

Rediscover Jesus, 20: "Women with Jesus"

Luke 8:1-3

Pastor John Eom

Personal Introduction

- Please turn your bibles to today's text in Luke 8:1-3.

Sermon Series & Scripture Introduction

Today, we are continuing in the sermon series, studying through the Gospel of Luke in order to Rediscover Jesus, for some of us, discover Jesus for the first time, to learn who Jesus is, what he did, and what it has to do with our lives today.

Previously, we saw how a notoriously sinful woman, in response to her many sins being forgiven, came to Jesus expressing humble, grateful, extravagant love to him.

Scripture ReadingLuke 8:1-3 (ESV)

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, ²and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, ³and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

This is the Word of God. Amen.

Sermon Introduction

Scripture today will call out two areas that we as the church can easily get wrong: our church's purpose and how we should treat women.

The One Thing

So, the One Thing for us today:

*In the work of proclaiming the gospel in every place,
Jesus values and includes women to participate.*

Overview

We'll take a look at this summary of Jesus' ministry from Luke 8:1-3 in two parts:

1. Jesus' gospel purpose (v.1)
2. Jesus' gospel patrons (vv.2-3)

Prayer for the Preaching of the WordSermon Outline

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- I. Jesus' gospel purpose (v.1)

Luke 8:1 (ESV)

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,

- Jesus was committed to his gospel purpose that he passed onto the church.

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- [Read verse 1]. We'll see that Jesus was committed to his gospel purpose that he passed onto the church. Let me explain.
 - First, we have to be clear about Jesus' purpose. As we have been reading through the book of Luke from chapter 4, we have been provided with several ministry summaries of Jesus like this. Jesus has been teaching (4:14-15) and proclaiming the good news. Back in Luke 4:43, when people from a certain town were trying to keep Jesus from leaving them, he said to them...

Luke 4:43 (ESV)

⁴³ but he said to them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose."

- So in case any disciple of Jesus Christ ever forgets why Jesus came to earth, we have these mission statements outlining Jesus' purpose for us. Reminding us how Jesus was committed to this gospel purpose. And they're repeated for us throughout scripture.

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Luke 8:1 (ESV)

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,

- Jesus' purpose is to proclaim and bring the good news of God's kingdom (gospel) in every place.

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- So, what is Jesus' purpose? Jesus' purpose is to proclaim and bring the good news of God's kingdom in every place.
 - We usually refer to the "good news of God's kingdom" as the gospel. And there are two ways to understand this term: First, it is in the general/summary sense where it refers to all the teachings of Jesus Christ. So this includes the various teachings Jesus gave in his Sermon on the Plain that we looked at in Luke 6. Second, in a more narrow sense, we can understand it as the good news as news. It is news of the present arrival of God's kingdom on earth and his kingdom will be fully established on the day of judgment. But in either case, the connection between the two is Jesus Christ himself, that he is the one true king. He teaches us how he is our King and how we can live as citizens in his kingdom.
 - But why is Jesus so committed to this gospel purpose? It's because he is so committed to offering sinners salvation. And the only way to understand this good news is to first face the bad news. The bad news is that we have an unsolvable problem. Because of our sin, we are not safe before God. We stand condemned as God's enemies and we rightfully deserve God's eternal judgment. This is why a significant part of Jesus' teachings was to show people sinful we really are (cf. Luke 7:47-48). If we do not realize how great our sin is, the good news that Jesus is proclaiming won't seem that good for us. We won't be able to truly see how good it is that Jesus gave up his life on the cross in our place for our sins. If we don't understand how we deserve God's wrath, then we won't see a need to be saved.
 - To say this in another way, the good news of God's kingdom is not just mere information. Because the proper response to good news is celebration. There is no reason to celebrate information, or another religious instruction or moralistic teaching. Christ came to proclaim the gospel that solves our problem God's wrath.

- (i) Imagine two kingdoms are in battle against each other. The king and all his soldiers have gone out to fight for the security and safety of the kingdom. It's been days, weeks and no messenger has brought back any news. The citizens are scared and worried—what if our king is dead? What if we lost? What will happen to our lives? But finally, the messenger comes back, proclaiming, declaring the good news that your king is alive and that he has defeated the enemy and that the kingdom is safe. The citizens' response will not just be nodding their heads saying thanks for the update. No, they'll be celebrating, dancing for joy! All fear is cast away and there will be days and weeks of rejoicing in the good news of the kingdom.
- o The good news is that while we were still enemies of God, Jesus Christ came to us. He was committed to his gospel purpose and therefore our salvation from the very beginning. He was committed to the point of death, even death on a cross to take the punishment for sins that we deserve (cf. Philippians 2:6-8). And then three days later, he resurrected that we may also have new life in him (Romans 5:10). So that now whoever repents of their sin, believes in Christ alone as their Lord and Savior, submits to his authority and follows Christ the king for the rest of their lives— they will be saved. This is the gospel. The good news of what has been done for us. And the greatest reason to celebrate!
- o If you have yet to make this confession in Christ, I encourage you to continue in that journey to understand the gospel with someone in our church. And for everyone of us who have made this confession, I encourage you to continue on in rejoicing in the good news of our King, living in great joy of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- o Again, the good news is that Christ is our King and we by his grace are not his enemies but fellow citizens in his kingdom. And this means that we as his kingdom citizens continue to carry out Christ's gospel purpose.

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Luke 8:1 (ESV)

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,

- Through the apostles, Jesus has passed on his gospel purpose to every church.

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- More specifically, we see that through the apostles, Christ has passed on his gospel purpose to every church. Every church must strive to be a gospel-proclaiming church. Let me explain.
 - Looking at the end of verse 1, Luke notes that “the twelve were with Jesus.” “The twelve” refers to the twelve apostles that Jesus appointed. The other important word here in this short sentence is the word “with.” The word “with” marks a relationship that often involves joint participation in some activity.¹
 - o So Jesus’ purpose in choosing twelve men among all his disciples were so that they could participate and be involved in a unique way in Jesus’ gospel-proclaiming ministry. They were still being equipped by Jesus at this point in time. But after Jesus died, rose again, and ascended into heaven, Jesus passed on the gospel purpose to these apostles. They were called to be special messengers of his gospel purpose, sent out for the task of preaching the gospel, teaching unbelievers the proper truths about Jesus, and teaching believers the proper ways to live out the gospel.
 - o And as we continue reading through the book of Acts, we learn that the apostles were the ones who will establish the first generation of churches and make sure these churches were grounded in sound doctrine and guard the gospel against false doctrine. The apostles also were responsible that these churches accepted the gospel purpose they received from Christ, to go, preach the good news to those who have never heard of Jesus (Romans 10:15) and

¹ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 790.

make disciples of all nations. Jesus' gospel purpose was passed down from the apostles to every single church after church after church. All the way down to our church here today.

Show image "US Embassy.jpg"

- Here's a helpful way to think about this: As every member of a church is an ambassador of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20), we can imagine that each church is like an embassy of Christ's kingdom on earth. An ambassador is someone who represents his/her country while they are living in another country. And the embassy is the official office where ambassadors will work in that foreign country. So, for example, in the US embassy here in Jakarta, US ambassadors work and carry out their assignments on behalf of the United States. And they represent the interests and purposes of the US here in Indonesia.
 - In the same way, every church is called to represent and carry out the purpose of Jesus Christ on earth until he returns. A true church reflects the values and interests of our King. As citizens of God's kingdom, we joyfully follow his orders in the specific assignment that we have been given. In other words, we as a church must also be committed to Christ's gospel purpose, to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to every place we are in. As we become aware of Jesus' gospel purpose, we must then faithfully strive to carry out this gospel purpose in every place that we are in.
- I really need to make sure that every disciple of Christ here understands that this work of proclaiming the gospel is not only meant to be done in the frontier missions contexts where there is not a single believer in Jesus Christ. Of course, it must happen there and those who are sent there will travel around proclaiming the gospel. But we are also sent here. Right here in our city. Yes, there are churches here and other Christians around. But this doesn't excuse any disciple of Christ from carrying out his purpose.
 - We need to understand that God has literally placed us as individual ambassadors of his kingdom whether in our homes, neighborhoods, offices, schools, etc. Wherever we are, we have already been called and sent to these places where we carry out our business and our daily activities with the purpose to proclaim and bring the good news of Christ. To teach others about Jesus and how he is our one true King. To share about the good news that he brings to sinners like us.
 - But before we get to the specifics of how we can carry out Jesus' gospel purpose, let's first make sure to address our hearts. Which leads us to our first life application.
- Life Application #1: Consider the purpose of your life. Is it aligned to the gospel purpose of our King, Jesus Christ?
 - So, this application requires that we take a closer look at Jesus' purpose for ourselves. And we need to make sure that we don't mistaken Jesus' purpose. Jesus' purpose is not to make our lives more comfortable on earth. His purpose is not to give us control over our lives. His purpose is not to give us our own kingdoms. And only after we truly realize what Jesus' purpose is and submit
 - We also need to take a closer look at our lives. We can start asking ourselves, what brings us the greatest joy? To see what purposes in life we find joy in. And to see if the good news of God's kingdom—if the gospel—brings us the greatest joy and the ultimate reason to celebrate through every season of our lives. We can ask ourselves what endeavors take up most of our efforts. What tasks occupy our time. And ask ourselves if we intentionally approach our work and our recreation with the gospel purpose of Jesus Christ.
 - We should definitely ask for help from our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ in this. We should ask them for feedback as they observe our lives: What do I talk about the most? What do you think I'm the most passionate about? How can you help me be more aligned to Jesus' purpose of proclaiming and bringing the good news of God's kingdom to others?
- So, first we saw Jesus' gospel purpose and how Jesus was committed to his gospel purpose that he passed onto the church. Second, we'll look at Jesus' gospel patrons.

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II. Jesus' gospel patrons (vv.2-3)

Luke 8:2-3 (ESV)

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.

- Jesus valued and included women in his gospel purpose as he was building up the church.

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- [Read verses 2-3]. We cannot quickly pass by what Luke has recorded for us in these verses. Other than noting that verse 2 starts in the middle of a sentence, we have to note that Luke is highlighting the women who were also with Jesus as he was carrying out his gospel purpose. Just like how the twelve apostles were with Jesus, following him as his disciples in ministry, so these women were also with Jesus. And why exactly is it important to know that Jesus' ministry included women? It is because how he valued women was counter-cultural.

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Luke 8:2-3 (ESV)

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.

- Jesus valued women in counter-cultural ways in his interactions with them, even in choosing women to be his first witnesses.

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- Historically, society as a whole has viewed women as lesser than men, and in many severe cases, devalued women and treated them to be less than human. Even in the Old Testament, there are records of men devaluing women, going against God's will and design. Because of such history, modern women in various countries around the world have rallied to stand up for their rights and equal treatment in society. And though many countries have made progress, there are places today where women still cannot vote, girls cannot go to school, and baby girls are aborted or thrown away. Those are the extreme cases.
 - But even in cases not as extreme, our society does not view women with the same intrinsic, God-given value as men. Rather, they have to earn their value. There are expectations that society places on women on what they should do and not do, or look like and not look like. Or even be and should not be. Even for the beloved women God has placed in my life, I see how they have to deal with such expectations. Whether it's my mom mom or my sister or my wife and even for my two daughters.
- Well, more specifically, during Jesus' time on earth, the predominant culture considered women inferior² to men as second-class citizens. We might not catch this when we see Jesus' interaction with women. But in Jewish culture, where there were many religious and social contexts for men and women, Jewish rabbis and teachers would refuse teaching women.³ Jewish culture also restricted women's privileges even to speak in public social gatherings, and a woman could not even enter a synagogue or pray aloud.⁴
 - So Jesus was different. Jesus was all the more a revolutionary as he honored the intrinsic, God-given value of women as he interacted with women in distinct ways. He didn't oppress or put down women. Rather he lifted them up into a relationship with him. One example of this is with Martha and Mary (Luke 10:38-42). Again, while it was not normal for a woman to sit under the teaching of a religious teacher, Jesus welcomed Mary to sit at his feet to listen to his teaching. Her sister, Martha, was playing a more traditionally female role, serving and

² James B. Hurley, *Man and Woman and Biblical Perspective* (Wipf & Stock, 2021), 63.

³ James A. Borland, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Crossway, 2006), 75.

⁴ David L. Jeffrey, *Luke* (Brazos Press, 2012), 118.

preparing for their house guests. And even as Martha demanded that Jesus tell Mary help with the serving, Jesus spoke compassionately to Martha. Gently correcting her saying, “Martha, Martha... Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.”

- Jesus also addressed women directly in public, and spoke in a thoughtful, caring manner. And in his care for women, he addressed the sins in the lives of the women that he met.⁵ We saw an example of this last week with the notoriously sinful woman who came to anoint Jesus’ feet at the house of Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:36-50). She began weeping, wetting Jesus’ feet with her tears and wiping them with her hair. “In cultural terms, Simon had every advantage. He is a man; she is a woman. He is religiously admired; she is despised. He’s hosting a dinner party; she is a weeping embarrassment. But according to Jesus, she surpasses Simon on every count.”⁶ Jesus had forgiven this sinful woman and also elevated her as an example for a man, a Jewish religious leader, to follow.
- So going back to verse 2-3, we now can understand Luke’s emphasis on how Jesus is counter-cultural in valuing women. And out of his love and compassion for women, he healed some specific women from spiritual afflictions and physical infirmities. And these women are mentioned by name:
 - The first is Mary Magdalene. All we know here is that she was possessed by seven demons. And we can only imagine what kind of spiritual affliction and torment she was facing. In other cases in the bible, one unclean spirit took away a boy’s ability to speak. It would throw him to the ground. He foamed at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid (Mark 9:17-29). In other cases, a man possessed with many demons lived without any clothes, he lived in the desert. Also lived separate from living people and lived among dead people in the graves. And these demons gave the man supernatural strength that he could break out of chains and shackles (Luke 8:27-29).
 - So as Mary Magdalene was healed and set free, she was restored both physically and socially, and she became one of Jesus’ followers.
 - The next woman on the list is Joanna. We don’t know what she was healed from but we are given the description that she is married to Chuza who was Herod’s household manager. This Herod is Herod Antipas (Luke 3:1), who was the Jewish political ruler over the city of Galilee. This means that she had some political influence and that she probably was part of a higher socioeconomic status.
 - The next woman is Susanna but we don’t know anything more about her. And lastly, Luke mentions that there were many others. This word “others” in the original language is a feminine word, and so just in case we missed the detail from the context, there were many other women from the full spectrum of women: from someone like Mary who was demon possessed to Joanna who had some social and political influence, and everyone in the middle, who followed Jesus’ in his gospel purpose.
- One final note I want to make here is that Jesus was also counter-cultural in his decisions in calling women to his witnesses. In ancient times, it was normal to exclude women from the court of law because women’s testimonies carried little weight compared to the testimonies of men. But in all four gospel accounts, in the book of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Jesus appears first to Mary Magdalene, Joanna and other women. The men were not around because Jesus’ male disciples fled and hid themselves when Jesus was being arrested. Even if they could go into the courts to be with Jesus, they didn’t.
 - So we have to note that women, not the men, that followed Jesus, were witnesses to the four essential components of the church’s confession (1 Corinthians 15:3-5): Women witnessed Jesus’ death (Luke 23:49), Jesus’ burial (Luke 23:55-56), the empty tomb (Luke 24:3), and Jesus’ resurrection (Luke 24:10-12). But, even when these women rushed to the male disciples of Jesus, proclaiming that Jesus had resurrected, what did they do? The men dismissed the women! Saying it was an “idle tale”, basically that it was nonsense, and even the apostles and other disciples did not believe them at first (Luke 24:11). So why would Jesus give the responsibility to a group of women to be his first witnesses?

⁵ Borland, 76.

⁶ Rebecca McLaughlin, <https://erlc.com/resource-library/articles/how-the-gospels-show-that-jesus-values-women/>

- There are a few reasons out there but I believe it is because Jesus wants his church to understand that women are valuable members of his body. Scripture teaches us that, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28). So throughout Jesus’ ministry on earth, Jesus has been intentionally “building up a community of men and women together as a holistic representation of membership in God’s kingdom.”⁷ By Jesus’ example of valuing and including women to participate in his gospel purpose, Jesus was already teaching and showing his disciples how they could be the church, and together with complementary roles and gifts, men and women would be fruitful members of his body. May this be our hope and prayer for our church!

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Luke 8:2–3 (ESV)

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.

- Women participated in Jesus’ purpose as gospel patrons, supporting the financial needs of his mission.
 - Gospel Patrons: “People who resource and come alongside others to help them proclaim the gospel.” - John Rinehart

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- Let’s close by looking at the very last phrase in verse 3. It says there were “many others who provided for them out of their means.” So the “others” are “other women” who became followers and disciples of Jesus. And the “them” refer to Jesus and the twelve apostles.
 - Specifically, they “provided for” them, which means that they served by caring for and taking care of the needs of Jesus and the twelve in the midst of their ministry. This word could mean the general serving that they provided but the next phrase helps us to define how they served.
 - They provided “from their means”, which means from their possessions/property. So essentially, these women participated in Jesus’ purpose as gospel patrons, supporting the financial needs of his mission.
 - A patron is a person who gives financial or other support to a person, organization, cause, or activity. A benefactor. So if we just imagine for a moment that Jesus had a GoFundMe account, fundraising for the gospel purpose of God’s Kingdom. If we check his page, then we would see this great list of women who are loved and valued by Jesus, who received Jesus’ forgiveness and healing and were now chose to financially serve out of their resources.
 - And they became not just his patrons but specifically, his “gospel patrons”.
 - John Rinehart, in his book, called “Gospel Patrons” defines this role simply as: “People who resource and come alongside others to help them proclaim the gospel.” And in his book, he shares the story of William Tyndale, who was the famous Englishman from the 1500s, who wanted to translate the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek languages into English. For about 1,000 years before that, the Bible had been locked in Latin. But because most Englishmen could not read Latin, they could not know the Bible. And Tyndale’s heart was so that his countrymen could know and meet the God of the Bible. The problem was that it was illegal to translate the Bible and possibly lead to the death sentence. But God provided Tyndale a godly businessman named Humphrey Monmouth as his gospel patron. Monmouth protected Tyndale, provided for him, and even used his own merchant ships to transport the first English New Testaments throughout English. We may not have heard about Humphrey Monmouth but he even risked being arrested for association with William Tyndale, but we know how this partnership did indeed change the world. And in many other examples, he shares how whenever God had raised up preachers and missionaries to lead movements of the gospel, God also raised up gospel patrons to come alongside them as partners in the work.

⁷ David L. Jeffrey, *Luke* (Brazos Press, 2012), 118.

- This was also true of the gospel movements and missions work that we see in the Bible. At first glance, we could read the book of Acts and other New Testament books and think that the Apostle Paul was working alone in bringing the gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. But even the Apostle Paul had gospel patrons, supporting him in his various needs as he traveled from city to city with the gospel (cf. Philippians 4:14-20). And I can share personally as I have been on the receiving of gospel patrons, that our partners' support have been a source of great encouragement and a tangible reminder of how God faithfully provides all that we need in order to carry out Jesus' gospel purposes wherever we are called.
- So going back to the example of Jesus' first gospel patrons, we can learn a few more lessons from these women about how we can participate in Jesus' gospel purpose. First, in terms of how these women became gospel patrons, it was by Jesus healing these women, not only from their infirmities but also saving them from their sins by his grace. And second, Jesus chose to depend on the support from these women.
 - I've heard that many men even today still feel insecure about their wives or other women who have a higher salary than they do. But for Jesus, who has divine power to turn stones to bread if he wanted to, who could turn water into wine, who could feed thousands of people with just 5 loaves and 2 fish. Jesus Christ, God the Son, chose to have gospel patrons. And above all, women to be his patrons in a society and culture where women were second-class citizens. He valued women this way, providing them the privilege to serve, and then humbly receiving their ministry.
 - Even with us today, we have to realize that Jesus doesn't need our resources, he doesn't need our funds. But, he chooses to use what we offer to him for his gospel purposes. Even though he has unending resources to carry out his purpose, Jesus grants us the privilege to participate. The privilege to bring even our limited resources for the work of proclaiming the gospel in our city, in every place he calls us to. We can start with giving faithfully to our church for our gospel-proclaiming efforts as well as supporting other churches and missionaries who are carrying the gospel to places where no one has yet to preach.
 - And the second lesson, in regards to how they gave. It says that they gave out of their means. Which doesn't mean that they gave a lot necessarily. But they financially supported Jesus' gospel purpose, giving out of what they had.
 - For all disciples to learn how to give in this way, Jesus taught us with another women's faithful giving.
 - Mark 12:41-44 (ESV)
 - ⁴¹ And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. ⁴² And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. ⁴³ And he called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. ⁴⁴ For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."
 - And so, all disciples, we can learn from these faithful women, giving out of what we have, not what we don't have.
- Life Application #2: Contribute to the culture of valuing one another in Christ, especially the women in our church body.
 - Unfortunately, in the greater body of believers, the capital-C Church, we have seen how women, our sisters in Christ, have not been loved and valued in the ways Christ loves and values them. Around the world, there are too many cases in the news about how churches have sinned and fallen short of Jesus' value of women, even silencing or threatening the women who have been abused and mistreated.
 - Part of this is brothers treating women with all purity: older women as mothers and younger women as sisters (1 Timothy 5:2).

- Part of this is praying for one another, especially our sisters.
 - Part of this is also honoring and thanking those who serve and build up our body. Especially making sure not to overlook or take for granted the ministry of our sisters. Those who serve as deacons and as our life group or ministry leaders in our church.
 - Part of this is being humble and teachable to learn from the example and correction that we can provide one another, especially that of our sisters. As they model for us how to care, serve, pray, study, evangelize, live out God's Word. As the Apostle Paul often called such women in the church, we must also strive to see women members as "co-workers" in the gospel purpose of Christ.
- Life Application #3: Make margins in our life (our schedule, our resources) and create contexts to engage with unbelievers in our lives.
 - As we strive to live out the gospel purpose of our King Jesus Christ.

As we try to apply God's Word into our lives of faith this week, remember the one thing:

The One Thing:

*In the work of proclaiming the gospel in every place,
Jesus values and includes women to participate.*

For TGR: Can we all stand together as we close?

For JKT: I'll close us out in prayer before P.Eric comes up to lead us in response.