



Interesting Women of the Bible

Session 2
The New Testament

You can download this presentation at:

<http://www.ceorockford.org/adult-faith-formation/>

9. Ruth

The Book of Ruth

1. Naomi, Ruth + Orpah – all widows, options: Poverty? Re-marriage? Prostitution?
2. Orpah returns to her family, Ruth stays with Naomi and returns with her to her native Bethlehem
3. Ruth, a Moabite (enemy of Israel, Deut 23) trying to survive in Israel with no husband, loyal to “MIL” – see Ruth 1:16-17
4. She is diligent (2:7), humble (2:10), generous (2:17), gentle, kind and unassuming
5. Boaz graciously becomes her protector, credits her with *hesed*, marries her, Ruth gives birth to Obed, the grandfather of King David, ancestor of Jesus, Mt 1:5

10. Queen Esther

The Book of Esther

1. A melodrama pitting good vs evil, set in Persia
2. Esther, beautiful and faith-filled Hebrew maiden chosen to be queen of Persia to King Ahasuerus
3. Her uncle, Mordecai hated by Haman, King's official, who orders slaughter of all Jews
4. M gains King's favor when he uncovers an assassination plot against the King
5. Esther courageously appeals to the King on behalf of her people, reveals H for his deceptions
6. Haman hanged, Mordecai replaces him
7. Jewish celebration ☐ Purim

Interesting Women in the Old Testament

1. **Shiphrah + Puah** – liberators from oppression
2. **Naaman's wife's servant girl** – deep faith in God's healing
3. **Jephthah's daughter** – humility + nobility of character
4. **Huldah the prophetess** – wisdom, holiness, intelligence
5. **Wise woman of Tekoa** – creatively facilitates reconciliation
6. **Abigail** – smart, quick-thinking, politically astute
7. **Tamar** – ingenuity, tenacity, perseverance, “righteous”
8. **Jezebel** – shameless, ruthless, clueless to role of King of Israel
9. **Ruth** – loyal, diligent, humble, kind/unassuming
10. **Queen Esther** – strength of character, brave, wise, savior

1. Anna, Prophet and Herald

Luke 2:36-38

1. Her roots = far from Jerusalem,
widowed, elderly, very poor
2. Her piety surpasses her poverty/
worships day + night w/ fasting and
prayer
3. Counterpart to Simeon in
acknowledging Christ as
messiah/redemption of Israel
4. “spoke about the child to all...” =
herald God’s good news
5. “the first Christian prophet”
proclaiming that the Kg of God is at
hand!



2. Woman Healed of a Hemorrhage

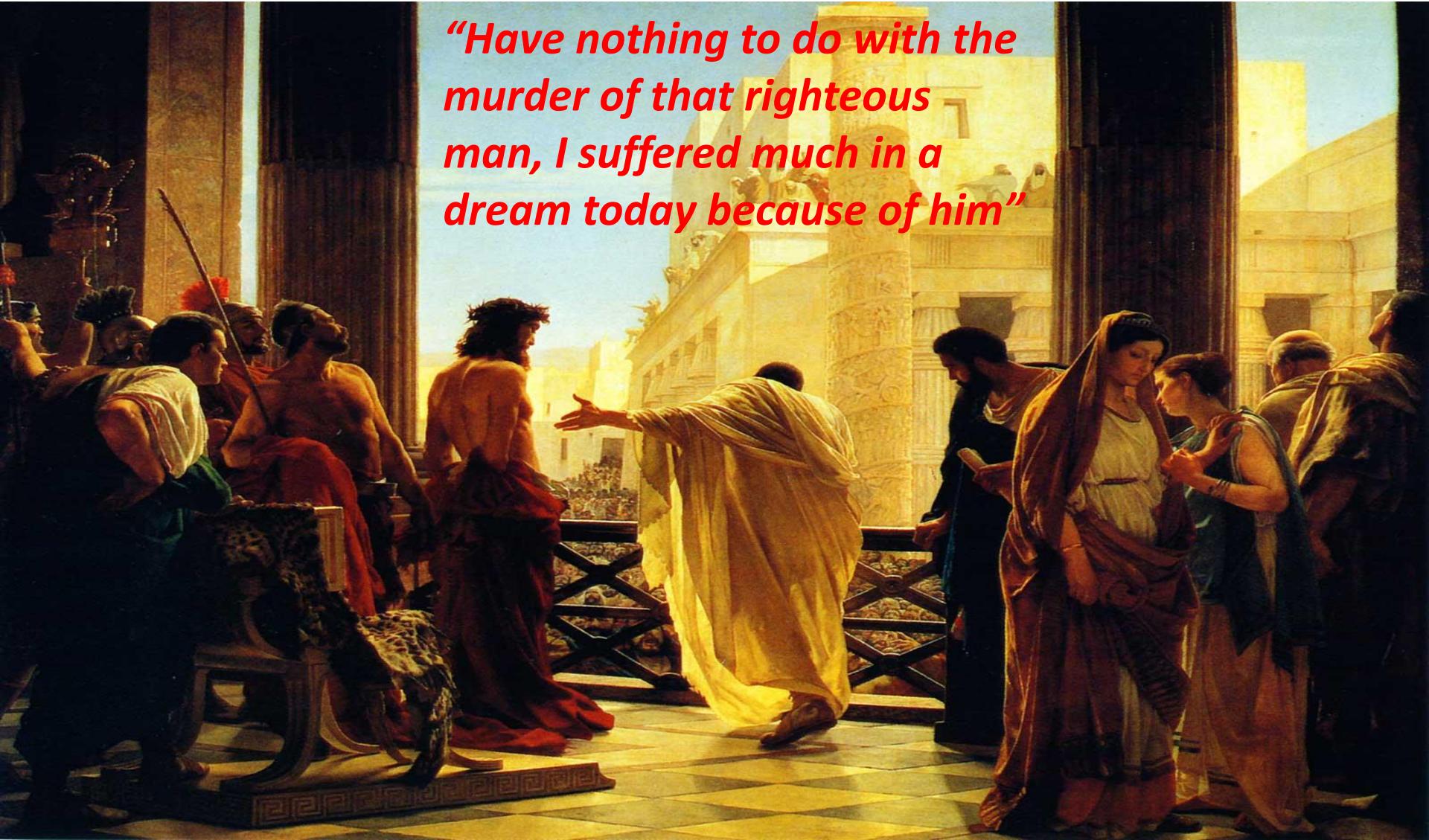
Mark 5:25-34, Matt 9:20-22, Luke 8:43-48

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1. Post-exilic Rabbinic legal tradition heightened inequality between men and women, esp. ritual uncleanness
 2. She is financially, physically, socially bankrupt = ostracized and isolated
 3. Her faith in Jesus' healing power aids her in overcoming all barriers
 4. “She falls down before Jesus” ☐ confronted by holiness, responds in awe
 5. “Your faith has saved you...”

3. Pilate's Wife

Matt 27:19

"Have nothing to do with the murder of that righteous man, I suffered much in a dream today because of him"

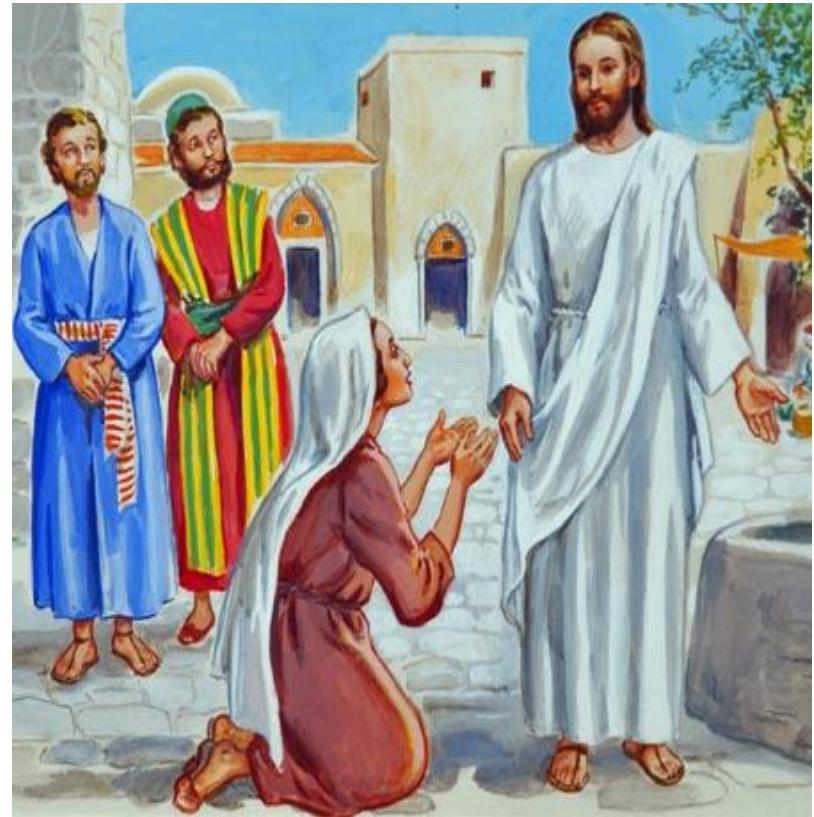


1. Dreams in Matt's Gospel convey God's truth, e.g. Joseph to Egypt, Magi warned to change route
2. Here: Jesus' identity revealed = “righteous”/right w/ God ☐ innocent
3. “I have suffered much...” ☐ minority view vs. religious insiders/leaders = troubled conscience, she's seeking what's just, cf. 5:10-12
4. In Gospels, disciples “suffer much” over Jesus' death

4. Mother of the Sons of Zebedee

Matt 20:20-28, 27:55-56

1. Women accompanied Jesus during his ministry
2. Like his apostles, she misunderstands his journey
3. Jesus' lesson on suffering as part of discipleship: "Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?"
4. She was at the crucifixion: a quick learner!



5. Syrophenician Woman

Mark 7:24-30, Matt 15:21-28

1. Jesus in place known for disbelief + paganism, seeking privacy (?)
2. “Dogs” – woman is unwelcome, outsider status, socially inappropriate
3. She perseveres in trust, humility, wit
4. Leaves in trust
5. Authorizes Gentile mission
6. Woman’s faith is acknowledged, praised
7. She is a role model for discipleship



6. Lois and Eunice

2 Tim 1:5, 3:14-15

1. Timothy's grandmother + mother ☐ raised Jewish, converted to Christianity
2. Paul's mentor/protégé relationship w/ Timothy, ("my true child in the faith" 1 Tim 1:2; now administrator at Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3), cf. Acts 16:1-5
3. Paul extols T's religious formation thanks to Lois and Eunice; cf. Deut 6:4-6

7. Lydia

Acts 16:11-18, 40; Philippians 4:2-3

1. “dealer in purple cloth” head of “her household,” “a worshiper of God,” Gentile, baptized
2. To Paul: “If you consider me a believer in the Lord, come and stay at my home” Acts 16:15
3. Founding patron of the Philippian church
4. Euodia + Syntyche – “come to a mutual understanding in the Lord”
5. “fellow workers who have struggled at my side”
6. “my true yokemate”?

8. Phoebe

Romans 16

1. 10 of 24 mentioned in Rom 16 are women
2. Phoebe – “our sister”
3. “diakonos” of church at Cenchreae,
recommends her, bears letter to Rome
4. Indicates women were traveling missionaries,
leaders, “deacons,” (Timothy is called diakonos
in 1 Thes 3:2)
5. 16:2 *prostatis* = benefactor? Leader, chief,
patron, guardian, protector = authority +
leadership

9. Priscilla (Prisca)

Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Romans 16:3; 1 Cor 16:19; 2 Tim 4:19

1. Wife to Aquila, usually mentioned first = prominence in the Christian community
2. Acts ☐co-workers, missionaries, experienced, knowledgeable about “the Way,” open home to itinerant influential Christians 1 Cor 16:19
3. Among Jews expelled from Rome by Claudius, meet Paul in Corinth, worked closely with him
4. Tutored Apollos
5. “risked their necks for my life” Rom 16:3
6. Model Christian couple ☐equality, partnership in marriage, business, education, ministry

10. Persistent Widow

Luke 18:1-8

1. Jesus teaches on way to Jerusalem (Lk 9-19)
2. Unscrupulous judge vs Widow
3. Widows had few rights, Deut 24:17, but she won't relinquish; takes decisive steps to advance her cause (cf. Ruth and Tamar)
4. Her persistence (threat) moves him to act
5. Lesser to greater ☐ if persistence can move a corrupt judge, how much better with a God who is loving and caring. So pray with confidence and persistence

Interesting Women of the New Testament

1. **Anna** – prophet, recognizes Jesus as “redemption,” announces the Good News to all
2. **Woman w/ hemorrhage** – great faith/trust in action
3. **Pilate’s Wife** – hears God, suffers, speaks up
4. **Zebedee’s Wife** – comes to understand Jesus’ true mission as suffering messiah
5. **Syrophoenician Woman** – faith, persistence

- 6. Lois + Eunice** – true catechists of the faith
- 7. Lydia** – converted by Paul, business woman, leader of house church
- 8. Phoebe** – authority + leadership in ministry
- 9. Priscilla** – trusted leadership at a cost ☐ “risked their necks, redirected Apollos, h/w teamwork
- 10. Persistent Widow** – determined to pursue what’s right and just

Interesting Women in the Bible

Old Testament

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2. Naaman's wife's servant girl
3. Jephthah's daughter
4. Huldah the prophetess
5. Wise woman of Tekoa
6. Abigail
7. Tamar
8. Jezebel
9. Ruth
10. Queen Esther

New Testament

1. Anna
2. Hemorrhaging woman
3. Pilate's wife
4. Mother of Zebedee's sons
5. Syrophoenician mother
6. Lois + Eunice
7. Lydia, Euodia + Syntyche
8. Phoebe
9. Priscilla
10. Persistent widow

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