

A Theology of Acceptance — A Feminist Survey of the Gospels

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this research is to develop a theological foundation for the empowerment of women based on a theology and practical paradigm of acceptance. This theology, which is a Women Theology, means women, accepted by God in Jesus Christ, are liberated in Jesus Christ.

That the liberator is Jesus Christ is not new to Christian theology. At the same time, "nor is freedom a new theme for Christian theology,"¹ as Letty M. Russell writes in Human Liberation in a Feminist Perspective — A Theology.

Yet today, in a world of revolutionary change, the freedom chorus is constantly growing in a symphony of the groaning of creation. It is heard, not only in the streets of San Diego, (or) Harlem..... but also (in) Djakarta, or Johannesburg.....²

or Tokyo. Feminist Theology was introduced nearly fifteen years ago, and its capacity for liberation has since that time been well acknowledged.

While low self-esteem and lack of self-acceptance are concepts that run counter to the idea of whole personhood, created by God and redeemed by Jesus Christ, it is a fact that there are a great number of Christians in Japanese churches who have difficulty in accepting themselves simply because

they are women. Traditional Christian teachings and cultural aspects of present society have exacerbated the problem. This lack of self-esteem, however, is not limited to Christian women alone, as a large number of Japanese women, young and old, are unable to accept themselves completely.

The situation existing in our society gives rise to the following questions: What are the relationships between self-acceptance, self-esteem, society and theology? What is the essential power that motivates change within a society? What aspects of Christian theology, in particular, Women Theology, can help women establish positive self-images based on acceptance of themselves as whole persons?

Once women learn to accept themselves, they can each learn to appreciate the diversity of others. In this manner, each individual can find sisters and brothers in the world in partnership. Though full acceptance may be difficult to obtain, it is the eschatological hope for a new community of new life with full acceptance in Jesus Christ that is Shalom.

2. When Jesus Encounters Women

2.1. TEXTUAL RESEARCH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

2.1.1 Focus of This Research

A feminist study of the New Testament texts should be the essential base of this study. In particular, the scenes in which Jesus encounters women would show the relationship between Jesus and women. There are sixty-seven New Testament texts from the Gospels that involve Jesus and women including the scenes where Jesus encounters women personally, where Jesus discusses women and their ways of living, where

Jesus mentions women, and the scenes which include women in the context, including the parables. These sixty-seven texts are listed in Appendix 1, and the synopses follow the citations. It should be noted that difference exist in the insights depending on the synopsis, and the time it was edited. These can be discussed individually, particularly with respect to the relationships expressed in the texts.

Of the listed texts, all of the scenes where Jesus encounters women are marked with an asterisk and taken up for examination from the point of view of relations. For this purpose, each text has been rearranged according to the method used in psychological counselling for recording conversations. By reviewing the rearranged conversations and dialogues between Jesus and women, some different paradigms of relationships can be observed.

This paper concentrates particularly on relationships based on acceptance of self and others, and on those based on rejection.

In this chapter, several different scenes are used as examples. The remaining citations can be found in the Appendix.

2.1.2 Paradigm of Acceptance Found in the Scenes Where Jesus Encounters Women

There are, in the relations found in the scenes where Jesus encounters women, slightly different paradigms of the relationship of acceptance. They are: (1) Acceptance by Jesus as a result of the requests of women or men to heal their daughters (the situation is initiated by the petitioner), (2) rejection or acceptance expressed by Jesus, and (3) acceptance that occurs mainly through the compassion of Jesus.

(1) Acceptance occurs when Jesus encounters a woman who expresses the need of his help. (Examples of this can be found in texts #5, #26, #32, #45, #47, #60, #66, and #67.) The examples of #5 (the ruler's daughter [#5a] and the women who touched Jesus's garment [#5b]), and #26 (the anointing at Bethany), can be taken up for study.

In #5 b, a woman who had been hemorrhaging for twelve years and had suffered much came up behind Jesus. She had heard the reports about Jesus and thought if she could even touch his garment, she would be made well, and so she touched his garment (Mark 5:21-43), or, according to Matthew 9:20-22 and Luke 8:43-48, the fringe of his garment.

She was helpless. Action was initiated by her, a result of the agony and desperation of a human being in need of help. She touched his garment from behind, as she felt she was not "clean" enough to be presented in front of Jesus. She knew herself from the stand point of the day, of the Jewish regulations. (Other synopses mention the fringe, which could give more meaning to the power of the part played by the garment in Jewish understanding, as a prayer mark.)

The woman touched Jesus's garment, and, according to Mark, "immediately the hemorrhage ceased ; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease." Luke states that "immediately her flow of blood ceased." She was healed immediately, showing the complete acceptance of her by Jesus.

Mark states, "and Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone forth from him, immediately turned about in the crowd" and asked who touched his garments. The disciples did not understand the situation, while Jesus looked around to see who had done it. In these accounts, there are often

third persons who do not understand the situation. The relationships between Jesus and women, or persons who are in need, are always one-to-one relationships, direct relationships. The woman, according to Mark, "knowing what had been done to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. And he said to her 'daughter, your faith has made you well: go in peace, and be healed of your disease.'" (Luke is identical to Mark in the order of healing. Matthew differs in order in that first "Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, 'Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.' And instantly the woman was made well." Matthew therefore emphasizes the power of words spoken by Jesus.)

A similar relationship between the needy and Jesus is shown in the case of the ruler. Here also, human desperation and powerlessness is expressed as the ruler "fell at (Jesus' s) feet" (Mark), and "besought him" (Luke). He has nothing to offer Jesus; he makes his petition out of despair. Upon hearing the news of the death of the child, Jesus says, depending on the gospel consulted, "do not fear, only believe" (Mark), "depart, for the girl is not dead but sleeping" (Matthew) or "do not weep; for she is not dead but sleeping" (Luke). Then Jesus goes to the bedside of the ruler's daughter, and, "taking her by the hand he said to her 'Talita cumi.' ['Little girl, I say to you, arise.']"

Although the incidents might have started because of desperation and human need, the initiative for acceptance is taken by Jesus. Jesus accepts the individual unconditionally. In spite of criticism, tradition, or human situation, Jesus immediately accepts the person, and this is manifested as

healing. Here, healing reveals Jesus's acceptance of all human beings.

An "unclean" woman touches his garment, he takes the hand of the dead girl. In both of these cases, Jesus ignores the rules of cleanliness. Jesus accepts all, while society often rejects individuals for various reasons.

Text #26 starts with the woman, out of simple need, abruptly bringing forth the ointment. There are some textual differences in the gospels, for example, the woman is described as a sinner in Luke, but in John, the woman is Mary. Furthermore, Jesus is anointed on the head in Matthew and Mark, but on the feet in Luke and John. Those who criticized the woman's conduct are the disciples in Matthew, unidentified people in Mark, the Pharisees in Luke and Judas Iscariot in John. Despite these differences, the main course of events is the same. Whatever the background of the woman, the fact is that here she anoints Jesus, and Jesus accepts her. There is acceptance of her as a person, even though her deed seems to be unusual. Jesus accepts her to the extent that he has given the meaning of her deed as his burial preparation and states that she is therefore to be remembered.

Luke introduces the concept that those who are forgiven much, love much. Here forgiveness of sin is the antecedent to love on the part of woman. As for the relationship between Jesus and women, we can not ignore the motivations of each party. Need motivates the women, while Jesus is motivated to heal. However, these motivations occur at the same time. The Lord's Prayer states, "forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." In the Greek language, the words imply that the granting and the receiving of

forgiveness occur simultaneously. In the same way, the granting and the receiving of acceptance occur simultaneously. The women petition Jesus, but they have already been accepted by him.

No matter what the social context surrounding the editing of the gospels, the relation between Jesus and women can be clearly regarded as Jesus's complete acceptance. Although the situation is often initiated by women, Jesus's immediate reaction is to accept them completely.

(2) Rejection and acceptance expressed by Jesus

The examples used are #9 (The Mother and Brothers of Jesus), and some parts of #14 (The Cananite Woman's Faith).³ (Examples can also be found in #18, #19, #48, and #58.)

In Mark this text is placed in the early part of Jesus' mission, while in Matthew it comes later. From the point of view of the relationship between Jesus and his mother and relatives, one unique point can be noted, which is Jesus's rejection of both the mother-son relationship and relationships between relatives.

Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza analyzes this rejection as the break with the patriarchal system, the tossing out of the idea of a "natural" household and the reestablishment of a "new 'family' of equal discipleship,"⁴

According to Mark, when Jesus's mother and brothers came and called for him, there was a crowd sitting about him. Jesus, indicating those who sat about him (in Matthew, the disciples) said, "Here are my mother and my brothers!" This indicates that Jesus called non-relatives his mother and

brothers, as if they were relatives. This also implies that there must have been some young and middle-aged women in the crowd of people around Jesus whom he could call mothers and sisters. There is no indication that his immediate blood relatives have special status. Instead, "whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister, and mother." ⁵ The only condition is that one do the will of God. This indicates that the relationship between individuals and Jesus is not limited by some moral legitimacy, but rather it is a direct relationship with God. Thus Jesus accepts all those around him, women, men, young and old, as sisters, brothers, mothers and fathers.

The rejection of relatives as having special status leads to the acceptance of everyone without condition. Rejection here means wider acceptance, or complete acceptance of all human beings, no matter what social relation they might have. As a result, there are no conditions on the part of the petitioners, either. The rejection of family ties also leads to the establishment of new relations which are not based on blood ties but on human relationships. This text makes very clear that Jewish society at that time expected that Jesus might favor his family and relatives. By rejecting favoritism, others can be fully accepted.

On the other hand, the rejection of the mother indicates acceptance of all women equally. If Jesus's natural mother was considered special, the other women would not be special, meaning that they would not be completely accepted. The rejection of special cases means that all human beings can be accepted equally.

Viewed from another angle, it can be said that Jesus re-

jects those who are violate human rights. In the above case, Jesus rejects those who insist on the special rights of one group or individual over other less privileged people. This extends even to those who would give a special place to Jesus's mother, sisters, brothers and relatives, for this in effect means taking the rights to equality from others. As demonstrated in the healing of a crippled woman on the Sabbath (# 51), Jesus shows his anger towards those who do not consider human rights as the first priority, those who show little concern for the misery of an oppressed woman. This rejection of oppression that is expressed by Jesus is the foundation of his acceptance, which for him leads to death on the Cross. Jesus's rejection of oppressors and acceptance of the oppressed are in a sense inter-related.

(3) Acceptance manifested in Jesus's compassion

The example taken up for study is #43, the raising of the widow's son at Nain, from Luke 7:11-17. (Other examples of Jesus's compassion can be found in #5, #43, #30, #51 and #64.) Luke relates the incident as follows :

When the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." And he came and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." And the dead man sat up, and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother.⁶

Jesus, in his compassion, gives life to the widow's son. Here Jesus accepts her completely, without conditions, the acceptance of a mortal by the immortal, Jesus. Jesus gives life, symbolizing here that Jesus is Life. Jesus shows com-

passion, often when men and women are facing death and their own mortality, and gives life.

This is clearly revealed in the Cross. The cross of Jesus Christ has the power to change mortality to immortality. On the Cross, Sin is replaced with Life. It is the salvation offered through Jesus Christ. There are no conditions on the part of us human beings, but it is Christ's compassion that saves us and gives us Life.

2.1.3. Meaning of the Complete Acceptance by Jesus

(1) The Cross.

The complete acceptance by Jesus leads him to the Cross. Jesus Christ accepts human beings to the extent that he undergoes death on the Cross. It is God's intention, for God accepts human beings through Jesus Christ. It was necessary for God to send Jesus Christ, who can be with us.

(2) Resurrection of Jesus Christ by God

Jesus's acceptance reveals God's perfect acceptance, and shows eternal life.

(3) Perfect Acceptance by Jesus Christ revealed in the Holy Spirit.

The Ascendance of Jesus Christ fulfills the promise of the Holy Spirit. It is the spirit of God, the spirit of Jesus Christ, that is the spirit of acceptance. With the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, which is acceptance, we are to accept others. We are given the evangelical purpose to declare our faith to the world, not only through words but also through acceptance. In acceptance, we are given the life to follow Jesus Christ. It is a new life for us. Full acceptance

by God through Jesus Christ leads us to accept ourselves and others.

It is also clear that in the social context, our present society is not fully open to acceptance. Human society has various limitations and it is not always an accepting society, therefore it is all the more necessary for us to be aware of our acceptance by God through Jesus Christ.

It is only in Jesus Christ on the Cross that full acceptance is revealed. It is a relationship of Love which has no limitations. This gives us human beings a mutual relationship with God, in Jesus Christ. We can become God's partner in Jesus Christ.⁷

As has been shown, relationships between Jesus and women are characterized by his total acceptance of them, no matter if they are young, old, middle-aged, widowed, mothers, foreign, sick, sinners, passive or active. No matter what their situation, Jesus first accepts them. This paradigm of Jesus's acceptance influences all the women who appear in the texts.

This unconditional acceptance leads women to accept themselves, even though they may not be accepted by society, and allows them to become free of all bindings. Women who encounter Jesus become new beings, wholly accepting their existence. This acceptance by Jesus Christ makes each woman stand up as a person. Self-acceptance and self-esteem are born within her, through the knowledge that she is fully accepted by Jesus Christ.

These relationships between Jesus and women found in the New Testament therefore also show that Jesus is the Savior from sin, the giver of Life and the liberator of women from

all of the discrimination and restrictions that they face. For women, these stories from the New Testament are the proof and the declaration that Jesus is Christ, the liberator, who accepts all by the sacrifice of himself.

2.2. NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY OF ACCEPTANCE

The following paragraph summarizes the points raised from the outcome of the survey conducted in Chapter 2 concerning the relationships between Jesus and women found in the gospels of the New Testament.

Acceptance of each woman by Jesus occurs as Jesus encounters the woman. Regardless of who initiates the encounter, Jesus first accepts the woman. Following this, acceptance of Jesus by the woman occurs as the second step. Once a woman is accepted by Jesus, and acknowledges this acceptance, she can accept herself for what she is, just as Jesus accepts her. When a woman is accepted by Jesus and subsequently accepts her own reality, she is free to show herself to others as a liberated person. Persons so liberated quite often want to tell the good news to others and proclamation of the gospel is initiated.

Once a person is liberated, she or he is able to take social action, not only as a liberated individual, but also as one who accepts and cooperates with others. Liberation is a catalyst for social change and social actions, led by personal conviction and decisiveness.

The above phenomena can be seen from a theological perspective as the following section demonstrates.

2.2.1 It the Concept of Christology

1-1 In Jesus Christ, there is a complete acceptance of women, reflecting God who can also be characterized by unconditional acceptance. It is only by *χαρις*, or God's blessings, that we are accepted by God. It has nothing to do with women's and men's own power or ability. Only God's blessings, *χαρις*, allow us to accept ourselves. Through *Χαρις*, alone, we know that God accepts us.

It is only because of *χαρις* that we can have confidence and sureness. If our confidence stemmed from our own ability or power, it would be unsure, unstable. Women who encounter Jesus Christ do not have any capability, and know that they do not, but they receive *χαρις* from Jesus Christ, making them feel utterly thankful. The revelation of God through Jesus Christ in connection with women shows the meaning of the existence of women.

1-2 The Cross is the ultimate expression of Jesus's acceptance. Without death on the Cross and resurrection by God, true and complete acceptance is impossible. Jesus Christ trusted God when facing death on the Cross and, because of this trust, or confidence that God accepts him, the resurrection becomes a reality that human beings can understand. Humans can see the fact that God accepts Jesus Christ. The relationship between God and Jesus Christ is based on the certainty (Faith) that Jesus Christ himself is being accepted by God. This leads us to the knowledge (Faith) that we are accepted by Jesus Christ.

The Theology of Acceptance contains an inherent aspect of passivity. As human beings, we are certain that we are accepted by Jesus Christ, showing our faith. Jesus Christ is

certain that he is accepted by God. This is a passive sureness, the passiveness of being loved and accepted.

The relationship between God and Jesus Christ can be characterized as one where God accepts Jesus Christ who in turn knows that God accepts him. The relationship between the Godheads is therefore a relationship of acceptance.

It should be noted that here acceptance begins with God, and with God through Jesus Christ. Here the emphasis is placed on Jesus as acceptor of us, as opposed to us accepting Jesus Christ as our personal savior, which has so long been the traditional emphasis in Christianity.

To know Jesus Christ in a relationship of acceptance, as acceptor of all, means for women eternal blessing, the blessings that comes from God through Jesus Christ. It is the everlasting joy of eternal Life. This fact is well expressed in John 17:3: "And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent."

2.2.2. In the Concept of God

2-1 God is the God of acceptance and self-acceptance. This self-acceptance is evident in Exodus 3:14: "I am who I am." God accepts God's self and does not need to be acknowledged by others. God said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (Exodus 3:14)

God is the God who cares about individual women, as revealed by Jesus Christ. God is the "God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Exodus 3:15), just as God is the God of Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel. This is clearly shown in the New Testament when Jesus encounters women individually. Particularly in the New Testament, the

individual woman becomes the follower of Christ.

The discovery of individuality occurs in each person when the individual's acceptance by God through Jesus Christ is recognized. The importance of individuality is acknowledged in the Theology of Acceptance. As can be seen in the New Testament, women who encounter Jesus do so as individual persons who are accepted by Christ. This acceptance occurs in the context of daily life, in an environment where women have experienced oppression, disapproval and rejection. Their own individual reality has in fact swept away the meaning of their existence. In the examples of individual action where Jesus is anointed with nard or where a woman listens to Jesus's teachings while sitting at his feet, Jesus accepts each person's individuality. In this display of uniqueness, Jesus discovers each woman's individuality just as the woman discovered the lost gold. It is the discovery of an individual person.

When an individual is accepted, it is God who accepts. God is the God who acknowledges mutuality. God accepts God's self, and God also accepts Jesus Christ. Through this, God accepts women and all people. As can be seen in the New Testament, Jewish women were extremely oppressed, yet God through Jesus Christ heals them and gives them life. The kingdom of God already exists, as indicated by this acceptance.

2.2.3 In the Concept of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit was sent by God, and Jesus Christ signifies the Spirit of Acceptance. God accepts the existence of the Holy Spirit for us. When the Holy Spirit descended

as recorded in Acts 1:14, people, men and women (we can well assume that there must have been women present) had gathered together, yet every one individually received the spirit. We can assume women received it too, and started speak out in each language. This indicates an acceptance of diversities. In spite of the passing of fifty days since the Cross and Resurrection, the Spirit of Acceptance was received, and each individual knew that he or she had been accepted by God. As a result, each person could start speaking in his or her own language, for the language was also accepted. When each individual has been given the certainty of and belief in acceptance, each one can begin anew and proclaim the good news. This is the spirit that enabled women to speak out in the early church.

These are the main points that have emerged from the survey of the texts of the New Testament in which Jesus encounters women. The survey would be more complete if other texts in the New Testament were also investigated, but the scale of this research is limited, and therefore only the gospel texts have been studied. Because of the limitation, the concept of the Theology of Acceptance may not be fully developed but only partially presented, and therefore only the basic principles may be understood.

The obvious points made known in the Theology of Acceptance is that God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are those who accept us, women and human beings. The emphasis differs from the historical concept of "acceptance" of Christ as our savior. The paradigm of acceptance is acknowledged to start with the love of God, who cared enough for us to send Jesus Christ to accept us, the sinful and un-

worthy, through the Cross.

3. Conclusion

3.1. ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

3.1.1 On Textual Research

Using the textual research of the scenes where Jesus encounters women, it has been shown that the situations can be understood in terms of interrelationships. In these situations, it is clear that Jesus accepts women unconditionally. This can be called a Theology of Acceptance, which is a relational theology. Through the examination of the relations of Jesus and women, the paradigm of acceptance shows itself. By this method, the process of how acceptance occurs has been made clear. This is the paradigm of acceptance which is always motivated by Jesus and can have the power to change women's lives. In addition, by borrowing a technical method often used for counselling and arranging the paradigm according to the manner in which the conversation takes place, the relations can be clearly shown. Through this method, it is clear that the actual situation is not necessarily initiated by Jesus. More often than not, women initiate the relationship. Yet these women, before initiating contact, already trust (as opposed to expect) that Jesus will accept them. It is a mutual relationship. It is surprising that meeting Jesus makes women profoundly active. Upon meeting Jesus, women often become subjective and constructive. Women take action, making decisions by themselves.

The relationships between Jesus and women are usually re-

ported through a third person who facilitates understanding of the context of the situation. The situation is often contrary to Jesus's intention. Clearly the circumstances of many of the situations are not favourable in society's eyes. The circumstances, however, contrast with Jesus's intention of accepting. It is thus clear that Jesus is not influenced by the social situation and social contextual mentality. It can be stated that the method used in this research has been useful for the purpose of making these distinctions in the relationships.

The criticism may arise that there has not been a detailed examination of the usage of terms. It is possible that a more detailed study of the Greek words and the concepts found in them may lead to more definite conclusions regarding acceptance to be found in Jesus. Yet, in this survey, it is obvious that there are many distinctions between the authors of the Gospels and their own interpretations of Jesus's attitude. There is also the problem of the historical Jesus and the implications of his kerygma, the teachings that reveal him as the Savior. Detailed research along these lines must be left for further study, as this paper has been limited to the relationships themselves.

3.1.2 On the New Testament Theology of Acceptance

This paper has been limited to a study of the scenes in the gospels where Jesus encounters women. However, in order to fully appreciate the Theology of Acceptance in New Testament theology, it is necessary to go beyond this limit, and study other Canonical texts. In this sense the survey has to depend on later studies. Yet, as the relationship between God

and human beings is the basis of every human relation, the relationships between Jesus and women are also fundamental. It is the belief that in Jesus, God is revealed, which forms the base for an accepting human relationship.

Therefore, the survey of the relationships between Jesus and women is essentially important to our understanding of the relationship between God and human beings. This survey has been limited to the texts of the New Testament, but there are definite factors included here that support the relationships evident in the Old Testament between God and human beings. Though it is limited, there is significance in this survey.

Jesus Christ, as the source of everlasting life, is received by the Samaritan woman. Jesus proves to Mary and Martha that he is the Life. Many of the healings that Jesus performed involved women. These relationships represent Life, the continuation of creation, suggesting the God of Creation as described in the Old Testament. Although the Theology of Acceptance rises out of the New Testament, it is based on the Old Testament relationship with God as any Christian theology is. Unless the Theology of Acceptance has this essential relation with the theology of the Old Testament, it is not a theology. It can be applied only to the New Testament, yet it relates on a basic level to the Old Testament theological concept.

When love of God and love of Jesus Christ is described in a relationship, it is a relation of acceptance. Love is the status, or situation, while acceptance is totally the relation between persons. The Theology of Acceptance thus has the concept of relationship, which can often be dealt with as a

socio-psychological concept.

No matter what the words used to express or describe God, they are not sufficient. On the other hand, in the modern world where alienation is often experienced, the meaning of relationships has some significance for the future. God in Jesus Christ looks for a relationship with women and men. Unless God, in Jesus Christ, offers the relationship of acceptance, there can be no relationship between God and human beings. It is a relationship of love, expressed as acceptance.

As it is clearly seen in the New Testament when Jesus encounters women, the acceptance of women by Jesus led Jesus to the Cross. With the Cross, the acceptance of Jesus is fulfilled, and the women in the Bible were liberated, just as we are. God accepts Jesus, who has himself accepted the misery of death on the Cross and then burial in order to fulfill the promise of the resurrection. Thus, salvation has occurred.

Because Jesus accepts us human beings who are completely unworthy of his salvation, we must also accept others, although it may not be easy for us to do so. We are placed in a relationship with Jesus, so that we are to strive towards accepting others.

There is mutuality in Jesus Christ and in God, in that Jesus calls us sisters and brothers.⁸ Through Jesus Christ, the community of mutuality is created, with God at the head sharing mutually with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. This mutuality has been extended to us, women and men, in the form of Grace, through the Cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus, even for us human beings, women and men, the image and goal of the community of acceptance is created.

which is our eschatological hope. It is the reign of God and the vision that in Jesus Christ enables us to hope and strive to achieve.

NOTES

¹ Letty M. Russell, Human Liberation in a Feminist Perspective — A Theology (Philadelphia : Westminster Press, 1974).

² Ibid., 18.

³ See Appendix

⁴ Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her (New York : The Crossroad Publishing Co., 1984), 147.

⁵ Mark 3:35 (Revised Standard Version)

⁶ Luke 7:13-15 (Revised Standard Version)

⁷ With respect to Letty M. Russell, The Future of Partnership (Philadelphia : Westminster Press, 1979).

⁸ Appendix text #9.

APPENDIX

The texts in which Jesus encounters women are listed below, numbered according to the order in which they appear in the New Testament. The list starts with Matthew, followed by Mark, Luke and John. The synopses are listed beside the citation.

1. Matthew 1: 1-17 LK 3:23-38
2. Matthew 5:27-28
3. Matthew 5:31-32 Matthew 19:9, Mark 10:11-12, Luke 16:18
4. Matthew 8:14-15 Healing Peter's mother-in-law: Mark 1:29-34, Luke 4:38-41 *
5. Matthew 9:18-25 The ruler's daughter (5 a), and the woman who touched Jesus' garment (5 b) : Mk 5:21-43, Lk 8:40-56 *

6. Matthew 10:34-39 Lk 12:51-53
Lk 14:26-27#
7. Matthew 11:11 Lk 7:18:35
8. Matthew 12:42 Lk 11:31
9. Matthew 12:46-50 The mother and brothers of Jesus : Mk 3:31-35,
Lk 8:19-21*
10. Matthew 13:33 Lk 13:20-21#
Matthew 13:53-58
Mk 6:1-6, Lk 4:16-30
11. Matthew 14:1-12 Mk 6:14-29, (Lk 9:7-9 not of women)
12. Matthew 14:21 Mk 6:44, Lk 9:14, J 6:10
13. Matthew 15:4-5 Mk 10-12
14. Matthew 15:21-28 The Cananite woman's faith : Mk 7:24-30*
15. Matthew 15:38
16. Matthew 18:25
17. Matthew 19:1-12 Mk 10:1-12#
18. Matthew 19:29 Mk 10:29-30, Lk 18:18-30#
19. Matthew 20:20-28 The Request of the mother of James and
John* (Mk 10:35-45 not mother)
20. Matthew 21:5 (Mk 11:1-11, Lk 19:28-38, no daughter),
J 12:12-19
21. Matthew 22:23-33 Mk 12:18-27
Lk 20:27-40
22. Matthew 23:37 Lk 13:34-35
23. Matthew 24:15-28 Mk 13:14-23, Lk 21-20-24
24. Matthew 24:66-44 (Mk 13:32-37, Lk 12:39-40, 17:26-30 no women)
Lk 17:34-35
25. Matthew 25:1-13
26. Matthew 26:6-13 The anointing at Bethany : Mk 14:3-9,
J 12:1-8*
27. Matthew 26:69-75 Mk 14:66-72, Lk 22:56-62, J 18:15-18, (25-27
no women)
28. Matthew 27:55-56 Mk 15:40-41, Lk 23:49, (J 19:28-30) (before)
29. Matthew 27:57-61 Mk 15:42-47, Lk 23:50-56, (J 19:38-42)

30. Matthew 28:1-10 The resurrection of Jesus : Mk 16:1-8*, Lk 24:1-12*, J 20:1-10*
31. Matthew 28:11
32. Mark 12:41-44 The widow's offering : Lk 21:1-4*
33. Mark 16
34. Luke 1:5-25
35. Luke 1:26-38
36. Luke 1:39-45
37. Luke 1:46-56
38. Luke 1:57-66
39. Luke 2:1-7 Mt 1:18-25
40. Luke 2:16-21
41. Luke 2:36-38
42. Luke 4:26
43. Luke 7:11-17 The raising of the widow's son at Nain*
44. Luke 7:28
45. Luke 7:36-50 A sinful woman forgiven*
(This is handled as separate from the anointing)
46. Luke 8:1-3 Some women accompany Jesus (Jesus and his followers - RSV) *
47. Luke 10:38-42 Visiting Martha and Mary*
48. Luke 11:27-28 True Blessedness*
49. Luke 11:31
50. Luke 12:45 (Mt 24:45-51 just servants)
51. Luke 13:10-17 The healing of a crippled woman on the Sabbath*
52. Luke 15:8-10
53. Luke 16:18 Mt 11:12-13 (no woman or adultery)
54. Luke 17:32
55. Luke 18:1-8
56. Luke 23:27-31 To women who followed, on the way to the Crucifixion*
57. Luke 24:22-24
58. John 2:1-12 The Wedding at Cana*

59. John 3:29
60. John 4:1-42 Jesus and the woman of Samaria*
61. John 6:42
62. John 8:53-11 The woman caught in adultery*
63. John 9:18-20, 22
64. John 11:1-16 The death of Lazarus*
- 17:27 Jesus the Resurrection and the Life*
- 28:37 Jesus weeps*
- 38:44 (45) Lazarus brought to life*
65. John 16:21
66. John 19:25-27 The Crucifixion of Jesus - mother and son*
67. John 20:11-18 The appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene*
(Mk 16:9-11)