



EVANGELISM WEEK WM 2025



Seventh-day
Adventist Church
NTER-AMERICAN DIVISION

Dear Women's Ministry Leaders Inter-American Division

It is a pleasure to greet each of you, tireless women in the missionary work of the church, women committed to every activity for the good of others, may God continue to be your beacon to guide your actions in everything you do.

We are about to start an extraordinary week of evangelism. Whether you are going to preach, prepare the whole program for this week, give Bible studies, or bring a guest, whatever your part in this week of evangelism, we say thank you!

You have a tremendously blessed material titled "Rescued by Jesus." This will be the theme. Men of God have written it: Ptr. Adán Ramos, president of the Union in Honduras; Ptr. Gunter García, president of the Union in Guatemala; and Ptr. Jorge García, president of the Central Union of Mexico.

We are deeply grateful for your collaboration this week, and we are certain that God will use every topic and word to attract many to Himself.

Jesus rescues us, rescues us out of love, rescues us by forgiving us, helps us to grow in faith, rescues us to serve, to be restored, rescues us to fulfill the mission and thereby transform our families, and above all, rescues us to live forever with Him.

May God use each of your gifts in His service during this week, may God be your shield to protect you, and may He be your strength during each day.

Let us enjoy sharing God's word and may our lives receive the greatest blessing.

With appreciation.

E. Edith Ruiz-Espinoza
Dir. Ministry of Women
Inter-American Division



Thematic Outline

1. Rescued by His love

2. Rescued by His forgiveness

3. Rescued to grow in faith

3. Rescued for mission

5. Rescued for restoration

4. Rescued to serve

8. Rescued to live forever

7. Rescued to transform our family

Rescued by His love



The woman of the garment

Bible Basis: ...And as he went, the crowd oppressed him. 43 But a woman who had been suffering from an issue of blood for twelve years, and who had spent all she had on doctors, and had not been able to be cured by any, 44 came up behind him and touched the hem of his cloak; and instantly the flow of his blood stopped. 45 Then Jesus said, Who is it that touched me? And when they all denied, Peter and those with him said: Master, the crowd presses and oppresses you, and you say: Who is it that touched me? 46 But Jesus said, Someone has touched me; for I have known that power has gone out from me. 47 Then, when the woman saw that she had not been hidden, she came trembling, fell down at his feet, and told him before all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. 48 And he said to her, Daughter, your faith has saved you; go in peace. Luke 8:40-56

Introduction

The life of the Woman of the Garment is one of the most dramatic stories that a human being can endure. Living with an illness for a long time often leads us to want to hide it from others, so that we are not rejected and, above all, not to be ashamed, no one likes to be pitied.

Whatever its source, shame is a devastating disease of the soul that weakens and isolates and makes us hide from the One who can help and save us.

Have you ever had a problem that has defined you? Something that has hindered you and taken away your life's strength? Maybe a habit, addiction, disease, rejection, or abandonment, has stolen your identity, damaged your relationships, hurt your family, drained your finances, crushed your hopes, dreams, and aspirations... and made you feel powerless and insignificant.

May I encourage you today with a look at one of the most famous “problems” in the Bible: the story of the woman of the garment found in Luke 8:40-56 Her chronic menstrual bleeding had caused devastating pain in her life for years! Because of the requirements of the Mosaic Law, she was treated as “unclean” (God had been sensitive in not requiring these women to publicly declare their uncleanness) until the bleeding stopped, but before that happened, she was forced to stay away from her family and others. This illness also wiped out her finances in her desperate attempt to recover, but it only made this woman's situation worse.

Body:

1. The Woman of the Garment is a fascinating story, we can take a look at the story in three ways that will allow us to focus on the masterful way in which God, out of His love, restores this woman.

First of all, the story begins with a woman who was trapped by a disease that had isolated her from the whole world, I imagine a woman, pale because of the hemorrhage, skeletal, somewhat decaying and offensive, weak, with a disgraceful appearance, because she had no one to show off her impoverished figure to, the possibility of being loved by a man was zero, and being a mother was not even an option.

Rejected by all, abandoned by her family, without any hope, with her eyes lost and submerged in her stormy suffering.

This woman had learned to “pack her pain”, even to use a mask to hide what she really felt, she was tired of being looked down on, her pain was so great that it caused her shame, even telling the same story that was already known throughout every town where she lived. The shame that this disease caused her devastated her because she had to hide from everyone to minimize her pain.

In fact, we have all felt at some point like this woman, we wear masks to hide our pain, we use them as “a graceful way to fit in and belong.” The more broken we feel, the more we are inclined to hide it from others.

This woman was tired of abandonment and rejection, and her wound was so great that she desperately needed someone to heal her illness. She had spent all her money in her desperate attempt to heal, she had gone to all the best “doctors” in her town, but the result was the same... “another failed attempt.” This was the sad diagnosis of this woman.

2. Secondly, this woman hears that there was a “man” who healed and the truth was that she had nothing to lose if she went to see another doctor, since she was sick with loneliness, desperation, and furthermore, health legislation did not allow these women to get near to people.

But the fame of this man surpassed the expectations of any mortal, and a faith that she had never experienced before began to take place in her. So she decides to follow Jesus and begins to walk through the crowd, afraid that they will call her unclean because of her condition, even that they will isolate her and not allow her to see Jesus, not only that, she also thinks that they will recognize her and that someone might tell on her. So I imagine her sweating from nerves, she could not even shout: “unclean” but ironically, it is the shame she feels for this disease that opened her way to seek the healing she knew Jesus could give her.

So at that moment, she devised a plan in her mind and immediately her adrenaline started to run and she thought: if only I touch the hem of her garment... I am sure I will be healed, and she cherishes the wonderful dream of the hope of her healing, and she executes her plan, the text says: verse 44 (she) came up behind him and **touched the hem of his garment, and** instantly the flow of her blood stopped.

I can imagine this woman's face when she felt that “memorable moment” when she touched the edge of the mantle and was healed, her face was filled with joy and she had the most beautiful smile that anyone could imagine, she’s now healed. I imagine that her emotion was so great that she did not know whether to laugh or cry, it was the most exciting moment of her life.

3. But it is precisely at that moment that **our third scenario** takes place, remember that she had never had a “Spotlight” moment, she had always lived under the gloomy shadows... then Jesus said: **Who is the one who has touched me?** Don't you think it is an ironic and even ridiculous question? He was in the middle of a crowd that pressed him, everyone was “rubbing shoulders” because they all wanted to see him and be eyewitnesses of his miracles.

But the question did not necessarily come because he had been touched, but because “virtue had gone out of him” 46 but Jesus said: **Someone has touched me; for I have known that power has gone out of me.** And it is here that the woman begins her process of restoration and redemption.

Jesus allows her to speak in front of a “select” group who had mistreated her, had forgotten her, and made her feel like a filthy rag. Then when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, fell at his feet, and **declared to him before all the people why she had touched him, and how she was healed at once.**

Jesus treated her masterfully and wonderfully, by allowing her for the first time in her life to express what she felt, giving her the opportunity for her “healing” to occur at a deeper level.

Jesus could have healed her and continued on his way, but Jesus needed to heal her shame, and restore her publicly; when we receive a special blessing from the Lord, He delights in allowing us to testify and receive praise so that others can enjoy the experience of healing and forgiveness. Jesus was not only interested in healing her physical health, but he was interested in healing her soul. But, to heal shame, it must be faced and the woman, seeing herself exposed, took courage and declared before all the people that the illness that afflicted her and had destroyed her greatest dreams, was now gone.

Finally, when the woman thinks she has already been restored, Jesus does a wonderful thing for her. He knew what this woman had been through and what she had suffered, and to reinforce her courage and complete her restoration, he said the most beautiful of words that a loving father can pronounce. He called her “daughter.” It was the most significant moment for this woman... he called her daughter in front of that crowd and validated her faith by testifying. 48 And he said to her, **Daughter, your faith has saved you;** go in peace.

Jesus called this woman “daughter” expressing his incredible love for her because he knew that she needed the love of a loving father, it is one of the most tender words that Jesus mentions when referring to a woman, he dispelled her shame, just as the sun dissipates the fog of a deeply black night to an early morning full of the splendour of the sun, salvation and restoration.

Michael Lindvall put it this way:

“A personal Affirmation in this Bible story is that — beyond physical healing — acceptance, intimacy and contact can make us whole and give us peace. In truth, we are made to have relationship with other people. Our relationships—in church, with friends, and in marriage—are not just something extra added to life to distract and entertain us, as if we could be complete human beings in solitary isolation. The relationship, “touching” if you will, makes us human and complete.

And our Lord Jesus Christ practiced it with this woman, by restoring her with love.

Conclusion:

Some of us have been bleeding for much longer than necessary! The devil is a liar and God's word for you is a revelation that your problem can be healed today. If you want healing, come to Jesus and partner with Him to speak His word in faith. Ultimately, it is how the woman received her healing. Jesus said to the woman with the issue of blood, "Daughter, your faith has saved you; go in peace" God's Word promises that when you align yourself with God, you will begin to regain your joy, your peace, your hope, your dreams, your identity and your important relationships will be restored - it is the revelation you need to see. He can stop the flow of your bleeding, and the hemorrhage of your life, and produce healing and Peace in your heart, because He can restore you through His love.

Called:

Is it not God? A wonderful God who is capable of fixing the disasters in our lives, capable of changing our tears into joy, of changing our misfortunes into lives with purpose. It is so wonderful that God not only wipes away our tears but redeems us from all evil. God is not only capable of cleansing our shame of sins, but He is capable of restoring our soul, which is what He ultimately wants to conquer so that we can enjoy eternity with Him. Remember the inspired words of Ellen White "...When human strength is lacking, man feels the need of divine help. And our merciful God never leaves the soul that sincerely asks for help. He is our refuge in sickness and in health." MC 171.1

Come to Jesus as you are and he will heal all your wounds and the most wonderful thing will heal your soul and you will have peace!
FOR WE ARE RESTORED BY HIS LOVE.

Rescued by his forgiveness



The woman He loved the most

Bible Basis: 36 Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house and sat down to eat. 37 And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, 38 and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. 39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."

40 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it."

41 "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"

43 Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." 44 Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. 45 You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. 46 You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. 47 Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." 48 Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

49 And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" 50 Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace." Lucas 7:36-50

Introduction

This woman's life is marked by contempt and rejection, and if this were not enough, she had lost her worth as a person and her reputation. Not only was she marked as a “sinner”, but she was also a social “outcast”. This woman did not have the slightest hope of growing professionally, her “work did not dignify her” and she was probably abused, and treated as an object. She couldn't allow herself to dream about the love of her life, because she had been defiled and her life had no meaning.

Sometimes life can give us unexpected turns, just as there are decisive moments that forever mark our lives, change our path and make us the people we are today. This could include a decision made, an unexpected death, a breakup, someone you meet, or even words people say. Whatever it is, we don't always recognize the impact it will have at the time, but when we look back later, we see it as a defining moment in our lives.

The decisions this woman had made for her life had not been the best. However, even in the worst of decisions, the Great God of Heaven can transform it into a new life.

Perhaps your past is turbulent, it is possible that your lineage is marked by immorality; You may not sell your body like this woman, but perhaps you have sold your loyalty, your affection, your ministry, your attention, or your talents. We have all at some point felt that we have sinned too much, failed too much, or stumbled too often.

But remember, that God has a place for the broken, and that the Promised Land is not just for a few; and that heaven will be full of men and women who, like this “sinner,” were rescued by the Great God of heaven to become part of his eternal and wonderful family.

Body:

1. The “Sinner” Woman is a story that describes sadness, disappointment, rejection, abandonment and the devaluation of a person. let us take a look at some relevant aspects of this story that will show us the unique and special way in which Jesus takes special care to treat this woman and restore her life.

The story told by Luke tells us that this woman goes to a party to see Jesus, I want to think that this woman is preparing to see the most important person in her life. And how do we do this? Whenever we are going to meet a special person, we imagine the outfit we are going to wear, we fix our hair, we put on perfume, and in short, we try to look very good for the special person we are going to see.

37 And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, However, we must remember that she was not invited to this party, the guest was Jesus, but she wanted to take advantage of the occasion to see her “favourite” person.

So let's imagine the moment. She enters the room and all the guests see her and wonder, What is "she" doing here? And they begin to murmur and wonder who had invited her. So the woman looks for a place to sit and it occurs to her that nothing more and nothing less than sitting at the feet of Jesus.

Jesus, being the guest of honour had not even greeted by Simon. This is the maximum expression of contempt we can show to someone. The custom at that time was to greet the guest with a kiss. Simon had not taken the time or care to greet him. It's as if we invited someone to our house and told them I'm watching my favourite show on television, you know what... look for a place to sit and get yourself something to eat, there's food in the kitchen... it would be a deliberate insult to our guest.

However, when this woman sees Jesus, she begins to cry. We can imagine that she remembers that one day she was the beloved daughter of a father, that she had hopes and dreams, but she ruined them, and that one day she dreamed of getting married and having a family, but none of that is possible at the moment due to her living conditions. And it is in that same scenario that she remembers the wonderful thing about this man who is the only Saint who truly loves her and does not reproach her for her dirty life, but who, despite her sinful condition, is willing to be with her in the midst of it. Of all those who were mistreating her with their looks of contempt and who saw her as someone worthless.

38 and stood at His feet behind Him weeping, and she began to wash His feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head, and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil.

And it is at that moment that this woman comes up with a brilliant idea, I am going to pour perfume on his feet, for her this man is worth so much that words are too short to express the immense gratitude that her heart feels for being loved by Him. A man who sees her with eyes of love and forgiveness. So, since it was such an expensive perfume, the smell of it fills the room.... and the envious begin to murmur about the "atrociousness" that this woman had just committed. They say "How is it possible that this woman is pouring this perfume when there are so many poor people who don't have anything to eat..." There are always people for "everything" and these Pharisees were no exception. But, she did not realize that, upon opening the perfume, the smell would cause such a scandal.

2. And as if this were not enough at that moment "Simon", who believes himself to be perfect and holy and that everyone is bad except him, says to Jesus: If you knew who she was, you would realize that she is a "sinner" and the kind of life she has. 39 **Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."** Have you ever felt like this? Someone has treated you like a "sinner" without being one. Has someone ever treated you with contempt? It's horrible, right? This is how this woman felt, it was an uncomfortable moment for her, and everyone looked down on her and believed they were better than her.

But Jesus, who knew the intentions of hearts and knew how perverse they were, that they cared more about what they say! They cared more about looking good before others so the only thing they sought was their own benefits and were not interested in salvation, nor in the restoration of this woman.

So I try to imagine that Jesus, at that peak moment of tension for the woman, tells her: "Calm down, don't pay attention to them, don't worry, everything will be fine, you are very valuable to me and you know that...: I'm not ashamed Of you, on the contrary, I feel proud of you." I imagine that her crying intensified.

In that scenario, Jesus asks Simon a question...40... **And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it."** 41 **"There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"** 43 **Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more."** And He said to him, **"You have rightly judged."**

44 Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. 45 You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. 46 You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil.

We can infer that Simon felt uncomfortable with this woman because at some point he had also slept with her. Ellen White describes when she says that: *"Simon was touched by the kindness of Jesus in not openly rebuking him before the guests. He had not been treated as he desired Mary to be treated. He saw that Jesus did not wish to expose his guilt to others, but sought by a true statement of the case to convince his mind, and by pitying kindness to subdue his heart. Stern denunciation would have hardened Simon against repentance, but patient admonition convinced him of his error. He saw the magnitude of the debt which he owed his Lord. His pride was humbled, he repented, and the proud Pharisee became a lowly, self-sacrificing disciple."* DA 567.5

3. Jesus does one more thing to restore the woman 48 And he said to her, Your sins are forgiven you. Isn't it wonderful how Jesus treats her in front of everyone and does for her what no one can do, restores her life, and fills her with hope. He changes his tears into joy. He redeems her in front of all those who had treated her badly.

Finally, when the woman thinks that she is now free from her sins, Jesus tells her one more thing to affirm her trust in him and to restore her soul 50 But he said to the woman: Your faith has saved you, go in peace. He knew that a broken and broken heart needs the Peace that only comes from God and it is at that moment that the healing and restoration of his soul is complete.

Conclusion:

Jesus doesn't care about your past, He is interested in your present and eager to enjoy eternity with you. He doesn't care what you've done, he never throws you away or rejects you, but the most beautiful thing of all is that he is never ashamed of you. He will always make you feel valuable to him because he truly loves you.

God's love is unconditional. He loves you with all your virtues and defects, those that are on the surface and those hidden in the depths of your being. He always loves you, even when you don't deserve it... and restores your life and your soul, but for this process to happen you must align yourself with him and everything else will be added.

Appeal:

Do you feel like your life is not going well? Have they despised you? And feel like you don't fit in. Have you been rejected? There is good news for you, for Jesus you are the most valuable, he loves you and will never be ashamed of you.

Mary had the opportunity that not even the three most intimate disciples of Jesus had, she had the privilege of being the first to see the resurrected Jesus. And she was the first to testify of the resurrection of Christ. Ellen White exceptionally describes Mary, stating that: *"When to human eyes her case appeared hopeless, Christ saw in Mary's capabilities for good. He saw the better traits of her character. The plan of redemption has invested humanity with great possibilities, and in Mary, these possibilities were to be realized. Through His grace, she became a partaker of the divine nature. The one who had fallen, and whose mind had been a habitation of demons, was brought very near to the Saviour in fellowship and ministry. It was Mary who sat at His feet and learned of Him. It was Mary who poured upon His head the precious anointing oil, and bathed His feet with her tears. Mary stood beside the cross and followed Him to the sepulchre. Mary was first at the tomb after His resurrection. It was Mary who first proclaimed a risen Saviour."* DA 568.2

God wants to win your heart and He has done everything possible just to get your attention and to remind you that his love for you does not change. Come to Him! Just as you are, don't wait any longer, he is eager to embrace you and redeem you.

Rescued to grow in faith



Bible Basis:

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1 NKJ

Introduction

Surely you have heard and pronounced the word “faith” countless times. Faith is an essential element in the Christian life, it is trust in God, the knowledge that He loves us and knows precisely what is best for each of us. According to the Bible, faith is defined as:

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1) NKJ

Another version says:

Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see. (Hebrews 11:1 NLT).

The renowned Christian writer Ellen G. White declares that:

«Faith means trusting God, believing that he loves us and knows what is best for us. That is why he guides us to choose his path instead of ours” (Education, page 229).

It is undeniable that faith is an essential quality in the Christian life, this faith is not only confidence in the salvation offered by Jesus Christ but also a continuous guide in daily life. The main way to develop our faith is through the study of God's Word. As Romans 10:17 teaches, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing comes from the word of God.” Dear friend, if you want to strengthen your faith, remember that it will grow in proportion to the time and dedication you invest in relating to God through his Word.

1. Sarah's faith (Genesis 18:10-14).

Sarah, Abraham's wife, lived with the deep desire to be a mother but faced the harsh reality of her and Abraham's infertility and advanced age. In Genesis 18, divine visitors came to his home and announced to Abraham that, within a year, Sarah will give birth to a son. The news seemed so implausible that Sara, upon hearing it, could not contain a laugh of disbelief. After all, Abraham was 99 years old and Sarah was 89, and they had spent years waiting in vain for the promise of a son.

However, one of the visitors responds to Sarah with a powerful question: «Is there anything difficult for God? At the appointed time I will return to you, and according to the time of life, Sarah will have a son” (Genesis 18:14). For God, there is nothing too difficult or impossible. These words are not mere words of comfort from a family member or close friend, but a direct affirmation of divine promise. Remember that: "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing comes from the word of God" (Romans 10:17). Sara heard God's promise.

The Epistle to the Hebrews reinforces this lesson about Sarah's faith: "By faith also Sarah herself, being barren, received strength to conceive, and she gave birth when she was old because she considered Him who had promised faithful" (Hebrews 11:11). Despite her initial disbelief, Sarah learned to trust God's promise. Her faith was not instantaneous or free from doubt, but as she experienced God's faithfulness, her faith grew stronger. Facing the challenge of infertility and advanced age, her faith in God's promise gave her the strength to conceive Isaac. Although the process was gradual and full of trials, God never let her down.

As with Sarah, you may face challenges and difficulties in your life that seem insurmountable. However, Sarah's experience teaches us that God's promises are fulfilled, even when circumstances seem impossible. No matter how big your challenge is, trust that God is faithful and that his promises will be fulfilled in his perfect timing. So believe, believe in the promises of God, to the one who makes everything possible, those promises are found in his Word.

2. Hannah's faith (1 Samuel 1:10-11).

Hannah is an outstanding example of an essential element in the development of faith: perseverance in seeking God through prayer. Like Sarah, Hannah fervently wanted to be a mother, but her desire had not yet been fulfilled. Despite her husband's love and support, the pain of infertility remained a deep burden. The true source of relief for Hannah lay in her constant search for the presence of God, to whom she expressed her pain and need: "She, in bitterness of soul, prayed to the Lord and wept abundantly" (1 Samuel 1:10).

Hannah explored all available solutions of her time and sought comfort from her husband, family and friends, but found no relief. Despite human efforts, her prayer reached God: "Hannah's prayer was unheard by mortal ear, but entered the ear of the Lord of hosts. Earnestly she pleaded that God would take away her reproach, and grant her the boon most highly prized by women of that age,—the blessing of motherhood." (The Prayer, page 132.1).

Hannah's faith is manifested in her persistence in prayer and her continued hope in divine response. Her dedication to prayer, despite the apparent lack of response, demonstrates unwavering faith. Once she received God's answer, Hannah kept her promise to dedicate Samuel to God's service.

Hannah's life teaches us that faith often requires patience and unwavering confidence that God will respond in His own time. Perseverance in prayer and hope in divine response are essential to strengthen our faith. Do not stop praying, share your concerns and desires with the God of heaven, who hears prayers and has an appropriate response for his children. Just as he answered Hannah's prayer, have faith that God will answer your prayers. We must understand that "It is faith, living faith that we need..." (In Heavenly Places, page 87.4).

3. Mary's faith (Luke 1:38).

Mary, the mother of Jesus, is an example of growing faith that stands out in the biblical account, particularly in Luke 1:38. In this passage, the angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will be the mother of the Savior, through a supernatural pregnancy that defies all human logic. Mary's response, «Behold the servant of the Lord; Let it be done to me according to your word" reveals extraordinary faith and obedience.

What was revealed to Mary was unprecedented. A pregnancy without having a relationship with a man seemed crazy from a human perspective. Mary foresaw the social and personal implications that this news would bring with it.

In a culture where purity and honour were highly valued, pregnancy outside of marriage would expose her to the risk of being rejected, harshly judged, and even potentially disowned by her fiancé, Joseph.

Despite these fears and risks, Mary chose to submit to God's will with unwavering faith. Not only did she accept the divine call, but she did so with complete readiness, trusting in God's promise without earthly guarantees. Her faith grew and strengthened as she faced the inexplicable, the incomprehensible and the difficult. Her response shows an act of courage and spiritual depth that challenges our responses to the calls and challenges we face in our daily lives.

Mary's faith teaches us to trust God even when we face circumstances that seem impossible to understand or accept. It encourages us to obey and follow His will despite the doubts, risks, and misunderstandings we may face. This example of growing faith is a call to live with complete trust in the divine plan, even when the path forward is unclear or painful. In Luke 1:38, Mary responds to the angel with faith and obedience and offers us a profound lesson. Mary accepted a divine calling that defied all human logic and faced enormous personal risks. His example of growing faith teaches us much about how we can respond to God's will in our lives.

Conclusion

A growing faith is observed in the lives of Sarah, Hannah and Mary, who teach us valuable lessons on how to develop a solid and mature faith.

1. Sarah's faith: In Genesis 18:10-14, Sarah shows that faith grows by trusting in God's promises from His Word, even when circumstances seem impossible. Although her pregnancy at an advanced age seemed incredible, Sarah learned to trust in divine faithfulness, demonstrating that God always keeps His promises.

2. Hannah's faith: Hannah, according to 1 Samuel 1:10-11, teaches us that perseverance in prayer is essential. Despite the pain and apparent lack of response, Hannah persisted in her pursuit of God, showing that growing faith requires patience and trust that God will hear and respond.

3. Mary's faith: In Luke 1:38, Mary exemplifies deep obedience and unwavering faith as she accepts God's call to be the mother of the Savior. Despite the risks and misunderstanding, Mary fully trusted the divine plan, teaching us to obey and trust God even in difficult circumstances.

These stories highlight that growing faith involves trusting in God's promises, persevering in prayer, and obeying His will even when we face challenges. I invite you to reflect on your faith and consider how you can apply these lessons in your life. Ask yourself: How can I trust God's promises more? Am I persevering in prayer with the patience of Hannah? Am I willing to obey and follow God's call like Mary did? May the example of Sarah, Hannah and Mary inspire you to strengthen your faith and live with full confidence in God's faithfulness. As you face your challenges, remember that nothing is impossible for Him and that His promises are always fulfilled in His perfect time.

Rescued to serve



Biblical foundation:

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:45).

Introduction

Jesus Christ is the supreme model of service for all believers. His ministry was a constant testimony of love, sacrifice and dedication to others. However, our natural inclination often leads us to seek to be served instead of offering our service. It is more comfortable and convenient to be the recipient of kindness and attention than to take the initiative to serve others. Often when we encounter a need, we expect others to solve it instead of taking responsibility for doing it ourselves. But in general terms, I dare to suggest, that women have a spirit more inclined to service, perhaps their maternal instinct contributes to making it that way.

In the history of the early church, we find inspiring examples of women who, being rescued by God through knowing the gospel, embodied a true spirit of service. Let's briefly look at three women who, through their actions and qualities, show how we can serve God and our fellow men.

1. Priscila (Acts 18:2-3).

Priscilla, along with her husband Aquila, is a prominent figure in the New Testament, mentioned repeatedly as a key collaborator in the ministry of the apostle Paul.

In Acts 18:2-3, we are introduced to Priscilla and Aquila as Paul's co-workers, showing their commitment to the task of spreading the gospel. Scripture also reveals that, in Romans 16:3, Paul salutes and recognizes the hard work of this couple in the Lord, underscoring their dedication and contribution to Christian ministry. Their work was not limited to supporting Paul, but also extended to training and teaching other emerging leaders in the early church.

In particular, Priscilla and Aquila played a crucial role in the life of Apollos, an eloquent preacher with an incomplete knowledge of the gospel. In Acts 18:26, we see how the couple, upon hearing Apollos preach in the synagogue, take him aside and explain more accurately the way of God. This act of mentoring and correction not only honed Apollos' understanding but also prepared him to be a powerful instrument in preaching the gospel.

Like Priscilla and Aquila, in your commitment to Christ, you are called to carry out a special work in the formation of others: "Aquila and Priscilla were not called to give their whole time to the ministry of the gospel, yet these humble laborers were used by God to show Apollos the way of truth more perfectly." (You will receive power, p. 281.3).

Priscilla and Aquila did not dedicate all their time to ministry, but their willingness to teach Apollos shows how even humble efforts can have a significant impact. Priscilla's work highlights that each believer can contribute to the spread of the gospel and the spiritual growth of others, not necessarily through formal ministry, but in the everyday context of life.

Thus, in your work, as you interact with others, you can serve just as in your own home and environment, you can educate your children and those around you with biblical principles, preparing them to be a blessing in the world and a living testimony of the transformative power of God. As the Christian writer Ellen G. White mentions: «Aquila and Priscilla were not called to give their whole time to the ministry of the gospel, yet these humble labourers were used by God to show Apollos the way of truth more perfectly.» (Ye shall receive power, p. 281.3). Likewise, your service can be a positive influence, guiding and training others in the truth of the gospel.

2. Phoebe (Romans 16:2).

As a deaconess of the church at Cenchreae, a port in Corinth, Phoebe is described in Romans 16:1-2. Her role as a deaconess involves active service in the faith community, assisting those in need and supporting the ministry of the church. Paul recommends her to the Romans, highlighting her selfless service: «I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea, that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she needs of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also.» (Romans 16:1-2, NKV).

Paul's recommendation to Phoebe also reflects his hospitality and willingness to support God's servants in their work. Her role not only as a deaconess but as a person who has helped Paul and others illustrates the impact of personal service and hospitality on the life of the Christian community.

No matter where you look, you will find people in need. Each one of them represents the opportunity to serve, extend your hand, and carry out some action that makes the need in which your fellow man finds himself more bearable. As expressed in: « When hearts sympathize with hearts burdened with discouragement and grief, when the hand dispenses to the needy, when the naked are clothed, the stranger made welcome to a seat in your parlour and a place in your heart, angels are coming very near, and an answering strain is responded to in heaven.» (Christian Service, pág. 187.3). This thought teaches that every act of service, no matter how small it may seem, has eternal value and significant spiritual impact. Like Phoebe, we are called to be instruments of compassion and support, not only for those we are related to but for all who cross our paths. By serving selflessly, we not only improve the lives of those we help, but we also fulfill the divine mandate to be light and salt in the world.

3. Lydia (Acts 16:14-15).

Lydia, a purple merchant in Philippi of whom we will cover more on another topic, showed remarkable generosity in support of Paul's mission. After her conversion, in Acts 16:14-15, she invites Paul and his companions to stay in her home, demonstrating an act of generosity and financial support that was crucial to the advancement of the gospel in the region.

«And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us.» (Acts 16:15, NKV).

Lydia offers her house as a meeting place for believers and a refuge for Paul and his companions. Her willingness to open her home to the Christian community reflects an attitude of welcome and hospitality that is essential for the growth and cohesion of the church "And the church in their house" (Romans 16:5, KJV). This woman's generosity serves as a model for our practice by giving a portion of the resources we are blessed with. Like her, we are called to recognize that everything we have comes from God and, therefore, we must use our resources to support His work and serve others. Generosity is not limited to hospitality; but by placing what we have received as a blessing from God at His service and that of our fellow men.

It is also manifested through our tithes and offerings, which are a tangible way to express our gratitude and faithfulness to God. In 2 Corinthians 9:6-7, Paul teaches about the right attitude with the gifts we offer to God "But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and he who sows generously will also reap generously. "Each person gives as he has proposed in his heart, not out of sadness or necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:6-7, ESV).

This passage highlights that our offerings should be given with joy and generosity, reflecting the same spirit that Lydia showed. By offering tithes and offerings, we actively participate in God's work in the world, supporting the mission of the church and helping those who are in need.

Conclusion

Jesus Christ is our supreme model of service, demonstrating through His life and sacrifice how we are to love and serve others. Often our natural inclination is to seek to be served rather than to serve, but Scripture offers us inspiring examples of women who joined in selfless service that emulates Christ our example.

Priscila and her husband Aquila showed that service can take many forms. They supported Paul and taught Apollos, showing that even humble efforts in our daily lives can have a significant impact on the advancement of the gospel.

Phoebe, as a deaconess, exemplified hospitality and selfless support, reminding us that every act of service, large or small, is valuable and has an eternal impact on the Christian community.

Lidia, by opening her home and supporting Pablo, taught us that generosity and using our resources for God's work are powerful forms of service.

By following these examples, as well as those of Jesus Christ, we are called to live lives of service that positively impact those around us and glorify God. Today I invite you to find ways to serve with love and dedication, reflecting the spirit of service of Jesus our model. Remember that we have been rescued to serve.

Let's pray

Rescued to be restored



Biblical basis:

"13 And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there. 14 Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. 15 And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us." (Acts 16:13 – 15).

Introduction

What a joy to be together again to continue our study of God's Word! We have had the opportunity to learn from valuable examples of women in the Bible, each of whom was rescued by God for a better life.

Today we will focus on an episode from the ministry of the apostle Paul that has a profound message for all of us. In this story, we find Lydia, a woman who was not only one of the first converts in Macedonia and Europe but also a woman whose life was radically changed through her encounter with the truth.

Although information about Lydia is limited, we know that she was a purple merchant from Thyatira and that she offered hospitality to Paul and his companions. This encounter reveals how God was working in her life, and offers us valuable lessons about the path we must follow toward the rescue that God desires to make.

1. To be rescued, you must search for truth (Acts 16:13).

Lydia was in a place prepared for prayer and the search for God. Although we don't know all the details of her life, it is evident that she was searching for answers and a deeper connection with God. Like Lydia, we all face moments of crisis or uncertainty in our lives, whether in marriage, raising children, at work, or in other areas. Lidia was at a point where she needed answers and direction.

The invitation to attend that prayer meeting was a divine opportunity for her. In the same way, today you have made an important decision by coming here to hear the Word of God. It's not a coincidence; God is calling you to find answers and hope.

Being willing to seek and listen to the truth is the first step to the rescue that God wants to do. Like Lydia, we must be open to God's intervention, knowing that He has a plan for our lives that includes peace and hope.

2. To be rescued, you must have an open heart (Acts 16:14).

Despite the circumstances of her life, Lidia showed an open and receptive disposition toward God's message. This openness was essential for her transformation.

We all face hardships and traumas in our lives: abuse, loss, disappointment. It is natural to feel hurt or angry with circumstances, but God calls us to open our hearts to His message of hope and restoration.

Paul's message offered Lydia a new opportunity to start over. God also offers us a new life, regardless of our past or the mistakes we have made.

Keeping an open heart is crucial to experiencing the transformation and rescue that God offers. Through repentance and faith, we can receive forgiveness and restoration, allowing God to write a new story in our lives.

3. Rescued through the new birth (Acts 16:15).

Lydia's story in Acts 16:15 shows us how, after baptism, life is radically transformed. Paul, in his letter to the Romans, explains the profound meaning of baptism: "Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? For we were buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too might walk in new life" (Romans 6:3-4).

This passage reveals several fundamental truths about baptism:

Union with the death and resurrection of Christ: Baptism symbolizes our identification with the death and resurrection of Jesus. Just as Jesus died and rose to offer a new life, baptism unites us to that experience, marking a new beginning in our spiritual life. This act is not just a ritual, but a participation in the redemptive work of Christ.

The new birth: In Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus, baptism is presented as a new birth (John 3:1-14).

This new birth is not simply a superficial renewal, but a radical transformation of our being, a completely new beginning in our life with God.

The Greek term for baptism means “immersion” or “immerse.” When a person is baptized, they are completely immersed in water, symbolizing the death of the old self, the burial of the past, and the resurrection to new life in Christ. This symbolism is clear in the baptism of Jesus in Matthew 3:13-17, where the Father publicly approved of his obedience.

Through this act of giving, we experience two extraordinary gifts that Peter mentions in Acts 2:38:

a. Forgiveness of sins: “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins;” (Acts 2:38).

No matter how numerous or serious our sins are, God's forgiveness is complete and absolute. God offers to erase every mistake, cleanse our past and free us from guilt. This forgiveness is a divine promise, as reflected in Micah 7:18-19 and 1 John 1:9.

b. The gift of the Holy Spirit: “And you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38).

Although we receive forgiveness for our sins, we still live in a world where we face trials and temptations. Therefore, God grants us the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide us, comfort us and strengthen us. The Holy Spirit is with us to help us overcome difficulties, forgive us when we fail, and encourage us to continue on the path of faith.

Conclusion

Baptism is not a mere ritual, but a powerful and transformative act that marks the beginning of a new life in Christ. Lidia's life, after her baptism, was never the same again. Her encounter with the truth and her decision to follow Christ led her to experience a radical transformation. In the same way, baptism is the starting point for a new and renewed life, full of forgiveness and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Today, as we reflect on Lydia's example and Paul's teaching, let us consider the magnitude of what baptism represents. It is an invitation to a new birth, an opportunity to receive forgiveness and the priceless gift of the Holy Spirit, and a call to live a transformed and enriched life in Christ.

I tell you about Clarita, a young woman who lived in a constant struggle with her past. Clarita grew up in a difficult environment, facing abuse and rejection, which led to a life of destructive decisions. Despite her efforts to find purpose and peace, she always felt trapped in a cycle of error and regret.

One day, Clarita was invited to a Bible conference by a friend. There, she heard the gospel message, which offered her new hope. Although initially skeptical, Clarita decided to attend a Bible study where she learned about the meaning of baptism. The teaching that baptism represents the death and resurrection of Christ moved her deeply. She understood that she could be freed and rescued from her past and start again.

When Clarita finally decided to be baptized, she underwent a significant transformation. When she was immersed in water, it symbolized her death to her old life and her resurrection to a new life in Christ. Although her external circumstances did not change immediately, Clarita began to face her problems with a renewed perspective. The presence of the Holy Spirit in her life gave her the strength to overcome her daily struggles, find forgiveness, and experience a peace she had never known.

Dear friend: Paul shared with Lidia the invitation that he received «What are you waiting for? Arise, be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name” (Acts 22:16).

That same invitation is for you today. There are many of us here who have made that important decision in the past, and we do not regret it. The Lord has transformed our lives. Many situations have improved as a result of this decision. God wants to do it with you too. Is it not true that you want to receive forgiveness for each of your sins? Do you want the Holy Spirit to be your companion from now on?

Join me, make up your mind now. Very soon we will have a ceremony where some of our friends will give their lives to God through baptism. You also make that brave decision, the most important decision of your life. Come, arise, be baptized and wash away your sins by invoking his name.

Congratulations, friends, let's pray together.

Rescued for mission



The Samaritan woman

Bible Basis: “And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, “What do You seek?” or, “Why are You talking with her?” 28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, 29 “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?” 30 Then they went out of the city and came to Him.” (John 4:27-30).

INTRODUCTION: Annie Lobert was born into a dysfunctional family in Minnesota. From a young age, she faced abuse and a troubled family environment. Seeking to escape her situation and drawn by the promise of a better life, Annie moved to Las Vegas, where she was soon drawn into the world of prostitution and sex trafficking. For more than a decade, Annie worked in the sex industry, facing multiple abuses and extremely dangerous situations. Throughout this time, she struggled with drug addiction and constant abuse from pimps. Her life seemed to be trapped in an endless cycle of violence and hopelessness.

A critical point came when Annie suffered a drug overdose that nearly cost her her life. This event marked a turning point for her. During her recovery, Annie experienced a profound spiritual transformation. She found comfort and hope in the Christian faith, which led her to reevaluate her life and seek a way out of prostitution. Determined to change her life and help other women in similar situations, Annie founded an organization in 2005. This organization is dedicated to rescuing and rehabilitating women trapped in prostitution and sex trafficking. It offers shelter, emotional support, and recovery programs to help women rebuild their lives.

Annie Lobert continues to be a powerful voice in the fight against sex trafficking and exploitation, using her own experience as a testament to the capacity for transformation and the power of forgiveness and faith. Her life and work are a testimony of how God can help a person overcome the most difficult circumstances and make a significant difference in the lives of others.

Today we are going to study the story of another woman who was rescued to fulfill a mission.

I. TIRED FROM THE JOURNEY

John 4:6 tells us that Jesus sat down, tired from the journey. “And there was Jacob's well. Then Jesus, tired from the journey, sat down like this by the well. “It was like the sixth hour.” In this passage, Jesus is travelling through Samaria and comes to a well where he sits down because he is tired. This episode precedes his encounter with the Samaritan woman, where he has a meaningful conversation about “living water” and reveals deep aspects of his identity and mission. How easy it would have been for Him to have used His power to shorten the distance like He did the time he walked on the water. How easy it would have been for Him to make the food appear as he did with the loaves and fish. However, he got tired of walking and was sent to buy food, instead of performing a miracle.

This and other passages demonstrate that Jesus, upon taking human form, experienced all the physical limitations and needs that come with humanity, including fatigue. This reinforces the idea that, although He was divine, He also shared fully in the human experience, which is central to Christian theology on the incarnation.

II. ENCOUNTER WITH THE WOMAN AT THE WELL.

We see the Lord preaching this beautiful sermon, NOT to a crowd but to a solitary woman of Samaria. The Lord Jesus Christ said to that woman: "Give me a drink." He was going to teach her a great lesson about the thirst of the soul and the water of life and to do so he begins by talking about natural thirst and natural water. What a contrast to the inflated language we often hear these days! That Samaritan woman had a great thirst in her soul. She had had five husbands. She surely had a tumultuous life. She would have been searching for security, love, fun, and joy in those "husbands"; but after one would come the other and that soul remained empty and thirsty.

Is it not true that many today suffer from this thirst? The Samaritan woman would quench the thirst of her soul that afternoon and it is amazing to see how the figure of Jesus grew in the concept of that woman. He was in her eyes a simple Jew who was sitting next to the well, but little by little she would see that He was that Son of God expected by Israel.

Jesus said to her: "If you knew..." We miss so much by not knowing Him! Thousands of young people think that pursuing a life of fun and pleasure is more satisfying than following and obeying Jesus Christ. This is because they don't know him! Thousands of adults think that peace and happiness lie in money, business, and the consumption of material goods. This is because they don't know Jesus!

He told her: "If you knew the gift of God..." He is the wonderful gift of God. He is the manifestation of the truth and Grace of God. Christ is within the reach of man and woman, of the youth, the child and the elderly, because He is the gift of God.

How different something is to us when it belongs to us! For instance, if we see a beautiful sports car parked on the street we may think, What a beautiful car! But most likely we will not go beyond that thought. Now if a very rich person came and gave us the same car, with a document proving ownership of that car, things would be different. We'd like to go out and try it and find out all its qualities and perhaps at night, we won't even be able to sleep for joy and excitement.

In the same way, just as the sinner finds forgiveness through His grace. There is nothing we must do to earn our salvation; it is a gift freely given! In this truth, joy and peace overflow in our hearts. Our souls are secured not by our own efforts or merits, but by the unwavering strength and sacrifice of Christ upon the cross. What a blessed assurance we hold! Do we truly believe this profound promise? If you knew the gift of God and who it is that tells you..." This is the crucial point of every man's life and also of mine and yours. Who is Christ for you?

The entire discussion the Lord had with the Pharisees and Sadducees revolved around who he was. They said: Isn't this the carpenter's son? on another occasion: Who is this that speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but only God? Who is this that even the wind and the sea obey him? others said. Pilate asked: Are you a King? This question necessarily appears in the heart of every man or woman, sooner or later and also in the heart of this Samaritan woman: she said: are you greater than our father Jacob who gave us this well? Ah! This man who had asked him for a drink was no longer a simple Jew. Truly she needed the water that quenches the thirst of the soul. How true it was that this tumultuous life had not satisfied his soul. How true it is that pleasure does not satisfy, nor money nor even success. Nor do works, effort and merit.

Just knowing the One who is the source of life! "Give me that water," the woman said. She was intrigued about who Jesus was, but he said: Give me that water! The Pharisees never said this. Oh! If you truly believe in Jesus you must say today, Give me that water!

In verse 16 it tells us that the Lord commanded her to call her husband. With this he made her understand that for God sin does not go unnoticed and is something that must be made clear. Confessing sin and restoring what was damaged is something that those who come to Jesus do. Whenever someone comes to Jesus the issue of sin must be clarified and settled.

In the 19th verse she calls him a "prophet..." Little by little He both leads her to think about the key point of worship. The Bible teaches us in many places that true worship is more important than service. When Martha reproached the Lord for letting Mary serve alone, Jesus told her that Mary, by lying at his feet listening to him and admiring him, "had chosen the good part which would not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:42). If we worship God in spirit and truth we will be good servants. Worship comes first, but true worship leads us to service. Jesus said it clearly in Matthew 4:10 "... You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve."

We live in times where worship has been distorted and many think that praise and worship consists only of music which is often associated with very poor lyrics that do not reveal even the most basic knowledge of the greatest truths of the gospel. Poorly chosen words repeated until exhaustion.

But here Jesus teaches us that true worship is in spirit. Carried out in the most intimate part of the being. Coming from that inner source from which life flows. Not necessarily associated with music, but with contemplation; yes to integrity of heart and holiness and obedience. And it is also in truth, based on the great biblical truths that truly teach us to know God and see him as he really is; and truly because it must come from a sincere heart that is open before the gaze of God and that hides nothing from its Lord. And that sermon of Jesus that began with a glass of water, led that Samaritan woman to the point of thinking about the Messiah expected by Israel.

And at that moment Christ utters those majestic words: "I am he who speaks with you." Those words that contain so much, because they are the true name of God. How many times had Jesus said: I am! I am the bread of life! the one who satisfies all spiritual hunger and all thirst of the heart. I am the true vine! that like a branch sustains you in all situations of life. I am the good shepherd! to correct you and to guide you to good pastures. I am the way! to God to heaven and eternal life. I am the light! to make you see deep things and understand mysterious things and to show you where you should go. I am the door! the gateway to all blessings and the exit door to all problems. I am the resurrection! and I can work even after death. I am the one who speaks to you! I am that ever present Saviour, but also a friend and advisor. I'm the one talking to you!

III. RESCUED FOR THE MISSION.

The passage tells us that that woman “left her jar.” Almost always, when we come to Jesus, we must give up something. But whatever we give up, it will not be loss or wasted. Surely Joseph, in Egypt, looking at the glory of his position before Pharaoh and seeing his father and brothers safe from the famine of the land and looking at his children and the wife that God had given him, thought: it was not a waste to have fled! of Potiphar's wife! Seeing the promised land and seeing the hosts of Israel, Moses surely thought that it was not a waste to abandon the luxuries and riches of Pharaoh's court. And the question arises: Why could they abandon those things? The world thought they were wasting their lives. Because beyond the circumstances they knew how to see Jesus. The Bible says that Moses stood as if seeing the invisible.

The most beautiful thing about this woman is that she gathered a large crowd of people who not only believed what she told them, but who were able to verify it for themselves.

“27 And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, “What do You seek?” or, “Why are You talking with her?”

28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, 29 “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?” 30 Then they went out of the city and came to Him”. (Juan 4:27-30).

CONCLUSION: The study of John 4 leaves us with several clear lessons: 1) The universality of Jesus' message. This meeting highlights the inclusion of Jesus' message to everyone, beyond ethnic and religious divisions.

Despite the tensions between Jews and Samaritans, Jesus demonstrates that his message is for everyone. 2) Personal disclosure. Jesus reveals himself as the Messiah directly to the Samaritan woman, showing that salvation and the truth of God are available to everyone, regardless of their background or social status. 3) Transformation. The Samaritan woman, after her encounter with Jesus, experiences a personal transformation and becomes a witness for Jesus, leading many in her city to faith.

This story not only has deep theological significance, but also shows Jesus' compassion and ability to see and value people individually. May God grant that someone today can say to Christ as that Samaritan woman did: Give me that water!

Rescued to transform her family



The Shunammite Woman

Bible Basis: “8 Now it happened one day that Elisha went to Shunem, where there was a notable woman, and she persuaded him to eat some food. So it was, as often as he passed by, he would turn in there to eat some food. 9 And she said to her husband, “Look now, I know that this is a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly. 10 Please, let us make a small upper room on the wall; and let us put a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; so it will be, whenever he comes to us, he can turn in there.” (2 Kings 4:8-10).

INTRODUCTION: Thomas Spencer says that when he was about eight years old, he and his grandfather were sitting on the porch swing. An old man from England lived on the same street; His name was Robert Dicks, but most neighbors called him “Grandpa Bob.” He was widowed and poor. Bob used to sit on the swing with him and his grandfather in the afternoons to talk. One day Bob told them that the little adobe house he lived in was going to be demolished. He had no family, no money and nowhere to go. Thomas's grandfather reached into his pocket and pulled out a small leather purse and from inside he took a key and put it in Grandpa Bob's hand. “Mr. Dicks,” she said tenderly, “you can put your things in the empty house next door. It won't cost you a cent, and you can stay there as long as you want. And remember, no one will ever kick you out again.” Grandpa Bob's eyes filled with tears of gratitude. That gesture from Thomas' grandfather forever changed his perspective on life. He made a commitment to help others without expecting anything in return. He learned that at home.

Today we are going to study about a woman who was rescued to transform her family. Although she does not have a name, the Bible says that she was a very “important” woman. Apparently she was not of royal blood. Nothing indicates that she had great rank, wealth, or “status.” No great knowledge or skill is attributed to her. Nothing is said about her beauty like that of Sarah, Abigail or Bathsheba. She did not save her people like Esther, nor was she a great leader like Deborah. What then made it important? How can mothers instill certain values in their families to help them become more like Jesus?

I. HER SPIRIT OF SERVICE (2 Kings 4:9-10)

9 And she said to her husband, “Look now, I know that this is a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly. 10 Please, let us make a small upper room on the wall; and let us put a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; so it will be, whenever he comes to us, he can turn in there.”

The prophet Elisha passes through Shunem. There was a woman there, who wanted to provide a place for him to stay and rest. She convinces her husband and they build a room for him. What she did didn't make the front page of the news and maybe no one knew about it or noticed. But, God yes. She served without expecting anything in return.

In our day, we struggle a lot with service; We think that, if it is not a large and public event, it is not worth the effort. Now, what kind of service does God expect from us?

34 “Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in;

36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' 40 And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me". (Matthew. 25:34-40)

If a neighbor is sick and needs a hot meal, don't tell anyone, bring it to them. If you know of a poor family and the children need shoes or anything else, take them. If you know someone who is going through tough times, be there for them.

The Shunammite woman was considered important, due to her spirit of service.

II. HER CONTENTMENT (2 KINGS 4:11-13)

"11 And it happened one day that he came there, and he turned in to the upper room and lay down there. 12 Then he said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite woman." When he had called her, she stood before him. 13 And he said to him, "Say now to her, 'Look, you have been concerned for us with all this care. What can I do for you? Do you want me to speak on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?' " She answered, "I dwell among my own people".

Think about what we just read. We have Elisha, who appreciates what the woman and her husband have done for him. He tells her that he knows the king and the commander, that she should just ask for what she wanted and she would have it. The prophet was giving her the "opportunity of a lifetime."

What would you have asked for instead? A better job, maybe one in the government; be on the king's payroll or be part of his staff; receive financial assistance or have health insurance. Did the Shunammite ask for these things? NO.

"I thank you for your offer," he told the prophet, "but I have a home; "My basic needs are being provided, I don't really need anything." Was she rich? No. But she was very happy. We live in a society, where everyone wants more, more and more. A bigger house, a job that pays more money, a new and better car.

"Contentment is not having everything we want, but wanting everything we have." If we are not happy with the things we already have, we will never be happy with the new things we receive. What is the secret of contentment? It's not how much money we have, or how big the house is, or how new the car is... It's how grateful they are for what they have.

"11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: 12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Filipenses 4:11-13).

A person who is not happy or satisfied sees the glass half empty; while the one who is happy and satisfied sees the glass as half or almost full.

The Shunammite woman, although she was not rich or had all the comforts in the world, was content and satisfied with her situation. This is why God calls it “important.”

III. HER INNER PEACE (2 KINGS 4:25-26)

“25 And so she departed, and went to the man of God at Mount Carmel.

So it was, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to his servant Gehazi, “Look, the Shunammite woman! 26 Please run now to meet her, and say to her, ‘Is it well with you? Is it well with your husband? Is it well with the child?’ ” And she answered, “It is well.”

When her husband asked her why she was going to see the prophet – she replied, “Peace. Everything's fine.” Really, was everything okay? No. She knew the child was dead; She had not asked for him, but she had undoubtedly learned to love him. She knew that what she was going to ask of the prophet was extremely difficult, but she also knew that everything was going to be okay.

Can you say the same as the Shunammite woman? In the midst of tragedy, illness, death; Can you say “everything is fine”? Because? Because God is in control and His will is always best for me.

IV. HIS PERMANENCE WITH GOD (2 KINGS 4:29-30)

“29 Then he said to Gehazi, “Get yourself ready, and take my staff in your hand, and be on your way. If you meet anyone, do not greet him; and if anyone greets you, do not answer him; but lay my staff on the face of the child.”

30 And the mother of the child said, “As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you.” So he arose and followed her”.

Elisha was a man of God. For this woman, it was her direct connection to him. No matter what the end result was, she was not going to leave Elisha, she was not going to leave God.

Have you ever met someone who, when faced with tragedy, turned to God, prayed and prayed, but when things didn't go the way they wanted, they blamed God and turned their backs on Him? Sisters, God hears and answers our prayers. Sometimes we don't understand the answer. But that doesn't mean he's against us or punishing us. No matter the outcome, or how things turn out in certain situations, we need to tell God, "I will not leave you."

CONCLUSION: I love the ending of this story. This extraordinary woman fought for her family. She sought to return her son from death and took care that her husband would not have an aberration against God. She was a true example for her family that is worth emulating.

If you want your life to count for something, you don't have to do or invent something important. You don't have to make tons of money, live in the biggest house, or drive the fanciest car.

If you want to be important as a daughter of God then dedicate yourself to serving, even if the world does not recognize you at all; Have a spirit of contentment and such faith that no matter what happens to you and your families, you can say: "Everything is well." No matter the outcome, never leave God, because God will never abandon you.

Call to follow the example of the Shunammite woman...

Rescued to live forever



The Syrophoenician woman

Bible Basis: “26 The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. 27 But Jesus said to her, “Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.” 28 And she answered and said to Him, “Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children’s crumbs.” 29 Then He said to her, “For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter.” 30 And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed”. (Mark 7:26-30).

INTRODUCTION: Andrew was a 13-year-old boy. His parents took him for a walk to the river. He grabbed a large tire, inflated it, and sailed down the river. That day, a large group of people had gathered at a place by the river to eat and play. Andrew was about to float down the fastest part of the river when he heard frantic shouts: “Save her! Save her!” A little girl had fallen into the treacherous whirlpools. None of the people on the shore could swim to save her. It was then that Andrew appeared at the scene and saw the girl's head disappear under the water. He reached out, grabbed the girl by the hair, pulled her up onto the side of the tire, and then stroked to the river bank. First, the family threw their arms around the little girl, kissing her and crying; Then they began to hug and kiss Andrew. A warm feeling invaded his being. He realized that without planning it he had helped save a life. God had allowed him to be in the right place at the right time to rescue a soul.

It is interesting to note the type of Evangelism that Jesus carried out when he was among men, Christ came to the world to save what had been lost, including everyone equally.

Today we are going to study the story of a woman who was rescued to live forever.

I. TIRE AND SIDON (MARK 7:24).

In the passage of Mark 7:24-30 we find a very interesting situation regarding the mission of Jesus Christ. In the previous verses, Jesus was in Galilee carrying out his work, it was on this occasion that he retired and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

“24 From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden”.

Tyre (what is now Lebanon) is located approximately 800 kilometers from Galilee and very close to the famous ports of Phoenicia. While Jesus was in this place, He did not want anyone to know that He had come with plans to “rest” but unfortunately He did not. He could not hide, since a Syrophoenician woman heard that He had come to this region, approached Him and asked Him to heal her daughter.

The Phoenicians were also known for their construction of ships that were used in battles, it was these who invented the bow that was on the bow of the warship, to confront the enemy and cause a collision and damage the opponent causing the ship to collapse and sink

These people were also known for the type of cult they carried out in their religious ceremonies; they were the ones who worshiped Baal, the god of fertility, both in agricultural products and in the reproduction of animals and of man himself.

Their cults were celebrated with human sacrifices and they were carried away by the desires of the flesh, including prostitution and promiscuity as part of their rites.

This was the kind of woman who dared to approach Jesus and ask for his help.

The other problem we find is that Jews did not interact with people from other places unless they were Jewish. Jesus, as a good Jew that he was, knew this problem well, but that was not all, he was a man and the person who requested the request was a woman.

What a big problem! Women in the Middle East were not considered a person with dignity, as men were. They were despised and were only useful to work in the house, in the fields or to be the delight of their husbands.

Sometimes you feel like this, that you are only used as an object without any type of value. I want to tell you that you are NOT, you are valuable in God's sight and He takes care of you.

II. THE SYROPHENICIAN WOMAN (MARK 7:25).

"25 For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet."

Who was that woman? The story we find in the Gospel of Mark tells us that she was a woman from Syrophenicia. This place was known in the ancient world for its trade and at the same time because it was given to the lusts of its inhabitants.

The woman approached Jesus for a simple reason, she had heard of the healing miracles of the Galilean Teacher who healed many sick and demon-possessed people and she needed Him to heal her daughter who is ruled by an unclean Spirit. She realizes that her god Baal cannot help her, because he has no power to do so, she finds that her only hope is in Jesus. She not only recognizes that she has a need, but that the only one who has the power to heal her daughter is Jesus.

It is interesting to note how she bows before him as a sign of humility, no matter the cost she would have to pay, the only thing she wanted was for her daughter to be healed.

Jesus apparently did not want to help this woman and told her: "Let Him feed the children first, because it is not right to take the children's bread and feed them to the dogs." Even with this, the woman does not give up, she was sure. that Jesus would heal her daughter.

These words were very harsh, but they were a reality, the Jews considered the pagans like dogs, since only they considered themselves heirs of the promises made to Abraham. These words of Jesus confirmed this idea, but it was not what He felt.

The woman demonstrated her faith and said: "Yes Lord, but even the little dogs under the tables eat the children's crumbs" incredible! That woman did not let herself be discouraged by those harsh words. That woman full of faith remained unchanged. Instead of choosing to be offended, she chose faith. Her response is an expression of hope even in the crumbs. What incredible faith to believe that a crumb from the Savior's table would be enough to overcome whatever ailed her daughter.

The response of that faithful mother shows humility and meekness. She admitted that they were less than the Jews, and even admitted that they were like little dogs, but like every little dog, she deserved to at least eat the crumbs that came from His children's table.

This woman's laudable persistence was based on that kind of faith that overcomes apparent obstacles and prevails even in the midst of discouragement. Faith in Jesus Christ is the greatest power we have available to us in this life. All things are possible to those who believe. This Canaanite woman is a New Testament example of the faith and meekness required of all disciples of Jesus Christ.

III.WHY WAS JESUS IN TIRE?

As mentioned above, Jesus went to Tiro with the idea of resting for a couple of days, so he tried to hide so that no one would notice that he was in that region. Why did Jesus go to such a remote place? Why didn't He try to hide in Bethlehem or Nazareth? It is evident that hiding in a region where he was very popular would be impossible, people would always notice, follow him and not let Him rest.

Some are surprised that their pastor is on vacation, and others invite a vacationing pastor to lead a mini-lecture or give them a week of prayer. Pastors also need to rest to replenish their energy, to be alone with their family. Jesus went to Tiro and Sidon because he knew that none of the Jews would follow them on such a long journey of 800 kilometers and in a place of pagan people.

While it is true, Jesus was going to rest from the crowd, He had another purpose to fulfill and that was to meet this woman, He knew that she needed his help. The purpose was twofold, to help this woman and to teach His disciples an unforgettable lesson, Jesus not only limited His ministry to the Jews, but to everyone who was really in need.

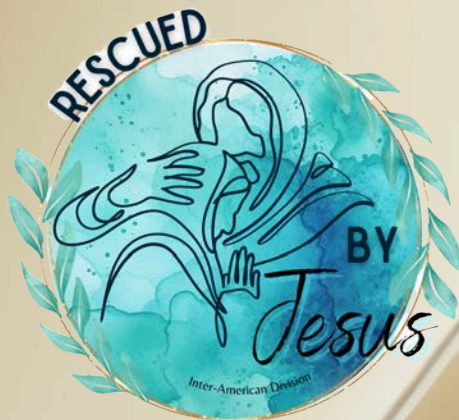
In contemporary Western culture, where “dog” is one of the most degrading epithets for a woman, we are forced to read insult into this statement. There is no evidence from any of the other healing miracle stories that Jesus ever treated a supplicant with any disrespect. The essence of this metaphor is that she is not one of the children, she is not part of the family fellowship around the table, and she is doing something very irregular in asking for herself and her daughter the blessings intended for the children.

For the third time, the woman addresses Jesus as “Lord.” Although bold, it is not disrespectful. She accepts Jesus' metaphor of dogs and children and expands on it, providing new perspectives. It takes the matter a step further, serving not only as an assertion, but also “as an implication drawn from what is asserted.” She “captures what the disciples have not realized that, even when the 'children' have been fed, there are enough leftovers for the strangers to be fed.

Jesus responds by praising the woman's “great faith” in contrast to the “little faith” he often sees among his disciples. Jesus had left all other activity to go and help this woman. He let her question him and ask him to heal her daughter and He granted her request. So Jesus knows your need and has come to meet you and waits for you to ask him with faith.

CONCLUSION: Just like the Syrophoenician woman, we must go to the feet of Jesus to ask him to heal us and although the world treats us like dogs, we know that Christ listens to us and is willing to help us if we ask Him. Jesus breaks every barrier, he does not take into account: race, color, social status, creed, sex, he considers you as a special person.

Jesus interrupts his work to come closer to you and me. Isn't this wonderful! The Lord loves us so much! Let us not be guided by feelings of inferiority, even if the world despises us, even if our own family despises us and even when our own church despises us, let us approach the feet of Jesus and experience His great love and mercy. He wants to have a personal encounter with each of us as he did with the Syrophoenician woman, let him direct your life and as a result you will be rescued to live forever.



**Seventh-day
Adventist church**

**Women's Ministry
Inter-American Division**