

Ministering Women

Luke 8:1-3

Of all the changes that have occurred at Emmanuel Enid over the past twenty years, the most significant and beneficial is placement of women in leadership. Conservative Bible-believing churches are typically male dominated in terms of leadership. I believe the Bible says spiritual leadership should always be based on the Spirit's gifting and calling, and never on a person's gender or control. Our text proves this.

I. Jesus depended on the ministry of women in His Kingdom work.

"Soon afterwards, He began going around....proclaiming and preaching the Kingdom of God" (8:1).

Soon after what? After Jesus says to the woman in Simon's house "Your sins have been forgiven."

It seems that Luke is tying what Jesus did in reaching out to this woman to what follows (Luke 8:1-3)

(A). Jesus is accompanied by a large group of followers as He preaches.

In the early days of our Lord's ministry, it seems as though He either traveled alone (Luke 4:16-30).

At other times, some of His disciples were with Him. Now there is a very large group of followers.

(B). At least half of these followers assisting Jesus in ministry seem to be women.

Luke mentions three women by name and then he makes an interesting statement about women:

"(there were) many other (women) who were contributing out of their private means" (v. 3).

(C). The ministry of these women must be considered as effective as the men's ministry.

It should note at this point that while the women contributed the money which provided for the needs of Jesus, one man--Judas, to be specific--(John 12:6; 13:29) kept and distributed the funds.

There are always problems that arise when men exclude women in Kingdom work and service.

II. Jesus depended on a variety of women in His expansion of the Kingdom of God.

Too often in women's ministry we get in evangelical churches a spiritual "Stepford Wives" movement.

Churches often have women in service that all "look the same, talk the same, believe the same way."

Not Jesus. When He went about doing Kingdom work, there were a variety of women He anointed.

(A). There was a woman with a past.

Mary Magdalene from whom the seven demons had been cast out. Not just any demons, but

"the seven." Is your past one that is notorious, embarrassing, or shameful? It doesn't disqualify.

(B). There was a woman with a position.

Joanna the wife of Cuza, Herod's steward (this may explain one of Herod's primary sources of information about Jesus and His ministry, cf. 9:7). This is Herod Antipas or Herod "the tetrarch,"

son of Herod the Great, murderer of John the Baptist, and the one who ruled during Jesus' day.

She didn't stay in the palace with her "tutor" husband, but traveled the roads with her Teacher.

(C). There was a woman with personhood.

Here name is Suzanna. She is not mentioned again in the Scriptures. Nothing is known about her.

there is nothing said about her past, nor nothing memorable about her position; but she serves.

III. Jesus depended on the women serving when He could have done it Himself.

When Jesus heals, He tells us, "Return home and tell how much God has done for you.(Luke 8:39).

Luke wants us to know that these women were not mere "clingers-on," they actively contributed to the proclamation of the gospel of the kingdom. Could Jesus have turned stones to bread? Of course.

(A). God provides for the needs of people through people.

One of the privileges of giving is that you get in on the blessing. It's more "blessed to give..."

(B). God intends for those who benefit from the proclamation of the gospel to provide materially.

No apology ever needs to be made for giving to ministry; it's a pattern established by Christ.