

Lessons Learned from Unnamed Women

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Through their examples, these women show us how to become devoted disciples of the Savior.

Women played an integral part in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Through their small acts of service, sacrifice, and faith, they gave the Savior what little they could and showed us all how to follow Him.

The Woman with an Issue of Blood

Although no physician had brought her relief in 12 years, the woman with an issue of blood knew that Christ had the power to heal her (see Mark 5:28). When she reached out in faith and touched His garment, “virtue [went] out of him” (see Mark 5:30), and the woman immediately “felt in her body that she was healed” (Mark 5:29).

Had she merely watched as Christ passed her in the street, the woman would have remained afflicted. Instead, we learn from her experience that when we exercise faith and reach out to the Savior, He can provide us the healing and peace we seek.

The Woman at the Well

Upon realizing Christ’s calling, the woman at the well abandoned her

waterpot and rushed back to the city to share her testimony and witness of Him. Because of her willingness to share her experience with others, “many . . . believed on him” (John 4:39) and left the city to find Him (see John 4:30).

By asking, “Is not this the Christ?” (John 4:29), the woman both testified of Christ’s glory and invited others to come unto Him. From her example, we gain a powerful witness of missionary work and learn that sharing our personal testimony of Him can inspire others to come and learn for themselves that Jesus “is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world” (John 4:42).

The Poor Widow

The poor widow at the treasury desired to give all she had to the Lord. Christ noticed her humble donation of two mites and pointed out to His disciples her contribution. In contrast to the rich, who “did cast in of their abundance,” the poor widow “*of her want* did cast in all that she had, even all her living” (Mark 12:44; emphasis added).

Today, the widow’s mites would have equaled less than a half cent, but Christ taught that she had cast in more “than all they which [had] cast into the treasury” (Mark 12:43).

Sister Cristina B. Franco, Second Counselor in the Primary General Presidency, taught that even though the widow did not seem to hold a notable position in society, “she actually held something more important: her intentions were pure, and she gave all she had to give.”¹ Through her example, we learn that the Lord knows the desires of our hearts and recognizes and appreciates our humble contributions.

The Sinner with Ointment

Upon learning that Christ dined with a Pharisee, “a woman in the city, which was a sinner, . . . brought an alabaster box of ointment” (Luke 7:37) and bravely entered the home. She stood behind the Savior weeping, then washed His feet with her tears, and “did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed . . . and anointed them with the ointment” (Luke 7:38).



These two unnamed women provide powerful examples for us today: the woman at the well (left) inspired others through her personal testimony; the woman with an issue of blood (above) experienced healing by reaching out to the Savior in faith.

To the Pharisee, the very fact that the Savior allowed the woman to touch Him discredited His divine calling. “This man,” the Pharisee said to himself, “if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is” (Luke 7:39). However, in a subtle act of recognition and reprimand, the Savior highlighted the significance of the woman’s actions by comparing them to the host’s:

“Thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears. . . .

“Thou gavest me no kiss: but [she] . . . hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

“My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but [she] hath anointed my feet with ointment” (Luke 7:44–46).

Although her sins were many, Christ

forgave her and told her to go in peace, “for she loved much” (Luke 7:47). From her example, we learn that no matter how small or large our sins may be, we are never beyond the reach of the Savior. As we come unto Him and show Him our love, He will grant us the forgiveness we seek.

The Savior Knows Us

Though often unappreciated by the people of their time, these unnamed women did not go unnoticed by the Savior. Not only did He acknowledge them for their love, personal sacrifice, and faith, but He also taught us through them how to follow Him—no matter who we are or where we may be. ■

NOTE

1. Cristina B. Franco, “The Joy of Unselfish Service,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2018, 56.