

# Outline

## Me and My Women

For the last few weeks we have been exploring what the Bible has to say about the lives of the people who Jesus chose to hang with. As I have mentioned before, the song *Me and My Gang* by Rascal Flatts reminded me a lot of the people that I read about in Jesus' gang in the Bible.

[It's a brother and a sister kinda thang. Raise up your hands if you all wanna hang with Me and my gang! We got hippies, gypsies, freaks and geeks High class women in Daisy Duke denim Bangin' on gongs and singin' our songs Dude named Elrod jammin on an iPod – Me and My Gang! Lyrics to \*Me and My Gang\* by Rascal Flatts](#)

And the Bible has sorta gone down the same route as the song from the person of Matthew the writer of the first book of the New Testament, who was a crooked tax collector, to the pessimistic skeptic of Jesus' disciples, Thomas, to the guy who seemed prone to mistakes, Peter – one of Jesus' inner circle. Jesus tended to go after and surround Himself with freaks and geeks and people with all kinds of troubles – a lot like you and me!

Today, in honor of the women of the world, we are going to try and see if Jesus would fit in one more group in the Rascal Flatts song – “High class women in Daisy Duke denim.” And believe it or not, I think we can fit the bill, which makes Jesus one of the true revolutionaries in the world, for Jesus is the first leader in history to equate women as equals to men and see them as more than sex slaves or property. There were many women that could count themselves as disciples or students of Jesus and His teachings. And believe me; this was just not done in biblical times or up to that point in history. Oh, you had your occasional woman who got the chance to make a splash in history like Cleopatra, but even she was on the arms of a Mark Antony.

Jesus, on the other hand, did the unthinkable; He actually sought to engage relationships with women, allowed them to touch Him, and invited them to be a part of His tutelage. He even accepted support from women with His ministry. Jesus is the original liberator of women. And what better day to study His view of women than today of all days when we celebrate the half of the population that sacrificially invests in all of us by making us at least the central focus of their lives for nine months as well as willingly endure pain to bring us into existence – MOMS! Happy Mother's Day to all our moms, wherever they are in the world. We could not be here without you!

### **God Loves Women and created them in equality with men – in His Image!**

[So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. Genesis 1:27 NIV](#)

Notice the beauty with which God created both men and women – in His Image! All humanity was created with equal parts of God in their makeup, which would mean that God enjoys male and female characteristics and values them equally enough to create two counterparts of humanity to represent His image. Men and women therefore, enjoy the separated strengths of God – protector and nurturer, discernment and wisdom, creator and preserver.

As we begin to look at the women that were central in Jesus' life, we see further God's inherent value of women. And as we speak of mothers, there is no greater example of motherhood than the human mother of Jesus, Mary. Mary exhibits much that is beautiful about motherhood and mothering. I find it immensely interesting that God chose to entrust the pre-natal care of Himself in human form to a teenage mother, Mary. God placed Himself miraculously inside of the womb of Mary and allowed Himself to be humbly cared for as a fetus and a growing life through the nine months of incubation within a human form. **God's stamp of honor and approval on motherhood – Mary!**

[God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph. The virgin's name was Mary. "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was](#)

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greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High...

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her. Luke 1:26-32 NIV

Notice a couple things about mothers here that I believe God wants to point out. **He wanted to go through the birthing process, which gives the idea of motherhood honor and dignity.** Our mothers deserve dignity and honor simply because God incarnates life through our mothers – they must care for us selflessly for a long period of time that God Himself reveres.

**Secondly, motherhood requires great faith.** Mary, the mother of Jesus is troubled here. Now who would not be? You're sitting in your room secretly playing with your Bratz dolls and dreaming of the local carpenter's "hot" and muscular son, Joe, and BOOOM! There is another person in your room – maybe he looked like a winged being or maybe he looked like a normal person – I don't know, but there is someone in the room that is not supposed to be there and he is saying, "Hi, you are a good girl and God likes you." I would wonder what kind of greeting that would be too and I am not even a girl. Then the guy says "You're going to have a baby." This sounds like an episode of *The Secret Life of the American Teenager* if you have ever seen that. Freak out time! But Mary seems to take it in stride once she realizes God is in the mix of things here. That is faith! The amazing thing is once she figures out God is involved, she is ok – never mind that an alien is inside of her and that it will come flying out in nine months. That is the beauty of motherhood that I have never been able to understand! **God loves motherhood and sees within it a great strength – so make sure you honor your mother today.**

**Not only did God honor women by creating them in equality and blessing the strength of motherhood, but Jesus' own revolutionary attitude toward women set the stage for women to be equally involved in His ministry both then and today!**

**Here are some facts about the treatment of women in the day of Jesus:**

- ◇ Women in the first century were viewed through patriarchal eyes. Women were not given the same rights as men, or for that matter, slaves.
- ◇ They were objects who were meant to please and serve men.
- ◇ Women were not allowed to vote.
- ◇ Women were not permitted in public prayer nor could a man talk to a woman in public.
- ◇ Women were not allowed to talk in public.
- ◇ Most ancient cultures by law or custom, excluded women from religious worship or public domain which comprised a large part of the world's ideas and cultural and creative contributions.

And here are a few great quotes by some "wise" guys in and around Jesus' day:

"Any iniquity is small compared to a woman's iniquity... From a woman sin had its beginning, and because of her we all die" (Sirach 25:19, 24; 2nd century B.C.).

"Better is the wickedness of a man than a woman who does good; it is woman who brings shame and disgrace" (Sirach 42:14).

"The woman is inferior to the man in every way" (Josephus, *Against Apion* 2:201).

"A hundred women are no better than two men" (Talmud, Ber. 45b).

"A man is required to say the following three blessings every day: 'Blessed are you who have not made me a heathen, who have not made me a woman, who has not made me illiterate' (bMen. 43b; Ber. 7.18).

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"There is no wisdom in woman except with the spindle" (bYom. 66b).

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century is a great time to be a woman. When you think of it, women did not really progress too much beyond the above attitudes until the recent history of the last 100 years! Only recently in history have women advanced to the equal status of men to be able to vote, get an education, own property, and play on the local high school football team. We certainly have come a long way in a very short time.

As you can see from the prevalent attitude, women and mothers were not really treated with respect and dignity. That is what made the fact that Jesus included them in His gang quite revolutionary. **Jesus viewed women as equal and worthy of honor by breaking the rules of His day.**

#### **Jesus Insisted on Caring about Women - The Samaritan Woman at the Well**

Now he had to go through Samaria. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" John 4:4-9 NIV

#### **Jesus Insisted on Respecting Women – A Woman Washes Jesus' Feet**

Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, and 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." Luke 7:36-39 NIV

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—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little." Luke 7:44-47 NIV

#### **Jesus Insisted on Including Women – Women Disciples and Supporters**

After this, Jesus traveled about, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna the wife of Cuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means. Luke 8:1-3 NIV

#### **Jesus Insisted on Liberating Women – Mary Learns at Jesus' Feet**

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. 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!" Luke 10:38-40 NIV

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." Luke 10:41,42 NIV

#### **What Does Jesus' Inclusion of Women in His Gang Teach us?**

1. God loves men and women equally.
2. God values men and women equally.
3. God ministers to and expects ministry from men and women equally.

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**How should that affect those who follow Jesus?**

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. **There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.** If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Galatians 3:26-28 NIV

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