

The Watford Word

www.watfordchurchofchrist.org

What's on

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.

Sunday 09 July - Service 10:30AM. Christian Xavier will be our visiting speaker. He hails from North West London where he and his wife Temi oversee the Youth Ministry. Later this year they will be moving to Cardiff to oversee our sister congregation there.

Podcast Milestone

The Watford church of Christ podcast has achieved a notable milestone. The total number of podcast downloads has passed 10,000! It seems that a lot more people than just our local membership are listening to our lessons. Please pray that God uses the recordings to his glory.

Free Tour of Israel

A special offer from Douglas Jacoby....



'Our two (back-to-back) Israel Biblical Study Tours slated for February 2024 are nearly full. In fact, 99 of the 100 places have gone. The remaining place is free.

Would you like to win a free tour (value \$2350)? New website subscribers have the chance to be entered into a draw. Website membership is just \$0.10/day, and affords unlimited access to all 10,000 pages of the website, 1000 audio lessons, detailed notes on every chapter of the New Testament, 20 devotional (quiet time) series, and more. Your subscription helps to fund the International Bible Teaching Ministry. A portion also goes to the HOPE children's home in Kathmandu, Nepal.

To enter the draw, become a new website member, or get a friend to sign up.¹ Then email the confirmation of the subscription (dj@douglasjacoby.com). There's no limit to the number of entries. (Sign up 5 friends, be entered 5 times.)'

Women Following Jesus

I enjoyed Stefan's excellent lesson on Jesus and Martha last week. Today we take a look at how the women around Jesus embraced discipleship to him. My takeaway from Stefan's exposition was that spending time with Jesus, listening to him and allowing him to correct us, leads to spiritual growth. Martha developed a more trusting faith by trusting him to adjust her priorities. That sounds like healthy discipleship.

This week we will take a bird's eye view of women disciples, and zoom in on a few specific instances to see what we can learn about

¹ https://www.douglasjacoby.com/become-a-premium-subscriber/?_s2member_vars=post_level..1..post..18087..L3RvdXltam9obi1sZXNzb241MzQv8.._s2member_sig=1677603544-93577fc53b9e1b5a3b8a4837f586085c

following Jesus. Here we will focus on the significance of the women disciples following Jesus on the way.

On the way

Luke 8:2 ‘...and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) 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.’

This was one impressive group of women! They travelled without guarantee of accommodation (if Jesus had no place to lay his head — Luke 9:58 — it's a given that those who followed him did not also). Perhaps some of their husbands were in amongst the male disciples, but some certainly were not (it's unlikely the manager of Herod's household was a disciple).

Not only were they voluntarily making themselves vulnerable, but they took some of their own resources to support Jesus and his other followers. Were these women effectively booking accommodation for Jesus and purchasing clothing and food for him? Without them, it is doubtful that he could have fulfilled his mission.

The women disciples were going against the grain of their society. They sat at Jesus’ feet while he taught. Some rabbis of the time viewed it as sinful to teach women.

*‘Rather should the words of the Torah be burned than entrusted to a woman. Whoever teaches his daughter the Torah is like one who teaches her lasciviousness.’
First century Rabbi, Eliezer²*

Women could attend the synagogue, but they were not routinely educated. Yet we find them drinking in the life-changing teachings of Jesus.

‘Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you.’ He replied, ‘My mother and brothers are those who hear God’s word and put it into practice.’ (Luke 8:19–21)

Jesus’ statement makes no sense unless there are women in his audience. He welcomed the women disciples as being equally entitled to learning as the men. This observation has ramifications. Part of being a disciple is to make more disciples.

‘...those of us who profess to be a Christian but do not embrace the call to make disciples, are simply following a different Jesus than the Jesus of the Bible.’ Love Story, F. Barton Davis and Frank Davis

One cannot make disciples without passing on what one has learned. Jesus is giving his female disciples authority to make disciples just as much as the men. Matthew 28:19-20 may have been spoken to the Apostles, but it applies to all who follow him.

To the cross

The lesson will also touch on the significance of the women disciples following Jesus to the cross and the tomb. But for now, we will content ourselves with the above reflections.

God bless, Malcolm

AIM UK&I

If you are interested in the programme please email courses@aimukandireland.com.
www.aimukandireland.com

Watford Media

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCj9Qa8D9zumJZdoAtARDUww>

Podcast: <https://www.podbean.com/pu/pbblog-aiinq-raef9o>

² JT Sotah 3:4 , 19a