

Jesus Encourages All Women

by Zac Poonen

Jesus' New Covenant raised women from under the feet of men and gave them an exalted position as partners and fellow heirs of the grace of life.

Duration: 57:30

Scripture: Matthew 1:16, Luke 3:23, Luke 7:36, Hebrews 4:15

Topics: "Women"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the first part of Hebrews 4:15, which states that Jesus can sympathize with our needs and struggles. The speaker shares a personal anecdote about using relatable topics like sports to connect with people and show his humanity. He highlights how Jesus always identifies with the underdog and tells stories that demonstrate this, such as the laborers who came late receiving the first prize and the thief on the cross being promised paradise. The speaker encourages the audience to present this compassionate and understanding Jesus to the world, particularly to those who have been marginalized or trapped in a life of sin.

Transcript

And if the church goes along that direction and continues to have humble brothers and sisters like that in the next generation particularly, it will go in such a new way. Because God gives grace to the humble, and it's only through those who want to be nothing before God so that God can be everything, and God does His work. And that is what every sister has the privilege of being.

Have you noticed it says in Proverbs in chapter 13, 14 Proverbs chapter 14 and verse 1, we can think of the home or house as a church and our personal home. And here, have you ever wondered why it says a wise woman builds her house? It's not a wise man. I thought about that for many, many years.

Why doesn't it say a wise man? Why does it say a wise woman? That's a mystery, which I don't think they understood in the day when Proverbs was written. Proverbs is one of those new covenant books in the Old Testament. Amazing things.

God gives grace to the humble. It's gone in Proverbs. And yet nobody experienced it till the New Testament.

And even this verse is fully fulfilled only in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, they didn't care much for women. It's very important for us to understand, you know, we have grown up in a Christian culture, but if you want to know the place of a woman in Old Testament times, exactly the same as it was in the villages of India where a woman is treated like a slave, I think even worse than that, because some amount of modern civilization has come to the villages.

But if you want to know, if you want to get a little glimpse of how the Jewish community considered a woman, I want you to just notice this. If you turn to the New Testament, there are two genealogies of Jesus. Certainly, Mary was the greatest woman that Israel ever produced.

We can say that because God selected her to be the mother of Jesus Christ. I mean, imagine, God searched for years and looked around Israel and picked on one woman. She must have been the most wonderful, most godly, most humble young.

I promise, she was about eighteen years old. That's all. Imagine, being a god at the age of eighteen, that almighty God can pick her to be the mother.

And with the little life that she had under the Old Testament, most of you who have got so much more life, I think all of you young girls should ask yourself this question. If I were living in Israel in the first century, would the Lord have picked on me? Would I have been in the final list, even, the last ten names that God had to pick out from? It's a good question to ask ourselves. Whatever people may think about us is not the important thing.

Would God have picked on you? He picked on a young girl, not because she knew the scriptures. I don't know whether Mary knew the scriptures all that well, not because she was of a rich family or influential family, but there was tremendous godliness that surpassed older women. God could have picked a twenty-five-year-old woman.

He didn't do so. And that should be a tremendous challenge. All of you sisters, even after you're married, you know, what a low profile she always took.

Once when she came, her son had become very popular now, great healer, great preacher, standing around a big crowd, and she stood at the fringe of the crowd, just trying to get a word with him. So he sent a messenger saying, Please say your mother is waiting here. And he turns around and says, Who is my mother? My brother is my sister.

And she hears that. She's not offended. She says, That's right.

I'm not special. Even in the marriage of Kena, when she asks him, saying there's no wine, he says, Woman, what do I got to do? She's not offended. I want to say to you sisters, follow Mary's example, what a fantastic woman she was.

I fear that because the Roman Catholics have made so much of Mary and worshipped her, we Protestants have reacted against that, that we don't appreciate her at all. I think she was the most godly woman in the entire Bible. Certainly, if God chose her to be the mother of the son, there's a lot we can learn from her.

These little examples I just quoted of her humility, always taking the background low profile, you know how it is for some big shots, mother-in-law trying to become famous, Carol, the name of their son, but she never did that. And even at the day of Pentecost, she's assisted with all the other women waiting for her

baptism in the Holy Spirit. She's over fifty now, and she's waiting along with all these other young people and willing to accept Peter as the leader, and taking no important place.

Do you ever hear about Mary in the Acts of the Apostles? The fact that you hardly ever hear about her except in that first chapter shows us something about her humility. Imagine the mother of Jesus. What a position she could have had in the early Church as a powerful woman, and you don't even read her name.

I think you'll miss much, dear sisters, if you haven't studied Mary's life. You can start now and say, Lord, that's the type of woman I want to be. And here's something else I want to show you.

In Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 1, you read about the genealogy of Jesus, which finally ends up in verse 16 with, that Jacob was born Joseph, the husband of Mary, by whom was born Jesus. So Joseph's father was Jacob, and he came through, you read in verse 6, through Solomon. That is, Joseph came through David's son Solomon, and his father's name was Joseph, was Jacob, sorry.

Now when you come to Luke, Chapter 3, you see another genealogy. And you can get confused with this. Listen to this.

And Jesus began His ministry, verse 23, Luke 3, 23, about thirty years of age, being supposedly the son of Joseph, the son of Eli. How's that? Was He the son of Jacob? Or was He the son of Eli? And you go through this line, and the names are all different, and the clearest proof this is a different line is that when you come to David, you find it's not through his son Solomon that this descendant comes. It's another line.

It's David's son Nathan, through whom this, that's in verse 31, the son of Nathan, the son of David. David had a son called Nathan and a son called Solomon. So there the streams separated.

Through Solomon came Joseph, and through Nathan came Eli, verse 23. And if you got, you read in there that the phrase son, son, the word son is in italics. Why is it in italics? Words in italics means they are not in the original Hebrew, they are not in the original Bible which God dictated in Greek.

The translators added it because you can't have a sentence in verse 23 saying, Joseph, son of Eli. What it really means is the sign law of Eli. The translators put it wrong, and they put son.

Mary came through David's son Nathan. This is actually the genealogy of Mary. And the Jews despised women so much that they wouldn't even put her name there.

That's what I wanted you to see. Mary's genealogy, and they wouldn't even put her name. When it came to her father, Eli, they said, OK, his son-in-law is Joseph.

Why pass Mary completely? That's amazing. I don't think it affected her. When she read the book of Luke and found her name was not even there.

Praise the Lord. Can you be like that, sisters? Ignorant? That's God's will. So often we can have sisters complaining, I'm not being given the respect you need.

Is that what you look for? Imagine if Mary had been like that. I thought of Mary also when she gave birth to Jesus. There was no room in the inn.

And people were traveling to Bethlehem to get their names recorded in census. And there was no room in the inn. And she could have told Joseph, I told you we should have started a little earlier.

See, now we land up here. How many times did I tell you we should start a little earlier? Send a message earlier to somebody. You know, I was going to be delivering in the census.

This is my due time. And you could have sent a message to a messenger at least a couple of days earlier. Or to one of the others who were traveling earlier to Bethlehem saying, please give a room for us.

And then grumbling and complaining like that against her husband, and then they finally find this place in the stable with all the donkeys and cows and all that, and she's just full of complaints. And imagine if Jesus was born at that time into an atmosphere surrounded by His mother complaining and grumbling. How terrible it would be.

You see her humility. There is no room in the inn. God must have planned it that way.

He did. Of course He planned it. Jesus was to be born in a stable.

We know that today, but when you are actually in a circumstance, you don't realize that. Many of the difficult circumstances you go through today, when you look at it thousand years later in heaven, you say, Hey, that was great. But you don't say it's great right now, because you are going through it.

So it's very easy for us to look at Mary's story now, two thousand years later, and say, Boy, that was great. You know, Christmas time, making little cribs and donkeys and all is great. Looks fine.

Great, you know. In fact, it's more exciting that if you draw a palace than Jesus being born in a palace. But when the reality was there, it wasn't so neat as all these Christmas things that we see.

It was horrible. It was filth and dung and smell, all types of things. And here she was delivering her first baby.

And I don't believe she complained. I don't believe Jesus God would have chosen a woman who was going to complain against her husband and complain about the circumstances and allow Jesus to be born into that atmosphere. I think that may be one of the reasons why He chose Mary.

Here was a young girl who didn't expect much, was very happy with whatever she got. You know, so many women when they get married, they expect so much. They expect their husband to provide this and that and the other thing and the other thing and the other thing and the other thing.

And I believe that God can't do much with such people. And it limits the ministry of their husband too. I look back at my own life and I must say I am deeply thankful that I married someone who didn't expect anything.

I didn't have anything. I quit my job. I had zero in my bank account, and I was serving a lot of trusting to a lot of my nieces.

I didn't have anything. I thank God someone who didn't expect much. Mary was like that, didn't expect anything.

And God chose someone like that to be this mother of Jesus. And different, you know, some of these women you read out here like Susanna Wesley and Catherine Booth and all whom God chose, they were women whom God found something in them. God gave Catherine Booth, for example, as a wife to William Booth, and boy, he went through such fantastic pressures in the founding of the Salvation Army.

If you read the story of the beginning of the Salvation Army, they went through tremendous pressures that people wanted to kill William Booth. Because he was, all the bars were closing down and all kinds of things were happening. There was not so much saving souls, and the prostitute houses, some of the prostitutes were getting saved.

And imagine being the wife of such a man, and God had given him someone who was going to grumble and complain, the whole Salvation Army would have suffered at that time. Salvation Army that time was not like it is today. It was a tremendous movement of God.

I've often felt that if I lived in England a hundred and forty years ago, I would have joined the Salvation Army, without a doubt. That was perhaps the greatest work that God was doing in England at that time. And God chose a woman to be the husband of this man.

And you know, God may have a man whom He wants to use in some way, and He wants to prepare a woman to be His wife. That may be one of your young girls. But you've got to be what God wants you to be.

You can't afford to be like all the other young sisters around you, in the world, or in other churches, or in YMCA. God wants to see if you've got a vision to be dedicated and different, because, you see, God, I've got only one life, and I wanted God for you. I wanted God for you, and I'll tell you, if you're just going to flow with the time, flow with the current, all the other sisters and youngsters are going this way, I'll also flow along.

That's easy. You'll be popular, but you won't fulfill your ministry. Which God has for you.

You've got to swim against the current. You've got to be different, if you're willing to be a bit unpopular. Different in certain things you stand for.

In humility, you stand different. And God takes note of that. And then He can prepare you for, give you as a wife to someone.

So, think of that when you're young. And those who are married also think whether God's already given you as a wife to someone, and whether you are hindering His ministry in some way. It's very easy for a woman to complain and make life so miserable for her husband at home, that hinders his ministry tremendously.

So there are certain things here we see, the humility of Mary. I'm just trying to tell you that in Jewish society, even someone's soul, the mother of Jesus, and Luke was written, the Gospel of Luke was written long after the day of Pentecost. And Luke was not even a Jew.

He was a Gentile. But Mary's name doesn't figure in the genealogy. It's amazing.

Into this society where woman had no place, where woman was ignored, came Jesus with a new covenant. And one of the wonderful things He did in the new covenant was to raise woman from under the feet of man to the side of man, co-occurring as a partner, as a fellow heir of the grace of life. And you know what's happened in 2,000 years? In 2,000 years, many, many creatures have pushed woman back, may not be under the feet perhaps, down to the knees at least, somewhere down there, but down from this exalted position that Jesus gave woman.

So I want you two sisters to see the exalted position that Jesus gave woman in this new covenant age. I want you to turn, first of all, in Matthew chapter 1. Again, let's look at the genealogy. Because that's the first thing you read in the Gospel of Matthew.

Matthew chapter 1, you read in this genealogy, as I told you earlier, in the genealogy in Luke, Mary's genealogy, they wouldn't even put Mary's name. They wouldn't say that finally Eli's daughter was Mary who married Joseph. No.

They just say Eli's son-in-law was Joseph. Good way to get out of using Mary's name altogether in the genealogy. Because in Jewish genealogy, they just didn't put a woman's name.

And that's why it's surprising that in Matthew chapter 1, you find the names of, you mention of four women. That's amazing. Because they didn't put Mary's name.

But, here they say Joseph, the husband of Mary, but then, before that, there are four women in the genealogy of Jesus through Joseph, who was his mother's husband. And it's very interesting to look at that. Because the New Testament begins with the Gospel of Matthew, and it begins with the genealogy, and right at the top of the genealogy you have these four names.

And you heard me say this before. I'm going to repeat it. It's very interesting to see the history of these four women.

The first woman was Timar, verse 3. And if you read the Old Testament, I think it's Genesis chapter 38, you read that Timar was Judah's daughter-in-law, and she committed adultery with her father-in-law. She committed adultery with her father-in-law after her husband died, and she got two sons through her father-in-law. And the names of those two sons were Pyrrhus and Zerah.

And through Pyrrhus came Jesus Christ. Because Mary's genealogy is also Timar and Judah. After the time of David, both Mary's genealogies and Joseph's genealogy are the same.

So Jesus physically descended through Mary, and Mary physically descended through a woman who had incest. Incest means sexual relations within the close family, father with daughter, or father-in-law with daughter-in-law. Jesus came through this type of genealogy, physically.

Secondly, the second woman mentioned here is Rahab, verse 5. And Rahab is mentioned in the book of Joshua. She was the most well-known prostitute in Jericho. Everybody knew it was Rahab's house.

I mean, if you went to Jericho and asked where is Rahab, it's over. Go to the red light area, the woman there, you'll find her house quite prominent. She's one of the ones who's made a lot of money.

Now, if one day you become a great man or a woman, famous man or woman, and somebody writes your biography, okay, would you like it to be mentioned on the very first page of your biography that one of your ancestors was one of the well-known prostitutes in such-and-such a town? You wouldn't like it to be mentioned anywhere in your biography. Imagine, why does Jesus, why does the Holy Spirit put it right at the first page of Jesus' biography? There are four biographies of Jesus written in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and the very first page, that one of his ancestors was one of the most well-known prostitutes in Jericho. That's the second woman.

You go to the third woman. The third woman here mentioned in verse five is Ruth. Now, Ruth, if you see the book of Ruth, she was a Moabite, and that means they descended from Moab.

She was not a Jew. Rahab was not a Jew. Ruth was not a Jew.

She descended from Moab, and Moab, you know who Moab was? He was the son born to Lot when Lot's daughters got their father drunk and committed adultery with their own father in order to have children, and they got a child called Moab. And Jesus says, that's the line I'll take. Would you take, would you choose such a line? Would you choose a line riddled with insects? Father-in-law with daughter-in-law, most well-known prostitute, father with daughter.

I mean, you think the holy son of God coming to her constitutes any other line but that? Now, remember this. You and I did not plan our family tree. I don't know whether you would have chosen your family tree.

You had the opportunity to plan it before you arrived here. But Jesus was the only one who came to earth who would choose his family tree because he was sitting watching from heaven, right from Adam's time. Now, which line shall I choose to come from? Okay, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and then all these different tribes.

That one's got incest, and that one's got this. You could have chosen a pure line in which there was no incest, no adultery, no prostitutes, nothing. Why does he deliberately choose Judah committing... Judah was the next generation after Jacob.

Remember Abraham, Isaac, Jacob? Judah. And Judah commits adultery. It's way back in Genesis, nearly 1,800 years before Christ has come.

He's planning his line, his family line from heaven, and he sees Judah committing adultery with his daughter-in-law, having a child. He says, okay, that's the line I'll choose. Goes down the line, and down the line, and down the line, and then there's this prostitute in Reha called Jericho, a complete mummy of a Jew, who gets married to a Jew.

Jesus says, yeah, that's the line I'll choose. He's just sitting in heaven, planning his own family line. And then there's Moab, where the discernment of all the rules.

He chooses that line. And the fourth one. This is not in the physical line of Mary, but in the line of Joseph.

That's Chito. In verse 6, it says, David was born to Solomon. That was not... She was not the mother of Nathan.

You find her, who had been the wife of Uriah, that is Bathsheba. There's another horrible story of a man who grabs somebody else's wife, commits adultery with her, kills her husband, marries him, marries her, and hides the whole thing. And Joseph, can you imagine allowing Mary to marry someone who's come from a line like that? And for that to come in the first page of the New Testament.

What I'm trying to say is, Jesus identified Himself with some of the most sinful women recorded in the Bible, because He wanted to be known as the friend of sinners. He came to save sinners. And the Bible says, the last part of Isaiah 53, He was numbered with the transgressors.

When He was born, His genealogy is full of all these wretched transgressors, so that today a child born out of incest... Now, you and I may not have had the misfortune of being born out of father committing

adultery with his own daughter or something like that, but there are children like that in the world today, who are born out of fathers committing adultery with their daughters-in-law, with their daughters. There are children like that in the world today. Unless they feel left out, I know your pain.

I chose a line like that too. Can you imagine the encouragement that will come? It doesn't come to you, because you're not born out of incest. But some poor boy or girl somewhere in the world who is so thoroughly discouraged, saying, what an inheritance I have.

I mean, I was born with my grandfather committing adultery with my mother. My mother, her father committing adultery with her. I'm born.

And Jesus says to that person, I understand. I came for you. Look at my family line.

I've got people like that. Why did I choose that from heaven 1,800 years before I came to earth? Because I wanted to identify myself with people like you. Jesus identified himself with the worst women.

Yeah, I praise God for that. Some of us are so holy, probably holier than Jesus in our own imagination, that we wouldn't identify with such women. I praise God for a Savior who's a friend of sinners.

I want to be a friend of sinners myself. Otherwise, I cannot represent the Savior adequately. And you sisters, I want to ask you, are you friends of sinful women? Or are you so holy that you can't mingle with them? Let's learn from Jesus.

It says here in Luke's Gospel, Chapter 7, Jesus was invited to the house of a Pharisee, who was one of the religious leaders of His time. And He entered into the Pharisees' house, verse 36, and spread lightning at the table. You know, in those days, they didn't have chairs and tables like we have today.

It's not a table, and you sit in a chair with your legs under the table. Because then you wonder, how in the world did this woman get under the wife of Jesus' legs? But they didn't sit like that. If you've seen pictures of these old Jewish things, they had tables, probably nine inches off the ground, or a foot, and they would recline like this, you know, with their hand on their face of their hand, and their legs would be stretched out, and everybody's legs would be stretched out.

That's the way they ate. That's just their custom. So it says He reclined at the table with His legs at the back.

And that's how a woman could come and wash. So here He was reclining at the table, and there was this woman in the city, and all it said about her is she was a sinner. Now, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, so what's special about being a sinner? Is there any woman who's not a sinner? But when it says this woman was a sinner, it means that she was from the red-light district, a prostitute, a woman who was living in immorality, earning her living from immorality.

And when she heard, she obviously heard Jesus somewhere in the crowd somewhere, and she repented of her sin, being forgiven, because later on Jesus says she has been forgiven much, means that she was a repentant prostitute. She wanted to give up her life of sin, but she never got any help from the Pharisees. She wouldn't dream of going near the synagogue, because they, the ushers of the synagogue would say, get out from here, it's not the place for you.

So she didn't know where to go. I mean, here's a prostitute who wants to turn from her sinful life, and there's no synagogue that would receive her. I wonder how many churches today would receive a prostitute who wants to give up her sin.

Because she's dressed up, painted up and dressed, and she comes near most churches, they would, when she goes and sits near the sisters, some of the sisters would move away a little bit. I heard a story of a woman who was divorced, and marriage broke up, and she wanted to be restored to her husband, and she was seeking for some counsel. And she went to a marriage counselor, a secular man, and he asked her, have you gone anywhere else for counsel? I mean, did you consider going to some church? And she said, oh, church? I wouldn't go anywhere near a church, they'd just turn me on from the door itself.

What a testimony. Churches have. Divorced woman, oh, gotta be careful.

Prostitute, gotta be careful, some of our young men may be divided if she comes in here. And she never found a place anywhere. But when she heard Jesus preach somewhere, she said, boy, this man's different.

He's a rabbi also, he seems to know the scriptures. But there's something compassionate about his face. There's something understanding about the way he speaks, I think.

I think he'll understand. Here's a woman longing to be free from the life of sin. There are a lot of women like that in our country.

You know, young girls have been kidnapped from somewhere. They didn't want to live a life of sin. They were kidnapped when they were ten years old and taken somewhere, Bombay or somewhere, from Bangladesh or somewhere, and made into prostitutes.

It's happening all over the world, not in ones or twos, but thousands. Some of those women who are in the red-light districts never wanted to go there. They never wanted to go there at all.

They were dragged there and forced into a life of prostitution. I don't know. This girl was probably... A lot of people are driven into prostitution because of poverty.

It's very easy to look down our noses on these sinful people, but Jesus understands. You were not driven into that life because you were not poor. You were fortunate that you were not kidnapped as a young girl, and you met parents who brought you up in a good way.

But they, some of these... Jesus understands everybody. That's the thing that thrills my heart. It really excites me, and I believe that the Christian Church has not presented Jesus correctly to the world.

And I don't think in our old days, even C.S.C., we have presented Jesus correctly to the world. It's one of the things we've got to repent of. I hope if a prostitute ever comes to C.S.C., that she'll find the real Jesus here, represented by this church, the one we see here, who can understand, who sympathizes.

And she felt, well, I know I'm not supposed to touch the feet of a man, much less a prophet, but I want to express my gratitude to this man who's changed my life. This preacher changed my life. He's not like the other preachers.

I've heard lots of preachers, he says, she says, but this one's different. He understands my situation. I want to show my gratitude to him.

And what does she do? She takes her entire life savings as a prostitute. She knows that it says in Deuteronomy 23 that you cannot take the earnings of a harlot and give it to God. There's a law like that.

She knew that because she was a Jewish lady. She had been taught that from childhood. But she says, what else can I give? I mean, just saying thank you to Jesus is not enough.

I have to show my gratitude by getting something expensive for him. And okay, there is an Old Testament law. If he kicks me out from there, I'll accept it.

But let me at least try. And she violates this Old Testament law that says you cannot bring the hire of a harlot into the house. She buys this perfume, brings the hire of a harlot into the feet of the Son of God, and he accepts it.

Wonderful Jesus. He doesn't care for all these rules. He goes by the spirit of the Old Testament law, not the letter.

We've got multitudes of followers of Jesus today who go by the letter and make life miserable for other people. Jesus went by the spirit of that. And it says here that when Simon the Pharisee, who knew Deuteronomy 23 very well, saw what was happening, he says in verse 39, boy, now I know that Jesus is not no prophet.

The Living Bible says this proves that Jesus is no prophet. I mean, I made a mistake inviting this guy to our house because he's not a prophet. At last I discovered it.

Thank God for revelation that he's not a prophet. Because if he were a prophet, he would know what type of woman this woman is. He would know Deuteronomy 23.

He would never allow her to touch his feet. Prophets don't allow women to touch their feet. No.

Especially sinful women. I love Jesus. He always takes up for the underdog.

Who's the underdog here? This poor woman. He takes up for her against all those people who are looking down at her. Just like the woman caught in adultery.

Everybody ganging up against the woman and Jesus takes the side of the woman. I want to tell you this, my brothers and sisters. Whenever you find yourself to be the underdog in school or college or office, everybody ganging up against you.

Think of these stories. Jesus is standing with you right there. He's the same yesterday, today and forever.

You find yourself being ganged up against by your husband and sister-in-law and mother-in-law and Jesus is on your side. It doesn't matter. So many women say, I'm the underdog.

I always have the worst part of it because my husband can do what he likes. He gangs up with his parents and does what he likes to do. But Jesus is on your side.

You show me one place in scripture where Jesus doesn't team up with the underdog. Always. His stories were like that.

The laborers who came at the eleventh hour, they get the first prize. The prodigal son who went and wasted his life, he gets the ring on his finger and sits with him. Jesus' stories were like that.

The woman caught in adultery. The thief on the cross, who even his mother probably didn't want to be identified. You'll be with me.

Brother, you'll be with me in paradise. Imagine that, identifying with a murderer, with a criminal in society. That's Jesus.

That's the Jesus we have to present to the world. That's the Jesus I want you sisters to get excited about. Can you say a hallelujah? A little louder.

We need to repent a lot that in the past years, we, including me, have not presented this savior in all his glory, in all his wonder to the world around us. You sisters have a tremendous opportunity by your lying, by your humility, by your meekness, by your being treated as an underdog to say, I have a savior with me. It doesn't matter if my husband doesn't understand me.

It doesn't matter if other people don't understand me. Some of you young girls, maybe your parents don't understand you. Sometimes it could be due to your own stupidity.

I don't want to repent you all the time. If it's your stupidity, you better repent of that. But sometimes it could be because your parents are ungodly.

You're an underdog. I want to tell you that Jesus understands. Jesus understood this sinful woman completely.

And he reviewed Simon. He said, trouble with you, Simon. I came to your house.

Did you give me any water for my feet? It's traditional in every house, a person comes tired, takes off his chappals and somebody, a slave will wash his feet. You didn't have time for that. You're too big a man.

This woman, she brought perfume, she wept. She has kissed my feet and washed it with her tears, verse 44. And she has anointed my head with this feet with this expensive perfume, which is her life savings.

I accept it, despite all that it says in Deuteronomy 23. I know what it says there. I accept it because I see her heart.

God sees the heart. God won't push away a person whose heart is good just because of some law. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

The laws were made for man. Man was not made for the laws. He doesn't understand this.

For years we've seen legalism that's brought death into so many churches, and I say, I don't want to be a part of that. And that's how Jesus was, always raising the level of women, identifying with sinful people. Think of the story in John chapter 4. In John chapter 4 we read Jesus and his team traveling together for ministry, and I've traveled with brothers for ministry in different places, and I know how it is.

We travel together, we have a lot of meetings, and we are tired, and we all go together to some place to eat. That's normal. So Jesus was traveling with his twelve people, and they came to Samaria, and we read there that when they came there, he sent away his disciples.

He didn't go with them to eat lunch. He was amazing, because normally he'd go with them to have lunch. But Jesus lived a life which is so sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

We don't understand that. We read passages like this, and we just skip over it, and don't realize there's something wonderful here on the leading of the Holy Spirit. Jesus and his disciples pass through Samaria, and they're hungry, and they're about to go for lunch, and the Holy Spirit tells Jesus, don't go with them.

Stay right here. He lived as a man. He doesn't know why, but he listens to the Holy Spirit.

Okay, fellas, you go and have lunch. Bring some for me. Bring a packet for me.

You go and eat. They wonder, why is he doing that? He always comes with us. Maybe he's too tired.

He wants to sit down here. He's not tired. He's listening to the Holy Spirit.

So they go off into the city to have lunch, and he's sitting there. And while he's sitting there, comes this woman. This is noontime.

Remember? Lunchtime. No woman goes to a well at lunchtime. She goes to the villages in India.

You see that? They go early morning to the wells to draw the water. Why didn't she go early morning? Because she knew that all the other women in Samaria would make fun of her and say, hey, who is this new guy, your sixth man you're living with? Where are your other five husbands? Do you know where they are? Great, eh? Enjoying yourself at the sixth one? They make fun of her and fun of her. She never decided never to go in the morning.

She'd go when she knew nobody would be at the well. This woman, reproach of society, rejected by everybody in Samaria because she's divorced not once, but five times. I mean, divorce once is a pretty strange thing in India.

Imagine a woman in this kind of society being divorced five times. This is not Western culture. In Western culture, that's pretty common nowadays.

But in Eastern culture, for somebody to be divorced five times is absolutely unheard of. This is this woman. And she suddenly sees Jesus.

And she knew that Jesus was a Jew, but Jews don't talk to the Samaritans at all. They don't even go anywhere near, it's like this caste system, where the Brahmins will not have anything to do with lower caste Jews and straight Samaritans like that, and Jesus says, give me a drink. And she's surprised.

Verse 9, John 4, 9, how is it that you being a Jew ask a drink when I'm a Samaritan woman? Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Now Jesus knew why the Holy Spirit prompted him to stay. And see how intently he deals with this woman.

He's a masterpiece of counseling. He talks to her, and first of all, he talks about earthly things. I was talking to, I was in Europe recently, I was speaking to a young man who's not converted, but had heard of some of my tapes, and I was speaking to him, and he knew that I was after his soul.

So he said, I've heard some of your tapes, Brother Zach, and I hear that you use clever tricks to capture young people, you talk about cricket and sport and games like that, and all like that. I said, yeah, that's right, because I want them to know I'm not an angel, because so that they know that I'm a human being. Because they've probably seen so many preachers who just preach scripture.

It's not a trick. It's just to show that I'm human like you. Anyway, I had a good chat with him.

I hope he'll get saved. So that's how Jesus started. He gave me a drink.

Much more than the, I don't know whether I had any water. I think she went out before she even drew the water here, and Jesus finally never got the drink. It was only a means of getting into conversation with her, and then the water of eternal life.

And then he knew, Jesus knew, the Holy Spirit said, go on, tell her to call her husband. So he says to her, go and call your husband. The woman says, I don't have a husband.

And Jesus said, you're the prophet who knows what's happening. Supernatural revelation, yes, it's true, because you've had five husbands, verse 18, and the one whom you now have is not your husband. And what do you do when you're embarrassed, sisters? Change the subject.

Correct. So she changed the subject. She said, you know, this matter of worship, I'm a bit concerned about this matter of worship you're talking about in verse 20.

I'm positive that you Jews say, can you tell me something about worship? Changed the subject completely. And Jesus doesn't say, hey, hang on. This is where you see Jesus' tenderness.

He wants her to know that he's a prophet so that she will trust him. Why did he bring up this whole subject of husband? Just so that she would trust him as a prophet who knew. That's the first step.

Otherwise she'd think he's a stranger. So that revelation made her know this is a prophet. And then, he also wanted her to know that he was not this regular Bible prophet who's just out to hit people on the head for their sins.

And when she changed the subject, said, OK, I don't know about worship. Closed out the other chapter about your husband. Finished with it.

That is the tenderness of Jesus, where he never makes a person feel small by some embarrassing thing in their past life. All of us, even you young people, I know you have something embarrassing in your past life. Now, I'm not a prophet, so I don't know it.

Don't get scared. God hasn't revealed me anything about any of your past lives, and I don't want him to. But what I'm saying is, being a human being, we all have episodes and events in our past life which are embarrassing, which we don't want anybody to know.

And I just want to tell you the good news. Jesus will not reveal it to anybody. He doesn't reveal it to me.

He doesn't reveal it to anybody. He knows, but he won't tell Peter about it. So, isn't it wonderful that he doesn't push you on that point, which is embarrassing, but he just means that.

That's what won her heart. And I want to tell you sisters, that's what Jesus is like. He wins her heart and then he uses her to go into Samaria and bring that whole city to Christ.

Because it says here, she went and began to be a witness there in the city. She was a woman who wouldn't want even to meet one woman at the well. But she's so changed by one encounter with Jesus, that she says, come and see a man.

And it says here in verse 30, they went out of the city. A woman. I love that.

Okay. We could go on the whole day with our times. So, it's wonderful.

The whole Bible is like this. The whole Bible is full of wonderful stories of Jesus and how he cares for her. You know, let's turn to John's Gospel, chapter 20.

Here we read, Mary Magdalene came only to the tomb. It's very interesting that Mary Magdalene, this woman who had demons cast out of her. We don't know much details about her life, but she was definitely a demon.

Had seven demons in her, we read in Luke chapter 8. She was delivered from it, a sinful woman. She was so grateful to Jesus, she comes to the tomb early in the morning. And she finds that she's the first person to discover.

There's nobody in the tomb. She runs, comes to Peter. She says, they've taken away the Lord.

We don't know where they've laid Him. And they run and come there and they looked inside. There's nothing there.

And they looked, and it's very interesting, they saw that the tomb was empty. Verse 10, the disciples went back to their homes to go to sleep. It was five o'clock in the morning.

Okay, come back later, eight o'clock, nine o'clock, I don't know what's happening. But Mary, it's a very interesting contrast, verse 10 and 11. The disciples went to their homes to sleep, but Mary still stood outside weeping.

She couldn't go back. She couldn't go to sleep. She said, where have they taken my Lord? Jesus comes and she thinks it's the gardener.

And she said, why are you weeping, woman? Verse 13, she said, because they have taken away my Lord. I don't know where to lay Him. If you can tell me where it is, I will go and pick Him up and carry the body of that man with me.

Boy, what love for a woman. Because she had been forgiven so much. She was a demon-possessed woman.

She was delivered. You sisters realize what your fate would have been if you had not met Jesus. What would be the condition of your home today? What would be the condition of your home if your husband was not a believer? What would be the condition of your home if you didn't meet Jesus? What would be the condition of your children today? Where would your children be today? Just look around and see.

Where are the children of a lot of other, your colleagues and your sisters and your brothers and all that, where are they today? Are you grateful like Mary Magdalene? You say, I'll never forget, Lord, what you've done for me. When others run away, I'll stay at the tomb. And God chose her, listen to this, to be the first witness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

That's also a plan. Long ages ago, thousands of years earlier, God, okay, who is to be the first person to go and announce that Jesus has risen from the dead? This is a fantastic privilege. It's a new covenant.

The first person to go and announce that Jesus has risen from the dead. And he got a woman. And it's not even Mary.

It's Mary Magdalene. You see something there? Jesus saying, because she loves him so much. Think of these wonderful examples that you see in the Gospels.

I want us to read this verse in Hebrews chapter 4, verse 15. So, I feel that so often in reading Hebrews 4, verse 15, we've got so taken up with the second part of that verse. I think for 30 years we've spoken of the second part of that verse.

He was tempted at all points, like we are here in love sin, that we have missed out on the first part of that verse. The first part of that verse, Hebrews 4, verse 15, is he can sympathize with our weakness. He understands.

He sympathizes. He shares with our struggles, our infirmities. In one translation, the King James Version says, he's touched by the feeling of our infirmities.

The feeling of our infirmities touches him. It touches his heart. I love to think of that.

Your sisters have a lot of infirmities and weaknesses. The Bible itself says, you're the weaker one. I want to tell you that Jesus understands your struggles, your infirmities, your weaknesses.

The pressures you face as a young girl at home, you can't do the thing that your brothers can do. You don't have that freedom because you're a girl. Your parents impose more restrictions on you, frankly.

Or maybe you're a young married person and you have problems with your in-laws, or your husband, or your older married person, you have problems with your children, you're home all the time at home, and you have a husband who's not understanding. I don't know what all you're facing, but I want to tell you that Jesus is touched by what you are facing. I hope you will feel really stirred to get close to this wonderful Savior and say, Lord, I want to be a witness for you on earth.

To witness for what? Not to do miracles and all that, but just to say that you are such a wonderful Savior. Just to introduce you, like a woman of Samaria, to others and say, you know, I found something wonderful. The world is full of other women like you, young girls, young women.

Some will come in suicide, people of all types of pressures. They don't reveal it. If you get close to them, they'll reveal it.

Don't go to them as a religious person, please. The world has enough religious people. Go to them as a friend of sinners and tell them about this wonderful friend of sinners who understands their sorrows, their pressures, their problems, and who can help them, who can deliver.

And change their mind. Give them bright hope for the future. This is the genes of the Bible.

And you are a witness like that. You can be a witness as a wife, a mother. Never mind if your husband doesn't understand you.

You try to understand him. Support him. And if you water others, the Bible says, God will water you.

And when you serve others, God will serve you. It's wonderful. May God help you young girls to be godly young girls and you older sisters to be godly, wise mothers.

Peace be upon you.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/7/SID7776.mp3>

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