

Round Rock Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
DISCIPLES WOMEN'S MINISTRY: 2018-19 Study
JUST WOMEN: CALLED FOR GOD'S PURPOSE
Study Guide for May 13, 2019

Disciples Women celebrate, embrace, and encourage God's call to women, "empowering each woman to find her voice and live out her call." If it is not a call to "vocational ministry," is it still a call? This study is a biblical look at women who probably have asked the same question.

**Lesson 7: *WOMEN'S MORAL AUTHORITY IN THE EARLY CHURCH:
SAPPHIRA, LOIS AND EUNICE, PRISCILLA***

Scripture: Acts 4:36-5:11 (Sapphira)
 Acts 16:1-5; 2 Timothy 1:17 (Lois and Eunice)
 Acts 18:1-4, 18:18, 18:24-28 (Priscilla)

Lesson Summary:

The stories of several women in the New Testament – namely, Sapphira, Lois and Eunice, and Priscilla – have important lessons to teach us about how God has gifted all of us – women and men – with moral agency.

Prepare for the study:

1. Read the scripture and answer the questions below.
2. Consider the background given by the lesson's author, Rev. Katie Hayes, DMin. Humans – unlike other creatures – make judgments based on a sense of right and wrong and are held accountable for their actions. This is **moral agency**. In the ancient world of the Bible, women were mostly excused from the heavy responsibility of moral agency and excluded from the maturity it produces.

But despite the patriarchal worldview of the Bible, the New Testament church of the first and second centuries became a sphere in which women's moral agency was assumed and even celebrated. That several of these women's names were recorded, and their stories told without fanfare, helps us recognize the radical promise of the gospel coming to quiet fruition: "*there is no longer...male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.*" Gal 3:28). This study looks at four such women. In each case, her own strong sense of moral agency and the church's recognition of it were instrumental in shaping the community of Jesus' earliest followers.

Questions to ponder as you read the scripture:

1. What concerns you about Sapphira's story? What reassures you about her story?
2. Considering Timothy's interfaith household (his father was Greek; his mother and grandmother Jewish), name some ways that Lois and Eunice might have practiced their Jewish faith with young Timothy.
3. Notice that Priscilla's name initially comes after her husband's (Aquila and Priscilla), but later references list her first, unusual in the patriarchal context in which this was written.