

CHAPTER 12: WOMEN: THE STORY OF COMPASSION

GOSPEL READINGS: Luke 7:11–17, 36–50; 8:1–3

McKnight describes the *compassion* of Jesus through his behavior of showing mercy those on the edge of society's table. He bids the widow and prostitute a fond welcome and teaches his followers that their (and our) *Abba* longs to be close to those in need.

1. What are the three stories of women in this section?
 - a. Luke 7:11-17
 - b. Luke 7:36-50
 - c. Luke 8:1-3
2. Who was the one who seemed to lack compassion (Luke 7:39)? What was Jesus' response to him?
3. How do Jesus actions teach those women (...and Simon...and us!) how to...
 - a. Let Jesus see us in our suffering and grief?
 - b. See Jesus' emotion and know his empathy?
 - c. Recognize our restoration *by* Jesus' action?
4. Luke seems especially interested in pulling in the narrative of women – which is exceptional in Greco-Roman literature. Can you think of any reason(s) that women in Scripture help uniquely illustrate the uniqueness of Jesus' compassion?
5. How does Jesus' compassion illustrate that of God throughout the entire story of Scripture? *Examples: Exodus 22:26-27; Psalm 78:37-39; 103:8*
6. How did you learn how to be compassionate?
7. Can you think of a time when you were *not* compassionate to others? Why do you think you were incapable of being compassionate in that moment?
8. When was a time when someone was extraordinarily compassionate to you?
9. Is there someone that God is asking you to be compassionate toward *now*?
10. Brennan Manning wrote, "Since whatever is done for the least is done for the Lord, our compassion must start with ourselves. Before I am asked to show compassion toward my brothers and sisters in their suffering, I am asked to accept the compassion of Jesus in my own life, to be transformed by it, and to become caring and compassionate toward myself in my own failure and hurt, in my own suffering and need."

How are you recognizing God's great compassion for you?

Why is the Jesus Creed only able to be lived out when we recognize and accept God's compassion for you?

Next week: Chapter 13: A Society of Transformation (new section)