



## The Gospel of Luke – Female Discipleship

Date: Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2018

Speakers: Adam Pipe, Becky Stamps

Key Verses: Luke 8:1-3, Luke 10:38-42

### Summary

- Luke clearly shows women as disciples and leaders in the early church, throughout his gospel. They work in partnership with male disciples and with Jesus to forward the Kingdom through financial support, personal devotion, hospitality and so on.
- In these texts, Luke not only shows women in their roles as disciples of Jesus but he uses their stories to demonstrate what discipleship is. This in itself is a good case for women being leaders in the church: both men and women can follow Jesus together and learn from each other.
- Discipleship begins with the love and grace of Jesus, healing us and setting us free; from this gift of love (grace), we decide to give up everything and follow him.
- Jesus humbly accepts help from the women in his team. As part of discipleship we also need to be like Jesus in accepting help and service from others.
- Distraction and competition are enemies of discipleship. Even good things, which lead us away from the main thing of sitting at the feet of and focussing on Jesus, are distractions to be rejected.
- Competition robs us of joy and communal discipleship. The antidote to competition (which involves looking at other people and evaluating yourself in comparison to them), is to keep your eyes focussed on Jesus and what he wants to accomplish (in you, in those around you and in the world).

### Small Group Questions

- Read the two passages from Luke. What do these passages have to say about female disciples of Jesus and the role of women in the church? Do you have any questions? (see below for further resources on women's leadership in the church).

- Jesus both serves and leads his 'disciples' (apprentices), and is humble enough to recognize his own needs and then to ask for and accept their help. Which of these do we find more difficult and why?
- Martha was distracted from her first calling (to spend time focusing on Jesus) by things that were positive, helpful and perhaps part of her calling from God. What positive things threaten to distract you from your relationship with Jesus?
- The Kingdom Jesus began is one where people support, love and also challenge each other to be better. How can we avoid competition and bring a 'Kingdom' atmosphere into our main places of service (work, home, church, neighbourhood?)
- Where and how do you feel most connected with Jesus? How could you make more time to be there this week?

### **To ponder or pray about this week...**

Make a plan to increase the amount of time you spend with Jesus (this could be on a walk, in the bath, on your lunchbreak, in the car). Do something that helps you connect with Him and spend time listening to what he wants to say to you. Be prepared for him to surprise you!

### **Further resources**

If people have questions about women's leadership in the church, you can direct them to the following resources:

Video: N. T Wright on women's service in the church <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FSZPyZFWQI0>

This is also written up as a theological paper: <http://ntwrightpage.com/2016/07/12/womens-service-in-the-church-the-biblical-basis/>

For the Vineyard position paper by Rich Nathan, visit his website: <http://www.richnathan.org/articles/topic/women/>

Derek Morpew, part of the Vineyard in South Africa and director of the Vineyard Institute, has written a book called *Different but Equal*, which provides a good basis for understanding the whole debate and why Vineyard has landed where it has.

N. T. Wright's commentaries on the New Testament (the 'For Everyone' series) are very helpful on some of the more confusing passages on the subject, if you have people in your small group who would like to borrow them, please contact the office ([info@birminghamvineyard.com](mailto:info@birminghamvineyard.com)). We also have a copy of the Derek Morpew book; all are lendable.