

"The Gospel for Women" — Sermon Notes

- I will use the masculine pronoun for God, so don't get confused here. This keeps us from calling God "it" — keeps a relational perspective.....
- Jesus often spoke of God as a loving and caring Father. He also used feminine imagery to complete the "portrait."
- To understand that God is neither male or female, Jesus knew we needed a variety of human analogies — that meant using male and female images.
- The Image of a Mothering Hen (Luke 13:34):
 - This imagery portrays God as having a protective, nurturing, tender, and longing love for His people, similar to a mother hen caring for her young.
 - Jesus loved Jerusalem, in spite of its treatment of prophets or differing religious ideas
 - Jews were not all located in Jerusalem. They were scattered the Roman Empire.
 - He used this image to show how God wanted to bring His people together — a unified community of believers — into the fold, hence the mother hen image.
 - Jesus knew what was eventually to become of Jerusalem — war, divine judgment. The mother hen wanted the people to be together and protected under her wings.
- **The Image of a Woman Seeking What is Lost (Luke 15:8-10):**
 - In the trilogy of "the lost" parables, one is a woman who is seeking a lost coin.
 - This is one of ten coins she possesses. This was a serious loss. (Could have been part of her dowry, a savings for her children, the hopes of a treasured future purchase, etc.)
 - The coin is lost and she will not give up looking for it.
 - The coin could represent God's children, demonstrating:
 - that God **does not want to lose** even one of His children,
 - God **will not give up looking for** any of His lost children, and
 - God **places an extremely high value** on His children.
 - This is an important parable. And Jesus uses a woman to bring it to life.
- **Jesus valued women.**
 - This was a radical view
 - Consider how Jesus changed women's standing — then and now:
 - **A women's place in the religious community (Luke 10:38-42).**
 - Jews thought women were not worthy to handle the law. Her place was to have an almost servant's role at home. When Jesus tells everyone, including Martha, that Mary was doing the right thing by learning at His feet, Jesus elevated women's status
 - **A woman's Sin (Luke 7:36-50).**
 - There is no double standard with Jesus.
 - A sin is a sin is a sin is a sin..... AND forgiveness is open to everyone.
 - **A woman's gift (Luke 21:1-4).**
 - The poor widow proved that generosity comes from the heart, not just the wallet. The wealthy gave a teeny part of their wealth. She gave everything.
 - **A woman's distress (Luke 21:20-24).**
 - War was particularly hard on women
 - Jesus expressed specific concerns for women, specifically pregnant women, when Jerusalem would eventually be destroyed.
 - **A woman's witness (Luke 23:55 –24:11).**
 - God **chose women to first discover** the resurrection, instead of men.
- **Paul makes clear in writing what Jesus demonstrated.**
 - **There is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave or free, man or woman — we are all one in Jesus the Christ!**

"TAKE-AWAYS" TO REMEMBER:

- Understanding God's Nurturing Love:
 - We can approach God as His children, with a sense of trust/confidence in His care.
 - God is not only powerful and authoritative but also intimately concerned with our well-being and safety.
 - In times of fear or vulnerability, we can find comfort in the idea of being sheltered "under God's wings," experiencing His protective embrace.
- Recognizing God's Longing and Patience:
 - The fact that the "hen" longed to gather her chicks but they were "not willing" illustrates God's patient and persistent love, even when we resist His care.
 - God's love is not conditional on our immediate obedience but that He continually reaches out to us with compassion.
 - It encourages us to reflect on our own responsiveness to God's love and to willingly open ourselves to His guidance.
- Emphasizing God's Care for All People:
 - Just as a mother hen cares for all her chicks, God's love and care extend to **all people**.
 - We can recognize the inherent worth and the potential for all people.
 - God shows absolutely no partiality
 - Seeing God in female terms, such as a loving mother, may foster a deeper sense of connection, comfort, and intimacy with the divine.
 - It is important to remember that while God is described using human imagery (both male and female), these are **only metaphors** to help us understand aspects of God's nature and character. God transcends human categories and **is not limited by gender**.
 - God's attributes include faithfulness, nurturing, teaching, guiding, authority, power, and mercy.
 - It encourages us to avoid limiting our perception of God:
 - God is beyond human categorization and gender.
- The Bible doesn't compare God to a father, saying that God is like our father; the Bible says God is our Father and Mother.