

What can we learn from luke about jesus' attitudes to women?

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



What can we learn from Luke about Jesus' attitudes to women? In order to discuss what we can learn from Luke about Jesus' attitudes to women we must first understand a little about Luke himself. According to Charpentier E (1981: 81) Luke had been seen as the, 'beloved physician', which is also cited in Hayes, M A. and Gearon L (1998: 145) whom further state that Luke travelled with Paul from Troas to Philippi in Greece, Paul, (Col 4: 14) expressly calls him, 'the beloved physician'. He was in fact Paul's medical adviser. Luke's acts were written in c AD 80.

The status of women in Palestine during the time of Jesus was very decidedly that of inferiors. The women is, 'in all things inferior to the man,' as stated by first century historian Flavius Josephus (as cited by Jesus central. com). Historically and traditionally, Jewish men did not speak in public to women even to their own wives. However, Jesus never treated women in the expected ways of his culture at all. He talked with them, he taught them and he also expected and trusted them to be able to proclaim the Good News.

Jesus therefore acted and spoke as if women and men were equal before God's eyes. According to churchofgoddfw, Luke's gospel portrays Jesus as the one, '...who fully accepted women. Regardless of their social or marital status.' It seems that Luke gives greater prominence to women throughout his Gospel. It is obvious that Mary plays a central role in Luke's Infancy narrative according to Hayes, M A. and Gearon L. Mary's role in history was to be an extraordinary one. God chose her to be mother of Jesus Christ. 'I am the Lord's servant,' Mary answered. 'May it be to me as you have said. (Luke 1: 34-38) Though Mary knew she was facing shame and humiliation, in

faith, she willingly submitted herself to God's will. Mary acted in great courage and faith. Jesus therefore honoured his mother throughout his life and also at his crucifixion. Mary was actually at the foot of the cross where Jesus compassionately let her know that she would be cared for after his death and resurrection. At the same time Jesus rejected the notion of woman's role within Luke (8: 19-21), ' Now Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him, but they were not able to get near him because of the crowd.

Someone told him. ' Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you. ' He replied, ' My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice. ' Here it seems Jesus refutes the notion of gender-restricted roles (women have their place). However, here it also seems that Jesus is saying that they do not have favoured status because of their family or gender relationships, rather a relationship with Him is attentiveness and regards for Gods' Word, according to Gods word to women. org.

Through reading Luke's Gospel, Jesus' honour and respect was not solely reserved for his mother ' Mary'. It was extended in fact to all women, which is unexpected as mentioned earlier. Moreover, women became disciples and followers of Jesus (Luke 8: 1) Mary Magdalane, Joanna, Susanna and several others journeyed with Jesus on his travels and are also present at his crucifixion; whilst the disciples flee; at his burial and at the tomb on Easter Day according to Hayes and Gearon. They become the first preachers of the Easter message (Lk 24: 1-13).

It therefore seems that Luke makes a point that women are the first to come to Easter faith according to Hayes and Gearon and the first to proclaim it. According to Judaic Law, 'women were not allowed to bear legal witness,' as cited by Jesuscentral. com. However, the fore mentioned bared witness of the risen Jesus Christ to his disciples. Luke highlights here also that Jesus revealed himself in one of his key roles according to Jesuscentral. com, 'as Messiah, to a woman.' The Life Light Home Study Course also highlights that Luke emphasizes, 'the fact that it was women that were the first resurrection evangelists. The fact that it was 'they' that returned from the tomb and told the eleven. Does this therefore imply the possibility of a much greater participation of women in the era of the Church? Luke goes on further to highlight how Jesus allowed women to touch him, even women who were considered as 'unclean'! According to Luke (8: 40-56), Jesus touched a dead women, the daughter of a synagogue ruler, and brought her back to life, within the same verse Jesus allowed a women who had been leeding for 12 years to touch his cloak in order that she may be healed. Further to this Jesus allowed a prostitute to touch and wash his feet while dining with disapproving Pharisee (Lk 7: 3) In addition to this Luke also has the story of Martha and Mary were Jesus taught that women were just as responsible for, 'growing in grace and knowledge as men,' when it came to being one of his followers as cited by Grace Communion International. Therefore, Luke highlights that Jesus expected women as well as men to learn from him.

Jesus saw woman as a full-fledgedhuman being, which is indicated here as Mary sat down and listened learning theology, rather than assisting her sister

within the kitchen preparing a meal for Jesus. Luke identifies Jesus regard for woman again as he after all taught Mary, when such behaviour was a violation of the established theology. Jesus thus affirmed a women's right to be a disciple and not to be concerned solely with domestic affairs. Further to this, is another fascinating account according to Luke (13: 10-13) when Jesus heals a disabled women on the Sabbath day in the synagogue. he showed his regard for her by calling her a ' daughter of Abraham'. Jesus was not only faced with the wrath of the Jewish leaders by healing this woman on the Sabbath. This highlights again Jesus regard for women, as he healed someone whom may have been shunned because she was a women and also she was disabled, plus to do so on the Sabbath. In the Acts women are full members of the Church. Luke specifically records that both women and men were baptized (Acts 8: 12; 16: 15)

It seems that more than twice in His parables Jesus used an illustration with a women to illustrate the faith and resolve they were to have: The persistent widow who troubled the judge (Lk 18: 2-8) and also the women searching for the lost coin, in which Jesus states, ' In the same way, I tell you, the angles of God rejoice over one sinner who repents. ' (Lk 15: 8-10). Jesus's attitudes towards women seem never to have been negative, rather always a positive attitude, which as stated previously is in dramatic contrast to his predecessors and the culture to which he was born into.

Concluding that from the evidence cited previously, Jesus as indicated by Luke, promoted the dignity and equality of women in the midst of a very male-dominated society, according to Hayes and Gearon, '...scholars have

concluded that women played a significant role in Lucan communities. ' Jesuscentral. com takes this one step further as to state that, ' Jesus was a feminist, and a very radical one. ' Jesus was therefore a friend of women, promoting the dignity and equality of women which is clear throughout Luke's Gospel.

It seems the prominence of women throughout Luke's Gospel suggests equality. Indeed theologytoday identifies that the attitude of Luke's Gospel towards women is, '... not so much a totally revolutionary picture of their discipleship as it is an appreciation of their inner resources and ability to centre themselves to receive and act upon the word of God in truth. ' Word Count = 1354 References Charpenter, E (1981) How to Read the New Testament. London: SCM Hayes, M A. and Gearon L (1998) Contemporary Catholic Theology: a Reader.

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