

Bhagat Ram

WDC 28:396

PAMPHLET

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How Jesus Christ helped To Change The World for Womanhood.



While the *historic attitude* toward woman has been that *she is the creature of her sex-relationships*, the **attitude of Jesus** toward her, was that **she was a person** with these relationships. He regarded women equally with men as capable of full intellectual and spiritual apprehension. He took as great pains with them as with men to bring them into His Kingdom. To seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and let all other necessary things be added, was fundamental in His message of Love embracing all mankind.

Christ the great Master, never put woman in a subordinate position. He had no different message for man or woman, black or white, rich or poor. The divine message was given to the world to all who were heavy laden and in trouble, to all who sought it; it was given irrespective of race or sex.

All students of the life of Jesus are impressed by **His teachings on personal religion**. They show that He persistently set Himself against woman's own belief that she was primarily a female—a creature of sex-relationships, and He demanded of her that she realize herself to be a self-determining person, responsible for the exercise of the highest intellectual and spiritual faculties. So He defended against

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criticism the women who reached out for these privileges that He set before them.

His belief in women as the equals of men led to a fine courtesy and consideration that is not shown towards inferiors. His attitude toward women may be described as one of spiritual chivalry—even to those most despised by men—while He accepted them within the inner circle of His disciples and friends who accompanied Him on His preaching journeys.

His dealings with women were marked by freedom from Oriental contempt. There is no trace of that sentimental chivalry that espouses a woman's cause right or wrong merely because of her sex. He respected women enough to rebuke them when needful, as He did His men disciples.

Jesus considered faith the pre-requisite for the revelation of Himself, and of the Heavenly Kingdom. In six cases where He specially commended faith in individuals three were women.

He exalted the qualities of gentleness, affection, meekness, purity so as **to make them the supreme virtues for all humanity** regardless of sex, thus bringing a far greater respect for women, as these had been regarded as peculiarly feminine virtues. It meant that, as His viewpoint came to be understood, the old stigma of "feminine" would be removed from these virtues and these would be seen to belong to the highest human development.

His disciples as the actual men of their day

were greatly perplexed by the attention He bestowed upon them, and the place He made for them. **He climaxed His amazing treatment of women by appearing to them first after His resurrection.**

As we read the story of resurrection, we note that **it was a woman who was chosen first** to receive the glad tidings that the Lord was risen—a fact upon which rests the Church and the Hope of IMMORTALITY. So he made women the first messengers of His completed Messiahship. All this reveals **His belief in the dignity and rights of women.**

Jesus struck a severe blow at the whole patriarchal system of family life by these words: "For this cause (of marriage) shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife"; while the exact opposite of this was true in the days of his flesh—that is, the wife left her father and mother to cleave to her husband. Thus He, to a surprising degree, anticipated to-day's belief in the full equality of the sexes. For, *it was the old patriarchal system of the family that had robbed woman of her right of self-determination*, and had made her the property *first* of her father and *then* of her husband.

Since Christianity has leavened human thought, and especially in lands where the mass of the people have had a working acquaintance with the teachings of Jesus Christ, many legal disabilities have been removed from women, industrial inequalities have been lessened, political suffrage has been granted, and many a devout and

saintly woman is being adm

Women are wanted in the Church, there are certain things they ought to be saying, there are certain conceptions of the Christian faith they ought to be promulgating. They should not demand ordination simply because they want a career, but because **they have something definite of spiritual force to give.**

In short, the status of women in Christianity is exactly the same as that of men. Here is a single standard of morals for both sexes. What is right for men is right for women. Surely to Jesus Christ women, in common with every class of the oppressed, are under deep obligations.

* Women of the Free Methodist Church of North America were granted the same recognition as men, and the privilege of being received on the same basis as men **in obtaining licenses as preachers and being ordained as deacons**, at the twentieth session of the General Conference in Rochester, New York, June 21.

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