



The unfolding of your words gives light.

To Seek and to Save

An Exposition of the Gospel of Luke

^{8:1} Soon afterwards, He *began* going around from one city and village to another, proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of God^a. The twelve were with Him, ²and *also* some women who had been healed of evil spirits and sicknesses^b: Mary who was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out^c, ³and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward^d, and Susanna, and many others who were contributing to their support out of their private means^{e, f}.

^a 8:1 **Soon afterwards, He began going around from one city and village to another, proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of God.** What does it mean that Jesus was “preaching the kingdom of God?” Some make a distinction between this message and the gospel itself. There is no need. In Luke 4:43 Jesus said He was sent here to preach the kingdom. This does not diminish the message of the cross because that is His means of taking over.

^b 8:1-2 **The twelve were with Him, and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and sicknesses.** The most devoted followers of Jesus were a fellowship of the weak. The powerful people like Paul who followed Jesus had to be broken before they could become useful.

^c 8:2 **Mary who was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out.** We have already seen Jesus’ power over demons in Luke’s gospel. Harmonizing the gospels, we see Mary Magdalene appearing at key moments in Jesus’ ministry: here at her introduction, standing with others at the cross, watching to see where the Lord’s body was placed, as the first witness to the resurrected Christ and reporting the news to the disciples.

^d 8:3 **Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward.** We know nothing more of her husband Chuza other than his place of employment, but Joanna is also mentioned as one of the women who went to the tomb of Jesus. Joanna may have been one of the healed, according to verse 2.

^e 8:3 **Susanna, and many others who were contributing to their support out of their private means.** Susanna and “many others” paid the freight for the support of Jesus and the Twelve while they devoted themselves to the ministry of the word. The word “contributing” comes from the source of our word “ministering” or “deaconing.” They had a similar ministry to what the woman of Shunem had with Elisha (2 Kings 4:8-10).

^f 8:1-3 Once again Luke narrates an event that demonstrates the way the Lord Jesus attracted those who had nothing to give and everything to gain from the relationship. The previous text moved us to pity the grateful Mary Magdalene. It showed us in that text that the powerful man was unforgiven and the vulnerable woman was forgiven. This text introduces other women who wanted to give and serve because of what the Lord had done for them. What does this tell us about the Lord? His kingdom is not bound by geography, ethnicity or gender. He attracts the weak and overlooked because they find their strength and identity entirely in Him.

All you have to do is look up women like Miriam, Priscilla, Lydia or Phoebe in your concordance to read of strong women God used. But they did not have to act like men to be valuable in God’s kingdom.

The vital place of women in the church is necessary to point out because some think that the distinct roles of men and women somehow give women a back seat in ministry. That is like thinking you can run an army without enlisted soldiers. John Piper offers two working biblical definitions of masculinity and femininity in the book he co-authored with Wayne Grudem. He argues that the Bible teaches very distinct, complementary roles for men and women in the home and in the church:

AT THE HEART OF MATURE MASCULINITY IS A SENSE OF BENEVOLENT RESPONSIBILITY TO LEAD, PROVIDE FOR AND PROTECT WOMEN IN WAYS APPROPRIATE TO A MAN’S DIFFERING RELATIONSHIPS.

The Gospel of Luke
Steven Svendsen, Sr.

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AT THE HEART OF MATURE FEMININITY IS A FREEING DISPOSITION TO AFFIRM, RECEIVE AND NURTURE STRENGTH AND LEADERSHIP FROM WORTHY MEN IN WAYS APPROPRIATE TO A WOMAN'S DIFFERING RELATIONSHIPS. *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, p. 29

It is no glory to Christ to take something that already had an inherent beauty or purity and make it a little better. What makes Him appear so glorious is to see the way He purchased His bride while she was in her uncleanness and transformed her. Here is the way you respond—male or female—as one who finds your strength and identity in the Lord Jesus:

1. You see God's kingdom as a cause that is much greater value than your comfort.
2. You see the immense contradiction of power plays in the church.
3. You show generosity and hospitality as a response to your rescue.

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