

WOMEN IN THE LIFE OF JESUS

The Book of Luke (8:1-3)

Introduction: In the days of Jesus women were considered to be of lesser importance than men and thus were shunned and not allowed the same privileges as men. They were not allowed to be in the same rooms with men and had their own area of worship in the temple area. It was a disgrace for a man to recognize or speak to a woman in public, so how did Jesus react to the women whom He encountered in His ministry? The book of Luke reveals how accepting, sensitive and affirming Jesus was of women.

I. JESUS WAS ACCEPTING

1. Jesus' sense of manhood was never threatened by the tenderness of a woman. (*Luke 7:36-50*)
 - A woman came to a banquet where Jesus was, knelt, wept over Jesus' feet, anointed them with perfume and then dried them with her hair.
 - An act of repentance which Jesus allowed her to do with no trace of embarrassment.
2. Women ministered to Jesus in unique ways. (*Luke 10:38-42*)
 - Jesus spent much time at the home of Mary and Martha.
3. As Jesus carried His cross to Golgotha, the "daughters of Jerusalem" followed and wept for Him. (*Luke 23:27-29*)
4. At the Crucifixion the disciples fled, including Peter, but the women remained, staying silently at the foot of the cross. They remained loyal to Jesus.
5. The women were at the tomb while the disciples were in hiding.
 - It was women who first saw Jesus in His new resurrected body and talked to Him.
6. From the moment Jesus came into the world as a tiny, helpless infant to the last moments on the earth and His ascension back into heaven, women ministered to Him.

II. JESUS WAS SENSITIVE

1. Jesus visited Peter and healed Peter's mother in law who was sick. He refused to allow her to get up from her sick bed to minister to Him until He first ministered to her.
2. A widow with no son to care for her was tragic so Jesus stopped a funeral procession that carried a widow's only son who had died. Out of compassion for this poor widow, Jesus touched the dead young man and restored him to life. (*Luke 7:11-17*)
3. On the Sabbath, in the synagogue at Capernaum, Jesus healed a woman, doing five astonishing things: (*Luke 13:10-17*)
 - In a place reserved for men only, Jesus called this woman from the place of women (back of the room) to the front where only men were.
 - Jesus broke tradition and culture by speaking to her in public.

- Jesus then laid His hands on her. By law He wasn't even supposed to look at her, but Jesus, in a public place reserved for men only, spoke to a woman, then actually touched her.
- Jesus then corrected the thinking of the men when He reminded them that if one of their animals needed watering on the Sabbath that they would tend to the animal, violating the Sabbath so a woman is more important than an animal. Jesus restored her to her rightful place.
- Jesus willingly risked His life for the sake of the woman.
 - Jesus humiliated the men in their own synagogue publicly, by ministering out of mercy, sensitivity and kindness to a woman.

III. JESUS WAS AFFIRMING

1. Jesus exalted and affirmed women and not one time did He ever "put down a woman."
2. Jesus' mother, Mary was exalted as no woman ever was, even greater than her husband, Joseph.
3. When Jesus was dedicated as a baby at the temple, Anna, a prophetess was recognized (*Luke 2:36-38*)
4. Jesus got separated from His parents at the temple in Jerusalem as a 12 year old and when reprimanded He replied with love and respect "*Didn't you know that I must be about my Father's business?*" (*Luke 2:41-52*)
5. Jesus often went out of His way to praise women as examples of faith.
 - At the home of Simon the leper a woman suddenly rushed into the house and knelt at the feet of Jesus, wept and then used her hair to dry the tears on His feet.
 - Jesus criticized His host for not caring enough to have a servant wash the dust from Jesus' feet but here is a woman who used her tears and hair to wash His feet. (*Luke 7:44-50*)
6. Jesus defended the actions of Mary who was sitting and listening to Jesus teach instead of helping her sister Martha cook the meal by telling Martha that she needed to be doing what Mary was. (*Luke 10:41-42*)
7. Jesus used stories about women in His parables such as one who lost a coin. (*Luke 15*)
8. In another story Jesus told of a woman who kept coming back to an unjust judge until he finally granted her what was hers under the law. (*Luke 18*)
9. Jesus used an unnamed widow as an example of the generosity God expects from everyone as He watched people drop their offerings into the temple containers. (*Luke 21*)
10. Jesus dared to talk to a woman in public at a well, breaking all the rules of tradition. (*John 4*)

CONCLUSION:

1. Jesus never intimidated or sexually threatened a woman and He was never threatened or intimidated by a woman.
2. Jesus lifted and affirmed every woman who came to Him and women find in Jesus the man they wish every man could be and men see in Jesus the man they know they ought to be.
3. Much has been said about Jesus' disciples and only the 12 are mentioned but there were women along with the men who followed Jesus and the women proved to be more loyal and faithful.
4. Among membership of today's churches, no matter what denomination or faith, the majority by far is women and they are usually the most faithful.
5. Jesus again set forth a truth: All are equal in God's sight.