

Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws

Adam Hamilton

Chapter 2 Discussion

Simon, Do you See This Woman? (pgs. 19-36)

Biblical Foundations Luke 7-17

Opening Prayer

Loving God, who created women and men in your image: Your Son Jesus welcomed all who sought him and showed your mercy without distinction. As we who are one in him study the scripture, may your Spirit help us learn more clearly to see all people as your children, that we may show them the kindness and compassion we have received from you. Amen.

Meeting Women in Luke's Gospel

Read Luke 8:1-3

The Parable of the Sower

8 After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him,² and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out;³ Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.

- What does this scripture tell us about women as some of Jesus's first followers?
 - Jesus first followers were often woman, women who had been healed from their different inner demons, or mental illness of the time.
- What can we infer from it about some women's ability to acquire and manage "resources" (verse 3) in Jesus's day?
 - Women usually had the resources to carry out the different tasks that were required (i.e. support financially, work behind the scenes, and do the work that the men of the time never did because of gender roles of the time.

- What does the place of these women among Jesus’s first followers mean for the place and role of women in today’s church?
 - **From the tone of the reading, Jesus viewed them almost as equals and dignified people among the disciples. They were held in the same regard as the disciples, almost a more devoted disciple.**
- Does either your congregation or denomination, or both, encourage and accept women in leadership roles? How?
- How are these women role models for all Jesus’s followers today, regardless of gender?

Visiting Martha and Mary

Read Luke 10:38-42

At the Home of Martha and Mary

³⁸ As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. ³⁹ She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!”

⁴¹ “Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴² but few things are needed—or indeed only one. ^[a] Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

- Why is Martha upset with Mary?
 - **Martha was upset with Mary, because she was not helping her prepare the meal for Jesus and the disciples. While Martha was working away in the kitchen when the large responsibility of these preparations, Mary was sitting at Jesus feet, with the disciples listening, learning, and enjoying his teaching.**
 - When was a time you felt like Martha?
 - How did you handle those feelings?
- *The Bible often emphasizes hospitality’s importance (examples are in Genesis 18:1-6, Hebrews 13:2).*

- **Genesis 18:1-6-** The LORD appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground. He said, "If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, do not pass your servant by. Let a little water be brought, and then you may all wash your feet and rest under this tree. Let me get you something to eat, so you can be refreshed and then go on your way—now that you have come to your servant." "Very well," they answered, "do as you say." So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. "Quick," he said, "get three seahs of the finest flour and knead it and bake some bread."
- **Hebrews 13:2-** Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.
- What does Jesus emphasize in this situation, and why?
 - Because it's important to be both Martha and Mary to be able to completely serve in the eyes of Jesus.
 - To be complete and serve completely, one must study the Bible, serve those in need, and volunteer and give time to causes that serve the lowly.
- How do you imagine Martha reacted to Jesus's response?
 - ~~I imagine that Jesus was taken back a bit by this, but with his calm demeanor and sole understanding, he took her aside and gave her an instance to where he explained what was needed, and what was right, and helped her understand the true meaning and situation.~~
 - Martha was hurt.
 - She thought Jesus should have sent Mary to help.
 - If it was done together, they both could have attended the lesson.
 - Jesus said that she was distracted by many things.
 -
- "It was assumed in this time," Hamilton writes, "that women's place was in the kitchen," while men "sat with the wise teachers" (Luke, pg. 29).

- How does this context influence your view of Mary?
 - **Mary seemed to be an individual who didn't follow social norms or expectations. This seems to be especially true when Jesus arrived, because she was truly interested in what he was teaching and wanted to understand, become a follower/disciple.**
- How does it affect your understanding of how Jesus views Mary?
 - **This question may have a more personal answer than a general or assumed correct answer.**
- Suggesting Mary represents contemplative study and prayer (*ora*, Latin for “Labor”), Hamilton states, “We need to be both Mary and Martha” (Luke pg. 31).
 - **Do you tend to identify more with Martha or with Mary?**
 - **Why?**
 - **How will you bring the spirit of the sister with whom you tend not to *identify* more into your faith?**
- **Would you characterize your congregation as more like a Martha or a Mary?**
 - **Why?**
 - **How does it – or how could it better—balance both sisters’ spirits?**

Seeing and Caring for Sinners

Read Luke 7:36-48

When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee’s house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.”

Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to tell you.”

“Tell me, teacher,” he said.

“Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?”

Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.”

“You have judged correctly,” Jesus said.

Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.”

Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

- Though the word Pharisee often carries negative connotations today. Pharisees were, as Hamilton states, deeply devout and well respected for their piety. Their definition of holiness or living a life pleasing to God was found in obeying the law.
 - How does this background influence your understanding of this story?
- Jesus often interpreted the law differently from the Pharisees, and as Hamilton writes, he “nearly always put people before rules” (Luke pg. 32).
 - Have you ever known churches to put rules before people?
 - What happened?
 - How can church know whether their rules are aids or obstacles to faithfully serving God and people?
- Hamilton says Simon’s failure to show “common hospitality” to Jesus was a “subtle way... to put Jesus in his place” (Luke pg. 32.)
 - How else does Simon reveal his attitude toward Jesus?
 - Through the way that he treats the woman when she enters his house. He held himself higher than Jesus and made the comment that if he truly is a prophet then he should know what type of person this woman is. She is a sinner. He berates her, and treats her very lowly, he makes a mockery of her, in order to get Jesus to say what type of person she is. Jesus views her as a human, who makes mistakes and tells her that her she is FORGIVEN.
 - Jesus lifts her up!!
 - What subtle way or not-to-subtle ways do Christians, including you, use to try and put or keep Jesus “in his place” today?
- Although Hamilton suggests some reasons this woman could have been known to be a sinner. Luke doesn’t specify her sins.
 - Why not?

- When is knowing someone's sins important?
- When is it not?
- **Simon doesn't see the woman at the banquet as a human being—only as “a sinner” (verse 39).**
 - When are you most tempted to look down on others?
 - What labels make it easiest for you to feel superior to and dismiss other people?
 - How do we increase our ability to see others first as our fellow humans and as children of God?
- **Hamilton writes about the courage and determination the woman must have had to interrupt Simon's dinner party to see Jesus.**
 - What courageous and determined women are role models of faith for you?
 - When has your faith in Jesus led you to act with courage and determination?
 - What happened?
- What is the most extravagant thing you've seen someone do to show gratitude for God's mercy?
- What's the most extravagant thing you have done?

Closing Prayer

For the world where all people know safety, are treated with respect, are encouraged to use and develop their gifts, and are seen with the dignity you bestow upon all people, we pray, O God, asking your Spirit's strength to help us make that world a great reality; in Jesus Name. Amen.

Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws

Adam Hamilton

Chapter 2 Discussion

Simon, Do you See This Woman? (pgs. 19-36)

Biblical Foundations Luke 7-17

Opening Prayer

Loving God, who created women and men in your image: Your Son Jesus welcomed all who sought him and showed your mercy without distinction. As we who are one in him study the scripture, may your Spirit help us learn more clearly to see all people as your children, that we may show them the kindness and compassion we have received from you. Amen.

Read Luke 4:38-39

Jesus Heals Many

³⁸Jesus left the synagogue and went to the home of Simon. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Jesus to help her. ³⁹So he bent over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. She got up at once and began to wait on them.

Read Luke 7:11-16

Jesus Raises a Widow's Son

¹¹Soon afterward, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went along with him. ¹²As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out—the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her. ¹³When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry."

¹⁴Then he went up and touched the bier they were carrying him on, and the bearers stood still. He said, “Young man, I say to you, get up!”¹⁵The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother.

¹⁶They were all filled with awe and praised God. “A great prophet has appeared among us,” they said. “God has come to help his people.”

Read Luke 8:1-3

The Parable of the Sower

8 After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him,² and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out;³ Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod’s household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.

Read Luke 8:40-56

Jesus Raises a Dead Girl and Heals a Sick Woman

⁴⁰Now when Jesus returned, a crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him.⁴¹Then a man named Jairus, a synagogue leader, came and fell at Jesus’ feet, pleading with him to come to his house⁴² because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying.

As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him.⁴³ And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years,^[a] but no one could heal her.⁴⁴ She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.

⁴⁵“Who touched me?” Jesus asked.

When they all denied it, Peter said, “Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you.”

⁴⁶ But Jesus said, “Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me.”

⁴⁷ Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed.⁴⁸ Then he said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.”

⁴⁹ While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. “Your daughter is dead,” he said. “Don’t bother the teacher anymore.”

⁵⁰ Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, “Don’t be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed.”

⁵¹ When he arrived at the house of Jairus, he did not let anyone go in with him except Peter, John and James, and the child’s father and mother.⁵² Meanwhile, all the people were wailing and mourning for her. “Stop wailing,” Jesus said. “She is not dead but asleep.”

⁵³ They laughed at him, knowing that she was dead.⁵⁴ But he took her by the hand and said, “My child, get up!”⁵⁵ Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat.⁵⁶ Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened.

Read Luke 10:38-42

At the Home of Martha and Mary

³⁸ As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him.³⁹ She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said.⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!”

⁴¹ “Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things,⁴² but few things are needed—or indeed only one.^[a] Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

Meeting Women in Luke 8:1-3

Women in Luke

As we know in the passages that we just read, “*there were twelve disciples, along with some women, who had been healed of evil spirits and sicknesses.*”

Only Luke tells us that there were women traveling with Jesus and the disciples who would help with their ministry, healing the sick, tending poor and lame, and even providing financially for Jesus and the disciples.

Keep in mind that in this time only men could be given the title *disciple* because women’s testimony was not considered credible. An Alexandrian Jewish philosopher wrote that “The minds of women are, in some degree, weak than those of men, and are now so well able to comprehend a thing which is appreciable only by intellect.

Now I do have to say on a side note that I am very glad that we now live in a society where this is no longer practiced or viewed, but where women are able to take part in the intellect, study, and contribute to the educational and intellectual systems that we have in place.

The women in this passage followed Jesus as he traveled, listened to his teaching, undoubtedly assisted in his ministry as Jesus healed the sick, fed the multitudes, and proclaimed the good news of the Kingdom.

Luke also tells us that they provided their resources also. We start see that although Jesus recognizes the difference between men and women, he sees that women are able to serve as legitimate disciples with an important ministry to fulfill as well.

Look at the four women we started out our study with, Mary, Martha, Joanna, Anna, Elizabeth, Susanna, and all women, but all women who have and served a valuable purpose in God and Jesus ministry. Some of them served as they were old, some serve as they were young, and some served by traveling, helping, and serving with Jesus and the disciples. Jesus’ look at how women can be utilized in spreading the Gospel is just as radical as the philosophers that we talked about in our book earlier in the chapter. We are all saved the same way, regardless of being male or female, why can’t we all serve the same with the same regard.

Visiting Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42

Jesus and his disciples were traveling, they entered a village where a woman named Martha welcomed Jesus and his group in. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his message. Martha was in the kitchen preparing the meal and making sure that everything was in order for Jesus and his disciples. Martha approached Jesus and said, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to prepare the table all by myself? Tell her to help me."

The Lord answered, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things. One thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the better part. It won't be taken away from her."

Now we see Martha here, she is being responsible, diligent, and maintaining her role of the time. Mary, is sitting upon the disciples/men taking in what Jesus has to say, listening and learning "as only disciples/men are to do." Martha was assumed by what she knew that her place was in the kitchen. However, Jesus being a person of great understanding, compassion, and reason said that she is distracted by many things, however, Mary has chosen the better of the two options, which he approved of, and he told Martha that it would not be taken away from Mary, allowing her to continue to learn, stay, and grow with the disciples.

Jesus true message to Martha in this instance was that she needed not be concerned with the role she was assumed to be in and to stop and take in what is truly important. The word of Jesus, message of God. Taking in the path of salvation. Which is necessary to come to God.

Take part in the fellowship with Christ while you serve others. Converse, serve, commune, and pray that your service will be acceptable in the eyes of your God.

It is important for us to remember that "We are to selflessly serve others, even the stranger— this is what it means to love your neighbor. But we must also make time to listen, to learn, and to make sure we share fellowship with Jesus. We also need remember that there is a time to listen and simply be with Jesus, to imbibe (to take in or assimilate) his word and spirit.

We find that the Parable of the Good Samaritan, and the Parable to Martha and Mary go hand-in-hand to lead us to a balanced faith of Fellowship with Christ and serving others.

Saints and Sinners at a Meal with Jesus

The Story of Martha and Mary occurs over a meal. We also see that many of the other great stories that we find Luke also occur over meals. Meals are a major setting in Jesus' ministry and how he tends to his flock. It is how he takes part in fellowship with his disciples. We find that this happens many times in all the Gospels. We saw that in John one of the most important moments of dining with the disciples was when Jesus demonstrated that to truly be righteous and great one must take on the ministry and work of the lowest servant (John 13:12-17).

Through these acts of breaking bread with his disciples, sinners, saints, Pharisees, tax collectors, and others that were either outsiders, outcasts, or outlaws, Jesus was criticized. He was accused of being a glutton, a drunkard, a friend of the tax collectors and sinners.

But what was truly overlooked in this message that Jesus was setting for his disciples, followers, you, and I was that we only break bread with those whom we consider to be companions. The word companion comes from the Latin *com panis*, *com* meaning with and *panis* meaning bread. This is interesting to see that Jesus was their companion especially in their times of need. So truly he was just being a companion, someone that one would break bread with, a companion for sinners such as you and I. This truly is a glorious picture. One that is not visible by everyone. Only those that truly trust, love, and follow Jesus. Others view it as some heinous act, or crime.

Many times, we see that Jesus was invited to eat in the houses of those who viewed themselves as pious or great. Jesus was invited to eat with Simon a religious leader, a Pharisee. It's important to remember that in the time there was a sect of about six thousand Pharisees' who studied and taught the law of Moses. These were often rabbis of local synagogues, or itinerant preachers. Usually highly respected for their piety (the gift of reverence for what comes from God, or the quality of being religious or reverent), they were the ones who taught, demonstrated, and encouraged normal people to live holy lives.

We see as Jesus' ministry was forthcoming that some Pharisees came to and followed Jesus, or were at least very curious about him and what he taught. For Jesus was extremely knowledgeable and was teaching a very young age. He had many traits that were similar to them, however, it's important to remember that when Jesus taught, healed, and did his work, he put people before rules, as where the Pharisees put the rules before people and many times separated themselves from those who were considered sinners, outlaws, and even then ill. Truly as we see in our text Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws.

Pharisees separated themselves from these people, Jesus befriended them. Just as we should also try to befriend them to some extent.

We see the story of where Jesus was invited into Simon's home, but not shown the appropriate traits of hospitality at the time. No water for feet washing, not oils or perfumes to freshen up, and no kiss on the cheek. An unknown woman at the time known for her scandalous past came into Simon's home uninvited, went straight to Jesus, washed his feet with her tears as she wept, wiped them with her hair, and then put alabaster oil on his feet and then left. Simon trying a humble stab at Jesus for his own personal gain, said to Jesus "If this man is a prophet, he would know what kind of woman is touching him. He would say that she is a sinner." (Luke 7:39). This is interesting because not long ago prior to this we hear that all humans as sinners, it is in our nature from birth, a natural trait that we have, until baptized. Where we get a fresh start.

Jesus responds with a parable:

[40](#) Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you. "Tell me, teacher," he said.

[41](#) "Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.

[42](#) Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

[43](#) Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven." "You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

[44](#) Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.

45 You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet.

Simon saw a sinner, where Jesus saw someone who needed grace, not judgement. Someone who needed to be given the chance to redeem themselves.

Jesus is the Lord of second chances. He sees us, he sees our pain, our brokenness, your hurts, your heartaches, and even your hang-ups not matter how simple or extreme they are. Jesus says to us, “Your sins are forgiven, your faith has saved you, go in peace.

It’s important that we see in this lesson that Jesus holds women in high regard, not as those who are able to help with his ministry in the background, but as individuals who can carry out tasks, help the sick, the poor, the hungry, and care for him and the disciples as they travelled and taught. Jesus unlike many men of the early times treated the women that we see in Luke and in the Gospels as human beings with dignity and sacred worth. Something that our society needs to see, make more transparent and more relevant today. We have seen major changes in the past through our present time, but more work needs to be done in that regard.

Other Things to draw your Attention to in the Gospel of Luke....

THE BEATITUDES (LUKE 6:20-23)

As we take a quick look back in the Gospel of Luke, right after Jesus goes to pray and call his twelve disciples, we find the beatitudes. The Beatitudes, the version that Luke gives us and the version that Matthew gives are different. Matthew’s beatitudes have a spiritual connotation, which seems to be lacking in Luke’s version.

Many of us hear or use the phrase “be blessed” but do we really know what it means? Jesus uses the term “blessed” in his most famous sermon, the sermon on the mount, in a section often called the “Beatitudes.” In the Beatitudes, Jesus shocks us with a much different version of a blessing that many expect. He shows us how being blessed is much different than everything going well for us.

The beatitudes are blessings Jesus gives us.

1. Blessed are the poor (afflicted, miserable) in spirit, for yours is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are the meek (humble, gentle), for they shall possess the land.
3. Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
4. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall have their fill.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
6. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.
8. Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

The Woes (LUKE 24-26)

24 "But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort.
25 Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep. 26 Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets.

This section is not in Matthew's version of the Beatitudes. Some Bible scholars believe that these woes were particularly addressed to the Pharisees and doctors of the law. However, they were not the only ones who were rich in Israel in Jesus' Days.

Being rich is not a sinful condition, but it brings dangers and temptations with it that the poor do not have. Paul issued several warnings in his letter to Timothy saying, "People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs." And: "Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm money, but the love of money.

Closing Prayer

For the world where all people know safety, are treated with respect, are encouraged to use and develop their gifts, and are seen with the dignity you bestow upon all people, we pray, O God, asking your Spirit's strength to help us make that world a great reality; in Jesus Name. Amen.