

# Women of Faith

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[ 0 : 00 ] Heavenly Father, we don't want to be a people who preach and teach more than we have experienced from your grace.

We want to be people who are full of love, affection for you and gratefulness toward you because we understand how lavish your forgiveness for this has been.

So won't you please, by your spirit, minister to us this morning. Convict us of our sins. But even more, comfort us with your grace.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Luke chapter 7, verse 36 to chapter 8, verse 3. I will read it out loud. You can follow along with me in your Bibles.

One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table.

[ 1 : 25 ] And behold, a woman of the city was a sinner. When she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment.

And standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wipe them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment.

Now, when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him.

For she is a sinner. And Jesus answering said to him, Simon, I have something to say to you. And he answered, Say it, teacher.

A certain money lender had two debtors. One owed 500 denarii and the other 50. When they could not pay, he canceled the debt of both.

[ 2 : 29 ] Now, which of them will love him more? Simon answered, The one, I suppose, for whom he canceled a larger debt. And he said to him, You have judged rightly.

Then, turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, Do you see this woman? I entered your house. You gave me no water for my feet.

But she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss. But from the time I came in, she has not ceased to kiss my feet.

You did not anoint my head with oil. But she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven.

For she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little. And he said to her, Your sins are forgiven.

[ 3 : 42 ] And those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, Who is this who even forgives sins? And he said to the woman, Your faith has saved you.

Go in peace. Soon afterward, he went on through villages, cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him.

And also some woman who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities. Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out. And Joanna, the wife of Chusa, Herod's household manager.

And Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means. This is the word of the Lord. We believe as Christians that we are saved by grace through faith.

We believe that faith is the means, the instrument through which we will be saved. But it's still kind of abstract, isn't it, to think about that. We're saved by grace through faith.

[ 4 : 46 ] What is faith? What does saving faith look like? And in this passage, Luke gives us two concrete pictures of various women of faith in order to teach us what saving faith in Jesus looks like.

And here he first talks about how he produces love for God, that we have to love God, chapter 7, 36 to 50.

And then we are to serve God in chapter 8, verses 1 to 3. And the main point he wants to get across to us is that God's lavish forgiveness of our sins produces lavish love for and service to God. God. It's a wonderful passage. Verse 36 tells us this. It says, One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table.

This is interesting because remember that Jesus drew the ire of the Pharisees in Luke 5 because he was eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners. And these Pharisees have questioned Jesus and accused him of blasphemy, and they have been keeping a close watch on him so that they can trip him up and bring a false charge against him.

[ 6 : 02 ] And yet, when one of their known number invites him, extends an invitation to him, opens up his home, Jesus takes the opportunity.

In spite of all of that. This is comforting because he shows me that he's, yes, he's a friend of sinners and he is a friend of all kinds of sinners, including the legalists and the prideful people, as long as there is an openness and desire to humble himself before Jesus.

We'll see that this Pharisee is not quite ready all the way, but this is still an encouraging sign. As they are dining together, another sinner enters the scene, but this time a woman whose sinfulness is widely known.

Verse 37 conveys the surprise of seeing this woman, and behold, a woman of the city who was a sinner. When she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, she came.

So you might wonder who opened the door for this woman, right? This is a dinner party. Where are the bouncers, right? This intruder has come in. We can understand the situation better by considering the cultural context.

[ 7 : 12 ] Notice that twice, in verses 36 to 37, we're told that people were reclining at table instead of sitting at a table like usual. The word suggests that this wasn't an ordinary family meal where people sit around the table on chairs.

Rather, this is a banquet. It's a special meal, and Jesus is likely the guest of honor at this meal. And in this kind of meal, people actually lay down on mats or cushions on their left side like this with their legs out away from the table, sporting themselves with their elbow, and they would eat with their right hand and drink with their right hand.

So they're all reclining, kind of lying down. It's a very intimate setting. And in this kind of, we know that this is the case because Jesus is also addressed later as rabbi, a teacher.

It was considered an honor to have a teacher who's out of town over at your house for this kind of a banquet. So it seems that's what is going on. And it was customary at a special meal like this to leave the door open so that uninvited guests could enter and be flies on the wall, observing and listening silently and respectfully to the discourse between the host and his guest.

This was also an opportunity for the poor to enter so that they can beg for leftovers. This explains why this disreputable woman was able to enter the banquet unhindered.

[ 8 : 36 ] And this woman, look at how she is described. She's described specifically as a woman of the city who was a sinner. Being of the city and being a sinner together suggests that this woman was known throughout the city as a sinful person.

Many people speculate that this woman was a prostitute. It's certainly possible that she was. It's not certain from the text. This sinful woman is also frequently identified in popular culture as Mary Magdalene.

But this is due to a mistake that people made in the Middle Ages to conflate Mary Magdalene with Mary of Bethany. They're two different people. Mary of Magdala and Mary of Bethany who is the brother of Lazarus and Martha.

This is all the more confusing because the episode where Martha anoints Jesus' feet takes place in the house of Simon the leper. This guy's name is Simon too, but this is Simon the Pharisee.

It's a completely different place at a different time of Jesus' ministry and Jesus' teaching and response is different. So all of this suggests that these are totally different instances.

[ 9 : 43 ] And it makes sense because actually Mary and Simon were very, very common names.

It's kind of like in our church we have, I don't know how many, we have three Daniels, three Johns, two Hanas.

I think it's similar. It's statisticians who look at the names in tombstones in the first century Israel. They estimate that Mary among the women was made up probably 25% of the women. It's a hugely, wildly popular name. And you can see that in scripture actually. In the New Testament alone, we find no less than six women named Mary, which is confusing. And then in the New Testament alone, you find no less than nine men named Simon. So you can see why this could be confusing, but just don't conflate the two. They're two different occasions. And so here is an unnamed woman. We don't know her name, yet she is known throughout the city as a sinful person. [10:49] It's public knowledge. And Luke repeatedly draws attention to that contrast between the sinful woman and the respected Pharisee. Notice just how many times the word Pharisee is repeated.

Even when it's a little awkward, it would make more sense to just use a pronoun. It repeats the word. Verse 36 to 39. One of the Pharisee asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined the table. And behold, the woman of the city who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining a table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, if this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner.

Four times. Pharisee, Pharisee, Pharisee. And two times, sinner, sinner. We know the name of this Pharisee, but Luke in this section doesn't address him by name. Pharisee and sinner, that's supposed to form a contrast because the word Pharisee in Hebrew means to separate. [12:03] These are people who separated themselves in order to purify themselves and to set themselves apart from sinners like this woman. So these two people do not belong in the same room.

The Pharisee is moral. The sinner is immoral. The Pharisee is respected. The sinner is despised. The Pharisee is the host. And the sinner is the intruder. And yet Jesus will forgive and receive the sinner as he does over and over again throughout the Gospel of Luke. Because as Jesus said in Luke 5, those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. And this woman seems to know about Jesus already. She has been exposed to his teaching before as we see later in Jesus' response to her.

So even though she is lowly and despised, even though she was well aware of her own sordid reputation in this city, even though she knew that she would attract the scorn and stares of people as she enters into this banquet, she cannot pass up this opportunity to go and see and honor Jesus.

[13:31] Look at verses 37 to 38. When she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster flask of ointment and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment.

An alabaster is a lightly colored, translucent, soft mineral rock that was believed to help preserve perfumes and ointments. And the word ointment used here is not the typical word that refers to the less expensive olive oil, but this is a reference to an expensive perfume.

She brings something that's valuable to her to use, to anoint Jesus. And it says that this woman stands behind Jesus at his feet. And as she stands behind Jesus' feet, she's so overcome by this opportunity to show her devotion to her affection for Jesus that she begins to weep. And it's not a quiet sniffing. The word weep is the same word used to describe a widow who was mourning, weeping during the funeral process of her only son earlier in this chapter. In Mark 5, 38 to 39, the word weeping is parallel to wailing loudly and making a commotion. You've probably seen similar reactions to this before in real life or on YouTube probably, right?

[15:05] a soldier that has been deployed for a long time returns home finally to surprise his daughter and she begins to weep with joy.

Or a little girl hears the news that her foster parents will be adopting her into their family and then she begins to weep with gratitude. It's the kind of sob that breaks forth from the chest. That's the kind of weeping that's pictured here. She's not stealing a single tear here and there. The word wet here is the same word that's used to refer to rain showers. There's enough tears to douse Jesus' feet.

That's how moved this woman is. Then she proceeds to wipe the tears on Jesus' feet with the hair of her head.

Remember that Jesus lived and ministered in what is today modern Israel and Palestine. So Jesus would have walked around with open-toed sandals in the desert region and his feet would have been sweaty and coated with dust.

[16:18] And it was customary for the host of a party like this to provide for the foot washing of his guests. But this was actually reserved for the slaves. In fact, some Jews insisted that even slaves if they're Jewish should not deign to do such a lowly task.

They argue that only Gentile slaves should do such a thing. And yet this woman wipes Jesus' feet with the hair of her head. For a woman to let down her hair in polite company was considered humiliating.

And yet, no matter that the hair is getting disheveled, no matter that she's getting dirt and sweat on her hair, because it's an opportunity to honor Jesus whom she loves, she does it without hesitation. And not only does she wash Jesus' feet, afterwards, she kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. In this culture, you kissed relatives and friends on the cheek or the forehead.

Kissing someone's feet was considered a mark of great respect, usually reserved for rulers, because it involves humbling yourself, lowering yourself before that other person.

[17:41] This woman kisses Jesus' feet, then anoints his feet with this expensive ointment. once again, anointing is something you typically do on the head.

Yet, this woman does not see herself as worthy of such a task. She anoints, stoopes to anoint Jesus' feet instead. And Luke repeatedly emphasizes this by repeating, repeatedly mentioning Jesus' feet.

Look at verse 38 one more time, and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

She did all of these things to Jesus' feet. Everything that she does here communicates Jesus' supreme worthiness, and her own unworthiness before him.

And this dramatic emotional scene featuring the sinful woman is unfolding right before the eyes of her host, the Pharisee. And you wonder what he's thinking.

[18:57] Luke tells us in verse 39, Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, if this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him.

for she is a sinner. The Pharisee, because he lives in the city, knows of this woman, knows of her public reputation as a sinful woman not to consort with, and he, as a Pharisee, would never have let such a woman touch him.

And for that reason, he assumes that Jesus too, as a Jewish teacher, would never let a sinner like her touch him. But since he is letting her touch him, he assumes he has no idea who this woman is. That he can't be a prophet. The Pharisee is now doubting Jesus' credentials because he can't possibly be a true prophet of the Lord since he's unaware of this woman's sinfulness.

But little does he know that Jesus not only knows that this woman is a sinner, but he also knows exactly what this Pharisee is thinking at that moment. And so Jesus addresses him by name in verses 40 to 43.

[20:21] Simon, I have something to say to you. And he answered, say it, teacher. A certain money lender had two debtors, one owed 500 denarii and the other 50.

When they could not pay, he canceled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more? Simon answered, the one, I suppose, for whom he canceled a larger debt.

And he said to him, you have judged rightly. The parable is simple, right? A denarius is a common laborer's day's worth of wage. So one has two months of wage canceled, the other one has almost two years of debt canceled.

And when neither of them could pay, this money lender cancels the debt of both. That's a shocking twist to this story because that's not what money lenders typically do.

They might let you finance your loan so that you could get a better interest rate. They might let you pay off your loans with years of service instead, maybe, for example, like through military service or being an educator in the public sector.

[ 21 : 31 ] But they will not cancel your debt outright. They will hound you until they get every penny with interest.

That's what money lenders do. Yet here, this money lender, whose picture of God, he cancels the debt. And the result is that these debtors love this generous and merciful money lender.

And the one who was canceled the larger debt loves him more. Then Jesus explains this parable in verses 44 to 47. Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, do you see this woman?

I entered your house. You gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss.

But from the time I came and she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven.

[ 22 : 42 ] For she loved much, but he was forgiven little, loves little. By turning to the woman while addressing Simon, she just focuses Simon's attention on this woman.

And then he proceeds to command the sinner instead of the Pharisee, implying that this sinner is closer to God than this Pharisee because of her humility.

And because she was fervent in her devotion to Jesus in comparison to Simon's lukewarm reception of Jesus, since he has neglected to extend the courtesy of washing Jesus' feet, or giving him a kiss on the cheek, or anointing his head with oil.

Simon secretly passed judgment on this woman and despised this sinful woman, but Jesus now enjoins him to follow her example because her sins, which are many, are forgiven for she loved much.

Now, this does not mean that our love for God is the basis for our forgiveness. Forgiveness comes first as we can see in Jesus' comment afterward.

[ 23 : 52 ] But he who is forgiven little loves little. The other statement is also true. He was forgiven much loves much. In other words, the sinful woman's love for Jesus gives evidence of the forgiveness that she has already received.

It's similar to how we might say, hey, it's snowing outside because the ground has snow on it. The snow on the ground is not what causes the snow to come down, but it's how we know that snow is coming down when the flurries are too small and you can't see it.

It's the evidence. So likewise, here, the woman's sins are forgiven for she loved much. The love that she has shown is the evidence of the forgiveness she has already received.

And there's a rebuke here for Simon as well, isn't there? Since according to the parable, he is the debtor who is forgiven little and therefore loves little.

That's not a compliment. Hey, you don't have that many sins, so you only have to be forgiven a little bit. That's not what Jesus is saying. That's not the point of this parable. Jesus is referring to the fact that it's not that he actually has little sin to repent of.

[ 25 : 12 ] It's not that he's actually slaved. It's that he does not recognize how indebted he really is because of his pride. He sees other people as sinners but not himself.

And precisely because he does not apprehend the depth of his own sinfulness, he doesn't appreciate the depth of God's mercy. Then finally in verse 48 Jesus speaks directly to the woman herself.

She's not supposed to be part of this conversation. She's just the fly on the wall. But Jesus turns to her, speaks to her, your sins are forgiven. The verb forgive here in verse 48 as well as in verse 47 is in the perfect tense.

Her sins have been forgiven. Jesus referring to forgiveness that's already been dispensed and received. He's now authoritatively pronouncing the forgiveness as a confirmation to her.

To use the analogy that Jesus uses, he is giving her the receipt of payment for her debt even though she hasn't paid anything back. And this causes a stir in verse 49.

[ 26 : 31 ] Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, who is this who even forgives sin? And he said to the woman, your faith has saved you. Go in peace.

That's the key word, faith. It's not her love and devotion that saved her, but her faith in Jesus Christ and in his saving grace that saved her.

The verb translated as cancel in verses 42 to 43, referring to canceling debt, is the verbal form of the noun, the word that means grace. It's the free bestowal of something, something unearned, unmerited, yet given freely as a gift.

It points to the spiritual reality that salvation is a gift from God and not that we are to receive humbly and gratefully with empty hands. Salvation is not a wage to be earned with our hard work or our good works.

Verse 42 says specifically when they could not pay he canceled the debt of both. Some of you are not yet followers of Jesus Christ.

[ 27 : 49 ] Maybe you think that you're a pretty good person. You think that by living a relatively moral life that you can earn your ticket to heaven but God's word tells us that you owe a debt that you cannot repay.

Every single one of us has rebelled against God. We have disbelieved in his existence at one point. We have flouted his authority. We have presumed to be masters of our own fate and we have violated his laws and we have lived selfishly for our own glory instead of living for God as he created us to do.

I wish I could convince all of you you can't repay the debt of sin. We owe too much money.

We have run out of money. Many of us know what it feels like to have debt that we will be paying off for many many years because there's a lot of schools in this area.

debt. But not many of us know what it feels to be overwhelmed by insurmountable debt.

[ 29 : 04 ] Debt that we have no hope of repaying. Hopelessness. Despair. Shame. Failure.

That's all of us. And where will the payment come from? Jesus teaches us here that when we cannot pay, God graces us with his lavish forgiveness.

God himself assumes our debt, absorbs the loss himself. he does this by sending his only son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross for our sins, to pay the price for our forgiveness.

Then God the Father raises Jesus from the dead as proof that his payment has been accepted. As proof of our forgiveness, our freedom.

Our sins, they are many, but his mercy is more, as one song says. As Romans 5.20 says, when sin increased, grace abounded all the more.

[ 30 : 21 ] Believing this truth and entrusting your life to Jesus Christ is what we call faith. And those who have faith in Jesus could hear today the assurance that Jesus gives to this sinful woman.

Your faith has saved you. Go in peace. That's the step that our sister Leah is going to take today by getting baptized.

And she'll be able to walk away today hearing those words from our Savior. Your faith has saved you. Go in peace. The biblical concept of peace represents so much more than the absence of conflict.

It means reconciliation with God. It means restoration to right relationship with him and his plan for your life. It means rest in the finished work of Jesus Christ rather than restlessly trying to save yourself in vain.

Restlessly trying to find meaning for yourself, validation for yourself. Have you experienced this salvation?

[ 31 : 35 ] God? Do you love God as a result? Are you grateful to him? Because this passage is teaching us that that's what faith looks like. This passage has wonderful application for those who are already followers of Jesus as well.

Because God calls us to keep his commandments, yes, but he calls us to much more than that. He calls us to love him. That's the greatest commandment. Do you love him with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength?

Are you lacking in zeal for God? Are you struggling in your acts of devotion to God? Jesus teaches us here that a principle that governs the whole of our spiritual life.

It's God's lavish forgiveness of our sins that produces lavish love and service unto God. Your lack of zeal for God, your lukewarm affections for God, your waning love for God, it's directly proportionate to your awareness of God's love for you expressed in his free forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

That's why we shouldn't wallow in our guilt and be dejected by our sins. brothers and sisters in Christ. Let your sins drive you toward the bosom of our Savior.

[ 33 : 10 ] Because where sin increases, grace abounds all the more. I quoted this in my sermon last spring, but it's worth quoting again. In his autobiography entitled Confessions, the fourth century pastor theologian Augustine writes this.

He says, the recalling of my wicked ways is bitter in my memory, but I do it so that you may be sweeter to me. if you're a believer, you know what I'm talking about.

I despise my sins. There's nothing in the world I hate more than my own sins to hide the face of God and displeases my Savior.

fear. Yet in the midst of it, when I confess it to the Lord, how sweet, how sweet is the grace of God that comes to me. When I come to him as an impoverished sinner, how sweet is the grace that comes to us.

He forgives me and cancels all my debt. Does it make you want to pour out all that you have ever owned to anoint Jesus' feet?

[ 34 : 39 ] Doesn't that make you want to embrace the embarrassment and dishonor of disheveled hair, dirt-caked hair, for the sake of Jesus, if it means you can render service to him, honor him, and serve him?

Isn't that the case for you brothers and sisters? brothers? And that's why confession of sin is such an important practice. Because it leads us to Christ.

It forces us to come to terms with the graveness of our sins and comforts us with the lavishness of God's grace and forgiveness. That's why later in Luke 11, 4, Jesus teaches us to pray like this daily. He says, forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. If we humble ourselves before God by acknowledging our own sins, we won't be haughty before other people and stand in sinful judgment over them.

This was the Pharisee's problem. Because he hadn't quite confronted his own sinfulness, he stood in sinful judgment over this woman. and he was unable to anticipate the grace of God extended to the sinful woman.

[ 36 : 03 ] So God's lavish forgiveness of our sins produces lavish love for God. It also produces lavish service to God. And that's what we see in the brief examples of chapter 8, verses 1 to 3.

Please read it with me again. Soon afterward, he went on through cities and villages proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the 12 were with him and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities.

Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna, the wife of Chusa, Herod's household manager, and Susanna and many others who provided for them out of their means.

remember in Luke 6, 17, we saw three kind of concentric circles of followers that were with Jesus. The first, the most smallest and intimate circle was the 12 apostles.

And behind that, there were the larger group of disciples, those who followed him and believed in him. And then larger than that was the crowds that had questions, skeptics, people who don't yet follow Jesus as their Lord.

[ 37 : 15 ] And here it seems, we expect to see the 12 apostles with him, but they only get a brief mention. But Luke specifically notes that there were women among Jesus' followers in that second group of the larger disciples, larger group of disciples.

Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons came out, Joanna, the wife of Chusa, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others who provided for them out of their means.

If you're looking for a name for a girl, a good biblical name, this is a good place to go. There's a lot of them right here. The verb provided is plural in the Greek, so it's not just referring to Susanna or many others, it's referring to all the people that were named here.

And they gave generously to support Jesus and his 12 apostles out of their own means. And this is shocking because of the marginalized status that woman occupied in the first century Israel.

First century Jewish Rabbi Eliezer expressed the popular sentiment of his day when he said this, rather should the words of the Torah, that's the law of God, be burned than entrusted to a woman.

[ 38 : 39 ] Whoever teaches his daughter the Torah is the one who teaches her lasciviousness. I'm not quoting a fringe radical, this was the common sentiment.

I have two daughters, I take objection to that. Because of what Jesus does here. Luke, more than any of the other gospel writers, compiles an impressive list of women who play a significant role in the life and ministry of Jesus.

And he does this intentionally to point out that God is no respecter of persons. He shows no partiality or favoritism. I wish I could take credit for planning this right after International Women's Day.

But I had no idea. it's relevant to talk about because scripture does teach that men are specifically called to be leaders in their families and in their churches.

That's why the apostles are men. But this has to do with differentiated roles between a man and a woman, not differentiated value or worth.

[ 40 : 02 ] players on a basketball team have different roles and positions to play. But that does not communicate their value to the team.

Depending on any number of teams, a point guard who specializes in assists or a shooting guard who specializes in scoring or a center who specializes in blocking and rebounding the ball, any one of those guys could be the highest player on the team, depending on what the team is.

There are different roles and different positions they occupy do not say anything about their value and worth. And what the Bible teaches is that women, though they occupy different roles, do not have less value than the men.

In fact, no religion has done more for the flourishing of women than Christianity. A few years ago, the Pew Forum published research indicating that women are measurably more active participants in Christianity than men across the board.

So pick up some slack, guys. But this is not the case in other religions. For example, among Christians, women are 7% more likely to attend the weekly worship service than men.

[ 41 : 22 ] But among Muslims, women are 29% less likely to attend the weekly worship service than men. women are there. There's a reason why the global church is still majority female with more women than any other religion in the world.

There's a reason why the American church is still mostly female with black women being the most Christian demographic. There's a reason why throughout the world, a Christian you meet is more likely to be a woman of color than any other demographic.

Jesus radically changed the status of women and we here in the Western world, though we criticize the Bible, we're actually reaping the benefits of it. So let this be an encouragement to all of you women, but also to others who feel like they're part of a marginalized group.

Jesus shows no partiality. And these women who have experienced God's lavish forgiveness and gracious healing dedicate their lives to serving Jesus by supporting his ministry.

And Mary Magdalene mentioned here will stay with Jesus until the very end. She's there where his apostles are not.

[ 42 : 49 ] She's at his crucifixion. she's there to see where Jesus' body is laid. She's there to anoint his body. Isn't God amazing?

I pray that Leah will be a woman of faith like that too. Now all of you guys. I'm going to invite Leah to come up and share her testimony with us. It's Wahes God.

Good night. Good night.