

Women Whom Jesus Praised by Dr. Annie Poonen

by Annie Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having a godly role model, prioritizing listening to God, and responding to trials and persecution with gratitude and brokenness.

Duration: 56:18

Scripture: Romans 12:1

Topics: "Spiritual Humility", "Godly Submission"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of humility, submission, and gratitude in our relationship with God, drawing lessons from biblical characters like Martha, Mary, Sarah, and the Canaanite woman. It encourages listeners to seek true brokenness before God, to learn humility from Jesus, and to embrace submission as a sign of spiritual strength. The sermon highlights the power of God's grace in enabling us to face trials, persecution, and challenges with a thankful heart, ultimately leading us to a life of surrender and service to God.

Transcript

Song number 2, 3 and 4. Upajarikenda enne ni, aakashikenda, kurishedo ten, guruvin pinpe, Poganam alladheni kini, ashaverilla alladheni. Ashaverilla sneha charadukalal enne yesu, Cherthu bendech, tan kurishu, denne yonneeche, Jnanallam thannila arpeeche. Avnadima anupaveekum, swadhandriyam pole verillam.

Swadhandriyamedum, avnadima anupaveekum, swadhandriyam pole verillam. Swadhandriyamedum, andhya swasam, Pomvare than vella chayyum jnanthropada, Seva chayyum jnanthropada, Seva chayyum jnan sneha charadukalal enne yesu, Cherthu bendech, tan kurishu, denne yonneeche, Jnanallam thannila arpeeche. Praise the Lord.

Let's look to the Lord in prayer. Our Heavenly Father, we come to your presence this evening. We come to you with hungry hearts, Lord.

We have so much need in our lives, Lord, and so we want to come and hear what you want to speak to us. We want to say like Samuel, Speak, Lord, your servant is listening. So we humble ourselves at your feet, Lord, and we commit this meeting into your hands.

We ask it in Jesus' name. I am so glad to see all of you here in Bahrain, I mean in Kuwait, and I am glad to get to know some of you. You know, all of us from our young age, we have some role models in our life.

Especially young girls, we think of somebody as our role model, and we think of that person, we want to be like that person. Some people admire some, maybe some film stars in the worldly sense, some people like Christians, but who are little stylish type of Christians, some people admire somebody like Mother Teresa, and whoever we admire, we want to be like that person. And sometimes we admire the wrong person, and we find we are going in the wrong direction.

I accepted the Lord when I was 14 years old. I had godly parents, especially my father, and he taught me many, many things from God's word, and the importance of being a godly woman. So I am thankful for that influence in my life.

And after I accepted the Lord, and I accepted the Lord in a very miraculous way, I had food poisoning and I almost died, and the Lord saved my life. And after that I wanted to live only for the Lord. Because I thought if I had died before that, I would have gone to hell.

So I felt like a person pulled out of death. Even now when I am tempted to do my own will, I think of the day I should have died, but Jesus saved my life. And that love, the love of Jesus is the one always speaks in my heart.

Then I thought, I read lot of missionary books, and I thought, I like to be a missionary, and go some place and sacrifice and serve God. Then the Lord opened my eyes to see some people whom Jesus appreciated in the Bible. Especially some women whom Jesus praised.

Because I was a woman, I was a woman. Because we as women, we think like, I want to be a woman like one whom Jesus praised. And one day when we stand before Him, He is going to praise each one of us if we have been true and faithful to Him.

So look forward to that praise we are going to get from Jesus. Don't think that when we stand before Him, He is going to scold us or find fault with us. Look forward to the day when He is going to say, Yes, well done, you have done your best for me.

That's the encouragement I want to leave with you. So there are many godly women who are praised. One of them is Sarah.

In the epistles it says, she is like a mother, and we have to follow her example. But as I said, I want to tell about few women whom Jesus praised. You all know who I am going to speak about, if you turn to Luke chapter 10.

Last, from verse 38 onwards you can see, read about one family. They were two sisters. One always liked to take care of the house, and do all the practical things.

And she was Martha, and she was the one who welcomed Jesus. So we think of Martha as not a nice person, but see, she did something really good. She kept everything ready and welcomed Jesus.

And she had a sister whom Mary, and Mary was the one whom Jesus praised. It all came about because Martha had a complaint against Mary. And one thing good about Martha was, she didn't complain to other people.

She came straight to the Lord and complained about. So when we find that some lack in our home, or in our church, all of us have lot of weaknesses. Lot of shortcomings.

But best thing is to go and tell Jesus. And that was one good thing she did, and because of that Jesus told her the priorities. Because what was Mary doing? She was listening to Jesus.

And I think, I wish it was written what Jesus was telling Mary, that she listened so carefully. It's not written, but I wish I know what Jesus was telling. I said, Lord, what were you telling Mary that she was listening? Then I feel God is telling me.

What I told Mary, that is her business, but I want to tell you something. And you be ready to listen to what I have to tell you. And often the Lord wants to listen to you.

He wants to speak to us many things. But we are like Martha, busy, busy doing so many things. But God, the Lord wants to speak to us also.

No, that doesn't mean that we have to stop doing everything and say, I'm going to be like Mary, I'm not going to do any work, I'm going to sit and listen. What will happen to our home if we sit like that? Who is going to take care of our home and our children? It will be completely neglected. So I said, Lord, I'm like a Mary, I'm like a Martha outwardly.

But give me a Mary's heart. Always, even if I'm busy, give me a Mary's heart. So while we are doing our work, and we may be doing very important work, but in our heart we are listening to the Lord.

And God can speak to us. Sometimes, like for example, I'll tell you a practical thing. When we are busy doing our work, it's morning time, we have to go to work, children have to be taken care of, and we get unrest.

Then we can have a Mary's heart. And the Lord speaks to us. Why are you complaining? Why are you judging your husband at this time? Why do you think that he doesn't care for you? Why are you suspecting somebody? Why are you thinking only about outward things, what to wear and what to put on? Why are you judging other sisters in the church? Even if we are involved in practical things, the Lord can tell us in our heart.

And we can say, Lord, forgive me for all these things. And say, Lord, I want to set right with everybody. And even though I'm working, I want to do it as unto you.

You know, later on, Martha was serving the Lord in another portion we read, but that time there was no complaint. I'll talk about it little later. So Martha took that advice in a good way.

Sometimes we hear things in the church and we get disturbed. Because it's not true in our life. And we don't like to accept it.

But we can be like Martha and say, Lord, whatever you say, I want to take it in a right way. And it will do good in my life. Now this family which Jesus loved so much and He used to visit, we'll think that such a family should not face any trials.

We think, I'm loving the Lord and I'm serving the Lord. I'm serving His people. Then when some trial comes, we think, why should it come to me? Why it could happen? That person doesn't have any trouble like I'm having.

She's not even trusting in Jesus, but she doesn't have the troubles that I have. If you turn to John chapter 11, you know what happened to that same family. Their brother was sick and they informed Jesus that.

And Jesus delayed in coming. We think that when we ask the Lord, He will answer our prayer. And sometimes our prayer is delayed.

We know that there are many instances when we have prayed and the answer doesn't come. And we should not think, Oh, God doesn't love me, that's why He's not giving me what I ask. Sometimes when He, yesterday we heard, when He gives some trial, He knows that we can bear that trial.

If He had sent that trial to some other family, that family may not have been able to bear it. God gave us an honor to give this trial to us. He knows that we can take it and handle it.

So if we have a difficult boss, or difficult husband, or difficult in-laws, or anybody, we should think, Lord, You know that I can handle it. And You will give me the grace to handle it. Sometimes when my children were sick and my husband was far away, and I had to handle it by myself.

One time one of my son fell down and there was a big cut on his head and I had to take him, find an auto rickshaw and take him in the night to get it stitched. And my children were all small. And then God gave me this right, this word.

God said, I have given you the education and boldness to handle such a thing. Somebody else who sees so much blood may faint, but you can handle it. That's why I gave you this trial.

It's a simple thing, you can get it stitched. So whatever things may happen, big or small, if we take it in this way, my grace is sufficient for you. Whatever we go through, may be different things in your life, different things in my life.

We all are different. Our backgrounds were different. The way we were brought up was different.

But I can say we are unique. Nobody is like somebody else and God knows what each one of us can handle. So this family, Mary and Martha, Jesus knew they can handle this big trial.

And so he allowed, waited till Lazarus became sick and he died. And Mary and Martha were all they never thought if Jesus comes he will heal them because he healed so many people with diseases. They expected healing, but God did greater than that.

We know he gave more than healing, he brought him back from the dead. Now we may expect God to answer our problem in a certain way. In our human wisdom we think in this problem God has to solve it in this way only.

But later we realized God has brought us through a different way which was far better. And you know in eternity when we look back on our life we will realize how the trials that God sent in our life they were the ones which brought us closer to the Lord. All the successes which we have in our life may not have brought us close to the Lord.

Maybe we got proud because of the successes but when one sorrow which God allows one failure one place where we didn't get what we wanted then we realize that has brought us closer to the Lord. Even in the few years I can say when I look back there were some trials in my life but the revelation and the comfort God gave me from his word it thrills my heart that God would speak to me like that. I wrote down

those verses and looking back I think yes I can't believe God spoke to me.

For every need that we face there is a comforting word for us. All we have to do is to search and find it. I read the story of a man who found a bag on a beach when he was walking by it's not a true story but it has a good meaning.

He took that bag and he thought there are some stones there. He thought some children have collected some stones. So as he was walking he was just throwing the stones into the water and he saw the water splashing and he reached home and there was one stone left.

So he opened the bag and looked at that stone. It was a precious stone and he thought all these stones I don't know what I threw away. I have only one left You know all the trials which God has given when we go through those trials there is a verse and a promise which God gives us.

Just pick it up like a precious stone and keep it in your bag and you find when you open it after many years you will have a treasure of precious stones. You know the earthly precious stones will all perish. The fire will burn it up but these precious stones which God gives us will take them with us to eternity.

Maybe he will put it in the crown for us. So take the trials like that. Don't think of it like a problem I am facing at this time.

Take it like from this I am going to make it into a precious stone. Some of us face pressures from our relatives or from our workplace and we fight with them or we speak rudely to them or in our heart we grumble and complain that is like throwing away the stone which we could have got. Pick it up and take it to the Lord.

Lord I don't know why this person is treating me like this but you can understand make it into a precious stone for me and in eternity it will be a reward for me. So instead of healing there was a resurrection in that family but there was more than resurrection there came persecution. The Jews when they heard that Jesus made Lazarus come from the dead they said we want to kill Jesus and Lazarus.

Because of this Lazarus people are believing in Jesus. So we will get rid of Lazarus also. So trials may come persecution may come to us when we follow the Lord.

In this extreme case they wanted to kill but for us it may not be so bad but even when persecution comes God will give us the grace to bear it. If you turn to John chapter 12 you will see another result of this trial. You know when somebody in our family is very sick and a doctor came and made him all right we will think I cannot tell you what I like to give for this doctor.

So we may like to give a sari for his wife or a suiting for him. And imagine in this family their brother was dead and raised. Mary was so thankful.

We read that Martha was serving Martha did what she was good at. And Lazarus was at the table. What a happy occasion that was.

Celebration that our dead brother is alive. And we would have Mary did something which even we feel like doing. The most costly thing we will put it at Jesus feet.

That's what gratitude does. When we realize that Jesus has done so much for us today we heard about the spiritual death which we should have gone through. But Jesus bore it all so that we need not have that

spiritual death in hell.

We don't have to even see hell. We can go straight and be with the Lord. It's the costliest thing we can give him.

What does the Lord want now? Not our money or all this ointment and perfume, not all that. In Romans 12 he says the only reasonable thing is to present ourselves to the Lord. Lord, you gave your life for me.

I want to live the rest of my life for you. 2 Corinthians 5.15 it says he died for all so that those who live should not live for themselves but for him who died and rose again. The rest of my life Lord, I am going to live for you.

I want to give more than what Mary gave. I give my whole life, my future, my strength, everything for you. Then serving our husbands, serving our families, serving our children will never be a burden.

Because we don't see them. Through them we see the Lord. Lord, I am not doing it for my husband and for my children.

I am doing it for you. Because you asked me to do it, I am doing it out of love. I love you so much that even the difficult thing I will do for you.

Then nothing will be difficult. Because my love for the Lord is much more. And his love for me is more than my love for him.

And we read that there was somebody who was upset about it. Now when we make an offering to the Lord, it's an offering to the Lord. But some people may not be happy about it.

And one more thing I want to say about this, when she broke, not in this part but in other part, we read that that woman broke the alabaster box and the perfume came out. As long as it's in the bottle, the smell, the perfume will never come out. But when it's broken, only the smell comes out.

Even so in our life also. If we are that strong type of person, I won't give up my ideas and my views. I am going to be strong and be a person.

I am going to be stubborn. Then whatever is inside will stay inside. But when there is a brokenness in our life, Lord, your body was broken for me.

I want to be broken. I want to think of your body broken for me and I want to break my own will. When that brokenness, true brokenness happens, a perfume will come out.

There is another verse in 2 Corinthians, verse 15, verse 14 and 15. And verse 16 it says, for some people it's an aroma of death and for others it is life. That's 2 Corinthians 2, 14 to 16.

For Judas Iscariot, that brokenness was aroma of death. For Judas Iscariot, that brokenness was aroma of death. He said, why this waste? Wasting this perfume on Jesus.

We could have given it to the poor. For him it was an aroma of death. But for Jesus, it was aroma of life.

He said, she has done this for me. You know, no one got a chance to anoint Jesus after his death. Because he rose up before that.

Some women prepared the spices and went but he was already risen up. But Mary was the lucky one who got the chance. God has given us an opportunity to do something like that.

It comes through brokenness only. No other way. As long as we are stubborn, we will have the aroma of death.

But when there is brokenness, there will always be aroma of life. And the whole house was filled with that aroma. The people who came there got that aroma.

When they went home, they could smell that all over their body. You know, when there is a true brokenness in our homes, in us as sisters, if there is true brokenness in our life, before the Lord, all who come to our house will be blessed. They will smell that perfume and they will be blessed and they will take back that with them.

I can say from practical life, if you go to a home where they just had a quarrel, suppose they were having a fight and you ring the bell and you go in, and you go inside, you can say something is happening in this house. I want to go away from here. I am not at all comfortable being here.

But you go to a house where there was peace and there was harmony in that home and you go into that home. You like to stay there. You like to live in that house.

Even if you want to go, people say, stay, stay, don't go. May God make our houses like houses of peace. In this world there is darkness.

Houses are full of darkness. But God can make your house and mine. Doesn't matter about the past.

All of us have things in our past we don't like to think about. But the future is ours and with God's help He can make a difference in our life. He can make a difference in our life.

Say, Lord, today when I go back home let there be a different person who is going home. I want to take the aroma of Christ with me and I want to bless my family. There was one more person who time is running out but there was one more person whom Jesus praised I want to talk about.

And the rest you can find out by reading God's word you can find out lot of people who were praised. Matthew chapter 15 from verse 21 onwards there was a Canaanite woman now she was like an outsider like an outcast who didn't belong to the children of Israel and she came to Jesus because her daughter was demon possessed. You can read when you get home from 22 onwards 22 to 28 and she came to Jesus and said Lord have mercy on me son of David my daughter is demon possessed.

And the disciples said send her away, she is an outcast. She is making a nuisance of herself. And she came and worshipped Jesus and she said Lord help me.

And you know the answer that Jesus gave? He said it is not good to take the children's bed and give it to the dogs. And she could have thought this man, I mean he is the son of God and he is calling me a dog. And she could have got offended with that.

And she could have lost the healing which God Jesus wanted to give her. You see her answer. She said Lord yes even though I am a dog.

And she said yes Lord I am a dog. But even the crumbs, the little bit is enough for me. What we learn from that is the humility of that lady.

She didn't get offended that somebody called her a bad name. And sometimes like when we go say like when we go to a hospital and we have to wait and they don't care about us oh this Indian woman has come let her wait. And we think what's wrong with me why is she talking about me like that.

But we can learn from this lady. When there is humility there is blessing also. Humility is not something which we can define oh I am humble and she is not humble.

It's not like that. The only true person we can learn humility is from Jesus. From Jesus.

Jesus said in Matthew 11 verse 29 We can learn true humility only from Jesus. And when there is true humility there is no problem about submission. We see the life of Jesus.

He said I can do nothing of my own. I speak nothing of my own. Imagine Jesus the son of God he says like that when he came on earth only what the father tells me I want to speak.

And for us to think Lord bring me to that place. Lord bring me to that place. I don't want to have any opinion of my own.

I don't want to contradict what somebody else has said. Because that is the source of all quarrels. When we think of the path that Jesus took then we realize what is the meaning of true submission.

Nobody need to make us submit. Nobody need to force it on us. Say Lord Jesus you did it.

You made yourself so much lower than everybody else. I want to take that and learn that submission from you. You know to submit to somebody which is easier to do your own will or to do what somebody else says.

For all of us it is easy to do what we want. It is hard to do what somebody else wants. So when you do something which is hard and you do it with God's strength you are actually doing something more difficult.

You are able to do a difficult thing. That is the power of submission. It is not a sign of weakness.

It is a sign of spiritual strength which God has given us. Only when God gives us the strength we can submit. Otherwise it is not easy to submit.

But we see Jesus who did it joyfully and we say Lord you submitted I also want to submit. Because when I submit I am doing something which you did. I am following your footsteps.

Even when I submit I am following your footsteps. If I don't submit I am doing my own will. But when I submit to you I do your will.

Another thing we read is that we have to show that when a wife submits to the husband it is a picture of the church submitting to Jesus. So God can point about our family and maybe tell the angels look at that family in Kuwait see how the wife is living that's how the church should be. That's how the church should be to Jesus.

The Lord should be able to point to each of our families like that. It's not easy but it is possible. With our strength it's impossible.

But with God's help it is possible. Think what God promised to Abraham with his own strength he got only Ishmael but with God's mighty power he got Isaac. The child of promise.

God has promised many things for us. But with his strength we can claim all those things. So let's not lose all these precious stones.

Let's pray. Lord our Heavenly Father we thank you for the high calling you have given us. It's not a mistake that you made me a woman.

It's the best plan for my life Lord. I thank you for that wonderful calling you have for each one of us. You have a plan for our life Lord.

You put us in our particular family and put us in this particular place. Every circumstance has been planned by you Lord. Nothing is a mistake.

So we have no complaint against you Lord. We want to thank you Lord. And we want to live a life of thankfulness to you Lord.

Please give us grace. We are such weak people Lord. Your word says we are weak.

But with your strength we can do all things. Please help us Lord. Fill us with the Holy Spirit Lord.

Give us grace for our daily situations. Help us to be faithful to the very end. We ask in Jesus name.

Amen. Amen.

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