

***“Paul’s First Letter to Timothy — Prisoners of Hope — Part 7,
The Pauline Women”***

Last Time: ‘Prisoners of Hope’, Part 6, “Mary Magdalene and the Others.”

Today: We finish our series today on “Prisoners of Hope”, Part 7 — “The Pauline Women”

Review:

Mary Magdalene & the Other Women — The First Persons to See the Resurrected Lord Jesus!

- ***Mary Magdalene and the Others — ‘They’ Visited the Open Tomb***

We looked at Luke 24 for the details of this amazing “visitation”:

Luke 24:1,10

1 Now upon the first [day] of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain [others] with them ... [But they found the tomb EMPTY and went immediately to tell the disciples as the angel instructed them.]

...

10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary [the mother] of James, and other [women that were] with them (Salome, etc.), which told these things unto the apostles.

- ***Here we see the dedication of these women to their Lord, whether in life — or in death. Their commitment to properly prepare his body even after his burial was proof. But fear, not joy, was their response to the angel and the open tomb even though the word was given that he was risen! And it seems that they ran in every direction after the angel’s report.***
- ***Mary Magdalene and the Others — ‘They’ Were Visited By The Risen Christ***
 - ***But the sacrifice of those women was met by the risen Lord who loved them so dearly. IT WAS MET WITH HIS “VISITATION” OF THEM!! SO PRECIOUS INDEED THAT MUST HAVE BEEN.***
 - ***It was the work of a mighty angel and an angel-caused earthquake that rolled the stone away!***

- ***They ran to tell the disciples that Christ was risen indeed ... AND JESUS MET THEM ON THE PATH -- HE VISITED THEM! AMEN. This changed their fear to joy for sure -- and they worshipped him.***

John 20:1, 8-11 [Mary now comes with the disciples but not with the other women this time, it seems]

1 The first [day] of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early [with a number of other women according to other references], when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

...

8 Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home. [and they had not yet seen the risen Lord!]

11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, [and looked] into the sepulchre,

12 And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

- ***So the Lord now has visited Mary Magdalene! She responds with great emotion as one might expect based on her earlier deeds.***
- ***Mary Magdalene and the Others — ‘They’ Will Visit Many With Their Testimonies***

Summarizing it all from Mark’s gospel account:

Mark 16:10-11

10 And she [Mary Magdalene] went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

11 And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

- ***They believed not — and yet their faith would in due time transform the world. And it all came at the beginning from these women and their testimony of the open tomb and the risen Christ who had so personally appeared to them. Amen! They were the Prisoners of a Hope that grew so rapidly during these days, and they spoke boldly concerning their risen Lord and their hope changed the world though those that came to believe, even the Lord's own disciples.***

Transition:

Background: We move now ahead in time to Paul and the women he mentions by name in his letters. We have seen in every dispensational setting how God used women on the very center stage of his plan of redemption. Now we reach THE women in Paul's life. There is no mention of his wife but 18 women are mentioned in his letters to very great acclaim. We will use the Romans final chapter as our starting and ending place today. 10 women are referred to by name in Romans alone!

[READ] Acts 17:2-4

2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,

3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

...

Acts 17:10-12

10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming [thither] went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

12 Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

...

Acts 17:32-34

32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this [matter].

33 So Paul departed from among them.

34 Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which [was] Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Our Outline Today: Many Women, All Servants of the Lord:

- ***They Were Patron Saints of Paul Indeed***
- ***They Were Co-Ministers with Paul***
- ***They Were Fellow Prisoners with Paul***
- ***They Were Servants, Workers for Christ***
- ***They Were Hostesses of the House Churches***
- ***They Were Faithful Family Members That Made a Difference***
- ***They Were Persons of Privilege But Saints to be Noted***

Introduction: Prisoners of Hope, Part 7

With so many women associated with the apostle we would do well to classify them into groups. Paul himself does that in the descriptions that he gives:

I. Patron Saints of Paul Indeed: Phoebe (Rom. 16:1-5):

[READ] Rom. 16:1-5

1 I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:

2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:

4 Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

5 Likewise [greet] the church that is in their house.

- ***In these verses we have Paul's "letter or recommendation" of Phoebe to the church in Rome. She was a Patron (benefactor) of Paul's and to whom the letter to the Romans was entrusted!!!! She apparently was a well to do business woman who often traveled throughout the Roman world, perhaps with men who guarded her. But none of them are ever mentioned. She seems to have financed Paul's journeys.***
- ***She was the only one, though, who was called a "servant of the church which is at Cenchrea". Prisoners of Hope indeed!***

II. Co-Ministers with Paul: Priscilla & Aquila, Euodia, and Syntyche (Rom. 16:3-5; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 4:19 cf Acts 18:1-3, 18-19, 26; Phil. 4:2-3):

- *This husband and wife team was the one most often referred to by the apostle — a total of 6 times! She is often mentioned first before her husband. They were faithful co-ministers with Paul in his several journeys.*
- *They were not, you should notice here, well diggers or water pump installers. They did share Paul's avocation as tent maker though and together they "wrestled together in the gospel". They were therefore teachers and preachers of the gospel and, he writes, their names were in the book of life!*
- *Prisoners of Hope indeed, with the church meeting in their house as we see here and also in 1 Cor. 16:19: "The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house." Prisoners indeed.*

III. Fellow Prisoners with Paul: Junia (Rom. 16:7):

- *Junia (and Andronicus): The word here means "prisoners of war" at the point of a spear" - Fellowprisoners, Rom. 16:7. Included also was - Aristarchus, Col. 4:10. Epaphras also was included in this small but special group, Phile. 1:23.*

[READ] Rom. 16:7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

- *Interestingly, Junia is called here his fellow prisoner, and of special note "among the apostles." A Prisoners of Hope indeed! How many must have been imprisoned for faithfully preaching and teaching the precious word of life as these did.*
- *Such as small group indeed, but so critically important in the early church. Prisoners of Hope and a New Life Lived!*

IV. Hostesses of the House Churches: Lydia, Priscilla & Aquila, & Julia (Acts 16:13-15, 40; Rom. 16:15)

- *House churches met in their homes and in the house of Priscilla & Aquila, as we have seen.*

- ***Also, the Acts accounts indicates that when Paul's journey brought him to Philippi, a woman named Lydia welcomed him:***

[READ] Acts 16:14-15

14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard [us]: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.
15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought [us], saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide [there]. And she constrained us.

- ***So it seems that a church was established in her home, what would become the church in Philippi! Prisoners of Hope - of course.***

V. Servants, or Workers for Christ: Mary, Persis, Tryphena & Tryphosa, Rufus' Mother, & Nereus' Sister (Rom. 16)

- ***Many "workers" were needed to support those who labored in word and doctrine. And so it is today as well. Prisoners of Hope indeed. WHAT ABOUT YOU?***

VI. Faithful Family Members That Made a Difference: Lois and Eunice (2 Tim. 1:3-5)

[READ] 2 Tim. 1:3-5

3 I thank God, whom I serve from [my] forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;
4 Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;

5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

- ***Timothy's mother and grandmother were do powerfully used to promote the gospel of grace from one generation to the next - and onwards from there. Paul gives honor where honor is due. Families are so very important to the work of the Lord.***
- ***Timothy was very near and dear to the apostle and he was often mentioned in his letters and even writes his final letter to him for his encouragement. It seems that Paul is in that letter handing over the apostleship to his son in the faith, Timothy.***

- *Again, they were all Prisoners of Hope. Amen.*

VII. Persons of Privilege But Saints to be Noted: Claudia and Her Heritage (2 Tim. 4:21)

- *Paul's final words are written here:*

[READ] 2 Tim. 4:21 Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.

- *Claudia was a woman of privilege Indeed from the British Isles, then a Roman colonial possession.*
- *She was it seemed (extra-Biblical inscriptions and ancient writings indicate that) a princess, the daughter of the King of part of Britain who had become a willing servant of emperor Claudius.*
- *She had been sent to Rome, it seems, for her education and while living in the household of the military leader who had subdued her father in Britain, she became a believer through perhaps the ministry of the mistress of the house! This is quite a story indeed and may be true. But perhaps we are speculating a little too.*
- *But we should not be too surprised that leading women were converted to the faith and many became leading women in the churches. See Acts 17 etc.*
- *Claudia is mentioned here last. In Paul's last five words written before his martyrdom he includes her name. All Prisoners of Hope indeed. Amen and amen.*

Application:

- *We have finished our series on the women who were used of God in participating in the fulfillment of Gen. 3:16. There were many of course and most were not known by the scripture writers. Think of that. They were Pillars of the Earth and Prisoners of Hope. As we see in Hebrews 11:*

Heb. 11:35-38

35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

36 And others had trial of [cruel] mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and [in] mountains, and [in] dens and caves of the earth.

- ***Looking back, therefore, we read here of generation of those that shared that great hope of Genesis 3. They were Prisoners of Hope. And so are we, for:***

Heb. 11:39-40

39 ... these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

“SOME BETTER THING FOR US!”