

Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: The Example of Christ and His Apostles Various Scriptures

Introduction

Biblical Manhood and Womanhood Series

October 2—God's Good Design

October 9—Marred by the Fall

October 16—**Example of Christ and the Apostles**

October 30—Apostolic Directions to the Churches

Ever since Adam and Eve fell to sin in the Garden of Eden, humanity has been marred by sin in every arena. The creation itself groans waiting for freedom from the curse. Sin by its very nature harms not only the sinner but those with any kind of relationship to the sinner. So it is not surprising that marriage and family would take a hard hit from curse of sin. Beyond that, all our relationships are undermined to one degree or another.

The only hope for anything different is through the offspring of the woman who God promised would crush the serpent's head. As the OT unfolds this promised one is revealed to be the Messiah, the Savior-King anointed by God Himself, the Redeemer in whom all the families of the earth will be blessed.

When the God-man Jesus Christ begins his 33 years of life as a human being, he lives a life completely in line with God's perfect design and righteous law. He fulfills it in every way. It is His perfect righteousness imputed to our account that takes the place of our sinful record and declares us righteous, justified, before God. Practically speaking, our righteousness is measured by how closely we conform to His. If we want to find the perfect example of a man who interacts with women in a way that pleases God perfectly, Jesus is our benchmark.

How did Jesus interact with women?

Let's start with His mother.

We know from Luke 2 that he lived in submission to his mother and his father.

Luke 2:50-51

50 And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. **51** And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

They did not understand all that he did and said and they were not sinless, yet he willingly submitted to them. Joseph evidently died before Jesus' public ministry began, but his mother was still alive. He honored her throughout, seeing to it even on the cross

that John the apostle would care for her when Jesus was gone.

John 19:26-27

²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!

²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

You who are hoping for a godly spouse, when you meet someone you think may fit the bill, *observe how the young man treats his mother and how the young woman treats her dad. That's about as good a practical measure as anything about how he or she will treat you when you're living together as a married couple.* If he's rude and resistant to his mom, run! If she badmouths her dad, run!

Luke 8:1-3

¹ Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, ² and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, ³ and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

Matthew 27:55-56

⁵⁵ There were also many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him, ⁵⁶ among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

The woman at the well

John 4:7-9

⁷ A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." ⁸ (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) ⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

John 4:27

Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you seek?" or, "Why are you talking with her?"

Here is a woman whose married life has been a shambles, drawing water in the middle of the day, evidently to avoid the other townspeople who would look down on her. Jesus initiates the conversation, asking her to give Him to drink, crossing the cultural barriers of gender, race, and reputation. She proves to have more insight than many of her

contemporaries, including men in the religious profession.

John 4:25-26

²⁵ The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things."

²⁶ Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

Mary and Martha

Luke 10:38-42 Mary sits at Jesus' feet, listening to His teaching while Martha was distracted with much serving. Jesus commended Mary's choice.

John 11:21-28

²¹ Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you." ²³ Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." ²⁴ Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷ She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

28 When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."

Luke 7:44-50

44 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. **45** You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. **46** You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. **47** Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little." **48** And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." **49** Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" **50** And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Woman who anointed Jesus' head with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard. His commendation in the face of those who criticized her for being wasteful:

Mark 14:6-9

"She has done a beautiful thing to me. . . . She has anointed my body beforehand for burial. And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

Similar commendation John 12 for Mary of Bethany, who anointed Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair.

Apostles—notably the apostle Paul
Frequently lists women among his collaborators in the gospel

Romans 16—8 or 9 women in the list
Phoebe, servant (deacon) of the church in Cenchreae

He calls Priscilla and her husband Aquila “my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their necks for my life.” They were the ones who together explained to Apollos what Christ had done beyond what John the Baptist had preached in his ministry.

Other women he mentions among the many individuals he greets at the end of the letter to the Romans, are the mother of Rufus, and Mary, who has worked hard for you, along with the sister of Nereus.

Lydia, business woman from Thyatira, seller of purple, one of first converts in Phillipi. She and her companions had come to the riverside to pray. That's where Paul and Silas met her and shared the gospel. The second convert was likely a demon-possessed slavegirl used by her masters for fortune telling. Paul cast the demon out, ending the slave owners' hope of gain from her. They

had Paul and Silas beaten and jailed, where ironically, the third charter member of the church was converted, the Philippian jailer.

Philippians 4:2-3

² I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. ³ Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

In his letter to the church in Philippi, Paul spoke of their “partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.” He declared that he “held them in his heart, for [they were] all partakers with me of grace.” And in Philippians 1:8, “God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.”

Colossians 4

Among the active church members Paul greets, he mentions Nympha and the church in her house.

What emerges from these passages is how much *the apostles valued women believers who labored alongside them in the gospel. They do not erase gender roles, as our next study will show, but they demonstrate the*

importance of women for the advance of the gospel of Christ and the health of His church.

Their view of women mirrors that of Christ Jesus their Lord. It was a break from the low view of women that dominated the ancient world among both Jews and Gentiles. In so doing they elevated the status of women to where it belongs, in keeping with humans' being created in God's image, both male and female.