Mother of James and John: Matt 20:20
- Widow whose son was raised: Lk 7:12
- Jairus' daughter: Lk 8:51
- Peter's mother-in-law: Mk 1:30
- Pilate's wife: Matt 27:19

Why not look these up and see what picture this paints of how Jesus felt about women, and how they felt about him. What do you think God is trying to get across to us by making sure these encounters happened and were recorded?

God bless, Malcolm

AIM UK&I

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