

God's Love for Women

Woman, His Creation

Part 1

Introduction

God is no respecter of persons and He values women every bit as much as He does men. If we will carefully search Scripture, we find that regardless of culture, social or economic conditions, God is constantly revealing His love and concern for women.

Jesus was a tradition breaker. And in no place did He break with tradition more completely than He did in His relationship with women. Jesus lived in an age and culture that often considered women as property, sometimes on a par equal with dogs. Women's testimony was not accepted in a court of law. Yet time and time again, Jesus violated those conventions by His friendship with a woman.

The Early Church followed Jesus' lead, and it has been said that wherever Christianity came, the status of women was immediately raised.

Because of length, we have had to abridge many of the scriptures used. However, if you have a Bible, it would be a good idea to read the scriptures in their entirety.

Our Study

The Scripture: Genesis 1:1, 27, 31

"In the beginning...God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female. God saw all that He had made, and it was very good."

1. Who did God create in the beginning? _____
2. How did He rate the creation? _____

From the beginning God had a plan for the human race. Knowing that Adam and Eve would "blow it", He had always been prepared to send His Son, Jesus, to earth as a human being, to live a sinless life, so that He might pay the price for humanity's sins and redeem us and the earth back from Satan. From this same beginning He has chosen women to play an important role in that plan and He continues to do so today.

The Scripture: Luke 1:26-28

"In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel...to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph... The virgin's name was Mary. The angel... said, 'Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.' "

3. How did Gabriel describe Mary? _____
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The Scripture: Luke 1:31

"You will be with child and give birth to a son."

4. What did Gabriel tell Mary? _____

The Scripture: Matthew 1:21

"You are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins."

5. Why was she instructed to give her son the name Jesus? _____

Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua, which means "The Lord saves."

The Scripture: Matthew 1:23

"They will call him Immanuel -- which means 'God with us.' "

6. What else would the child be called? _____

In this culture the name was significant, an indication of the person's role.

The Scripture: Luke 1:38

" 'I am the Lord's servant,' Mary answered. 'May it be to me as you have said.' "

7. What was Mary's response? _____

Yes, to put into effect the most important event in human history - the birth of the Savior of the world, God used a young woman, a girl by our standards, a poor, peasant girl even by the standards of the society in which she lived.

In one sense, we are all Marys. When we agree to accept Jesus as our Savior, He is "conceived" in each of us. Today that same event is reenacted over and over again in us. In His ongoing work in our lives, the Holy Spirit "overshadows" each of us, desiring to bring to birth within us a greater and greater revelation of God's love and character.

Two other women are mentioned in connection with Jesus' birth. Before Jesus' birth Mary traveled to visit her cousin, Elizabeth, who was also pregnant.

The Scripture: Luke 1:41-45

"When Elizabeth heard Mary's greetings, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit... She exclaimed, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear... Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished.' "

8. What was Elizabeth response to Mary's greeting? _____

The Scripture: Luke 2:36-38

When Jesus was eight days old, Mary and Joseph brought Him to the temple for purification.

"There was a prophetess, Anna... She was very old [and] never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying... She praised God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem."

9. What did Anna do? _____

Although we know that most of the religious leaders of Jesus' day were contemptuous of women we find nothing of this attitude in Jesus.

The Scripture: Luke 8:1-3

"Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve (disciples) were with Him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases. Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna (the wife of Cuza, the manager of Herod's household); Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means."

10. Who traveled with Jesus? _____

11. What were these women doing? _____

Because of our traditions, it is perhaps hard for us to realize that Jesus lived the life of an itinerant preacher, one who depended upon financial support from His followers. It is undoubtedly significant that the only direct reference made in the Gospels to those who supported Jesus was to women.

Although Jesus never lacked followers, few understood His purpose in coming to earth. Of all those who associated with Him, only one person, Mary of Bethany, was given the revelation of that purpose.

The Scripture: John 12:3-8

"Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany... Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor... Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped His feet with her hair... But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot,...objected, 'Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor?'... 'Leave her alone,' Jesus replied, 'It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial.' "

12. Where was Jesus? _____

13. What happened? _____

14. What was Judas' objection? _____

15. What did Jesus say? _____

Women ministered to Jesus while He was alive and they continued to minister to Him after His death.

The Scripture: Mark 16:1-5

"Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices so they might go to anoint Jesus' body... As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting at the right side, and they were alarmed."

16. What did the women come to do? _____

17. What did they find in the tomb? _____

The young man told them that Jesus had risen and that they should go and tell His disciples and Peter. The women fled from the tomb.

The Scripture: Matthew 28: 9-11

"Suddenly Jesus met them... They came to Him, clasped His feet and worshiped Him. Then Jesus said to them... 'Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see Me.' "

18. Who met the woman? _____

19. What did they do? _____

20. What did Jesus tell them to do? _____

In a very real sense Mary was the first evangelist. Imagine what Jesus had done; He entrusted a woman to share the most wonderful news of Jesus' resurrection.

The Answers

1. Man - male and female
2. Very good
3. As one who was highly favored. "The Lord is with you."
4. She would give birth to a son
5. Because He would save His people from their sins
6. Immanuel, which means "God with us."
7. "May it be to me as You have said."
8. "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the child you will bear. Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished."
9. She praised God and spoke about the child to those who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.
10. The disciples and several women, including Mary Magdalene
11. They were supporting Jesus' ministry.
12. In Bethany
13. Mary poured a bottle perfume over Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair.
14. That the perfume should have been sold and the money given to the poor.
15. To leave her alone, she had saved the perfume for the day of His burial.
16. Anoint Jesus' body
17. A young man
18. Jesus
19. They worshiped Him.
20. To go tell the disciples

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