**An Exploration on Women’s Contribution in Early Christianity**

***To what extent was the role of women, during the development of Early Christianity (0-325 CE), greater than men?***

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**Introduction**

In most parts of the world, the issue of gender inequality continues to prevail despite modern progression. Indeed, the roots of these issues run deep in many dominant religions. In many faiths, women are still prohibited from ordination: many times, women are often excluded from praying in the same room as men or even allowed in houses of worship.[[1]](#footnote-1) Similarly, in one of the most dominant faiths in the world, Christianity, although women enjoy more rights than some other religions, they still include misogynistic ideas. Born in a Christian family, I have been raised with stories about Jacob, Moses, and Abraham. Yet I have never once stopped to question why the main protagonist in these stories is always men, or why I have never once seen a female preacher. The phenomenon reined in my head and I continued to look out for women in higher ranked positions at my church. To answer my dilemma, I have led out this investigation on the role of women in Early Christianity (0-325CE).

This paper will examine the research through a variety of research methods, I will rely primarily on books, academic journal articles, the Bible, and Gnostic Gospels[[2]](#footnote-2) to address the research question. To have a full understanding of the research, the paper will examine women’s participation in the early establishment of Christianity through social science. Then, the paper will discuss the role of women in stabilizing the early Christian community through looking at scholars’ insight on Greco-Roman historical records. Lastly, through looking at the Bible, primarily the New Testament and the Gnostic Gospels, a complete view of women’s status in the spiritual movement will be examined.

As a whole, these three sections will aim to study both the physical contributions to the stabilization of Christaintiy as well as the spiritual leadership of women in Early Chrstianity (0-325CE).

**Women and Christian Growth**

It is indisputable that the Early development of Christianity had begun and took shape under the rule of patriarchal cultures: women are oftentimes rejected from positions of power or leadership. However, despite these circumstances, we can still find women manifesting and contributing significantly to the expansion of Christianty. Hence, this leads the investigation to understanding the role of women through a social science examination of the rise in Christianity. First, to examine the sudden rise of Christianity, the first question that comes to mind is how a small messianic movement in the Roman Empire can overturn the predominant paganism and become a Western popular faith. The conventional way of explaining such sudden and rapid growth was: the “Greco-Roman world was saved by mass conversions in response to public preaching and miracle working.”[[3]](#footnote-3) The common misconception derives from the central stories of mass conversions in the Christian bible: people followed, listened, awed, and were saved. For example, in *Acts 2:41,* in a scene after Peter had publicly preached, the bible states that “there were added that day about three thousand souls.” In the study of *Christianizing the Roman empire,* professor Ramsay MacMullen asserts that this type of mass conversions to must be explained through arithmetic calculations because “very large numbers are obviously involved,” and Christian growth could not have been limited to a single fashion of mass conversion, but is a form of “successes en masse.”[[4]](#footnote-4) However, the modern social science for calculating theoretical propositions could not be used to determine the result of spontaneous mass conversions. Instead, the growth of Christianity should be caused as the result of interactive social networks between people who have already been converted and hence convincing others to accept the new faith. Thus, through modern deductive calculations, this kind of extensive conversion is indeed miraculous. According to Rodney Stark, an actual arithmetic calculation[[5]](#footnote-5) result verifies the theory. Hence, to return to the primary examination of women’s role in such the growth of Christian followers, we will be looking at the ratio of women that contributed to such mass conversions.

In the Greco-Roman world, the gender proportion of males was much higher than females. Renowned historian of Greek and Roman origin, Cassius Dio, writing in about 200 C.E., ascribed the decreasing population of females in the Roman Empire.[[6]](#footnote-6) In his classic studies on general populations during prehistoric and medieval times, professor J. C. Russell also approximated “that there were 131 males per 100 females in the city of Rome and 140 males per 100 females in Italy, Asia Minor, and North Africa.”[[7]](#footnote-7) Professor Russell explained that the root of such a strange and extreme ratio can only happen if there was "some tampering with human life."[[8]](#footnote-8) And indeed, there was. Abandonment of female or ill male infants was authorized by law, “morally accepted, and widely practiced by all social classes in the Greco-Roman world.”[[9]](#footnote-9)

Through looking at the recreation of 600 families based on a study of epigraph done in Delphi, of all the families, only 6 had raised more than one daughter.[[10]](#footnote-10) For example, in this letter between a Hilarion husband to his wife, Alis, who was at that time carrying a baby, one can clearly see a distinctive apathetic attitude towards the possibility of his wife impregnated with a daughter:

*Know that I am still in Alexandria. And do not worry if they all come back and I remain in Alexandria. I ask and beg you to take good care of our baby son, and as soon as I receive payment I shall send it up to you. If you are delivered of a child [before I come home], if it is a boy keep it, if a girl discard it. You have sent me word, "Don't forget me." How can I forget you. I beg you not to worry.[[11]](#footnote-11)*

This letter, from 1 B.C.E., contains the common belief of pagans that perpetuated even till through the Christian era. Due to these practices, the status and number of females, compared to male, are completely outnumbered in the traditional pagan family of the Roman society. Moreover, traditional abortion techniques was a major issue in causing the death of women during this era for its methods are extremely harmful to the female body, hence the wide practice of it further risks the female population.[[12]](#footnote-12) Hence, after taking the normal sex ratio within traditional pagan families into consideration, a second calculation of the sex ratio within Christian communities must be made in order to make accurate judgement of the contribution of women in Christianity than men. The second calculation is from an inspection of an inventory of property uncovered from a 303 C.E. “Christian house-church in the North African town of Cirta during a persecution”; according to William Hugh Clifford Frend, an English ecclesiatical historian and archaeologist: “among the clothes the Christians had collected for distribution to the needy were 16 men's tunics and 82 women's tunics as well as 47 pairs of female slippers.”[[13]](#footnote-13) Seemingly, the numbers reflect a different reality of sex ratio when compared to the normal sex distribution. This shows that, among the Christian community, the majority of the membership at churches were female. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that predominant number of women’s membership indicates the crucial role of women in contributing to the rapid growth of the popularity of the Christian faith.

**Status of Women in Early Christianity**

In addition to the membership of women in early churches, I will also investigate the positions and status held by women within churches.First, women thrived at the role of being evangelists because they have access between the "inside" and "outside" realm of society, such as forming connections with the matrons of noble households, or craftswomen and tradeswomen who have connections with servants in wealthy houses.[[14]](#footnote-14) Contemporary scholars of the prehistoric Christian movement Margaret MacDonald and Luise Schottroff both agreed upon the “robust presence and activity of women from all livelihoods and class levels in fostering the new religion.”[[15]](#footnote-15) For example, the Greco-Roman records showed that women functioned as fluid intermediaries.[[16]](#footnote-16) Margaret MacDonald noted that women could escape without notice, or “fly under the radar in conducting house churches, catechizing converts in pagan households, seeing to the needs of prisoners, and acting as look-outs.”[[17]](#footnote-17) Hence, this shows how significant these female evangelists were in the early formation of churches.

In addition, records show that widows would oftentimes provide the emerging community with a foundational support: widows from wealthy backgrounds would foster and provide shelter for poor widows, who would then take care of orphans, and thus forming a communal“family.”[[18]](#footnote-18) The patronage from wealthy widows, then, became an important source of security for the new and vulnerable religion under a paganist dominated society.

Furthermore, both female and male evangelists would travel under the financial support of wealthy widows.[[19]](#footnote-19) Travel was an essential part of the early nurturing of church, especially for emissaries or simply the spread of faith. For instance, according to canonical texts, Deacon Phoebe was a successful example of a traveling woman who acted as a messenger between Apostle Paul and the Romans. Another example would be Mary Magdalene, the “Apostle to the Apostles'', who together with John the Evangelist have traditionally traveled together as partner-evangelists.[[20]](#footnote-20) To further clarify, this model of partnership ministry was extremely common in the early development of churches. In Paul’s reference to “sister-wives” from the First Corinthians, it can be seen that it was a very effective model during its historical circumstances.[[21]](#footnote-21) Men are socially accepted and hence could speak in public places and preach on the street; while women, on the other hand, can go to places denied to the men, such as confines of private, family space, or in the workshops and warehouses.[[22]](#footnote-22) In order to sustain these missionaries, this model shows that one cannot function without the other. This combination indicates that both genders, in the effort to establish the foundations of Christian communities and churches, are necessary and equal in their contribution to the development of Christianity.

**New Testament Portrayal of Women**

In this section, I will be discussing the New Testament’s view on women’s involvement in early Christian faith. Throughout the New Testament, it could be clearly seen that women were clear witness and accompaniment to Jesus during the early movement. Some important Jewish female followers, namely, are: Joanna, Susanna, and Mary Magdalene.[[23]](#footnote-23) Jesus was often recorded to be having conversation and meals with women in both public and private settings.

For instance, in Matthews chapter 15, the bible recounts a story of an unnamed woman who pleaded to Jesus to save her daughter. As a response to such a cry, Jesus answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel… [and] it is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.”[[24]](#footnote-24) Yet the woman cleverly replied, “yes it is Lord… even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table,” and hence her daughter was healed.[[25]](#footnote-25) In this scene, the woman was proved to be brave and persistent, which led to the possibility of her daughter to be saved. In this case, she could even be credited as the reason why people, even without Jewish descent, can be “saved” through faith. Hence, proving that women were not blind followers to the crowd formed around Jesus, but instead true believers who consist of strong faith that would be deemed extremely essential to the Christian teachings.

In addition, in the letters written by Paul, he would frequently begin by addressing female followers such as Prisca, Julia, Junia, and Nereus who worked in paired mission trips.[[26]](#footnote-26) Other women such as Euodia and Syntche were also mentioned to have “contended at [Paul’s] side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers.”[[27]](#footnote-27) Hence, evidently, women had always been active in works of spreading Christian message and were recognised to be working at the same level as Paul’s “co-workers”. Furthermore, these letters also discloses the work of women in the early forms of churches. Since Chrisanity was forbidden under the radar of the Roman empire along with the expense of building designated houses, the early form of churches were held in homes, forming house churches.[[28]](#footnote-28) As introduced in the earlier part of this essay, women worked with “special privileges” of entering houses and private areas, hence, in these letters written in the New Testament, we are given a chance to look at the inner works of house churches. In this domain, women indeed played a major role for leadership. For example, Apphia, mentioned in Philemon[[29]](#footnote-29), and Prisca from the First book of Corinthians[[30]](#footnote-30) were all figureheads for their individual house churches. Furthermore, it was suggested in the greetings by Paul in Chapter 16, verse 3 to 4 of Romans, that “Priscilla and Aquila… co-workers in Christ Jesus... risked their lives” for Paul.[[31]](#footnote-31) Although the book did not go into further detail about Prisciall and Aquila’s life-saving gestures, it could be seen that women held noble and heroic attitudes for the work of their God and were willing to make sacrifices in the need of development for Christianity. Hence, women hold special spiritual achievements that were greater than men even under patriarchal suppression. However, it still must be noted that these are only brief mentions of women’s work in the development of early Christianity. Given that they are mostly hints of a small fracture of women’s work, the New Testament holds a considerable amount of uncertainty in its record.

**Gnostic Gospel: Mary Magdalene**

Now, I will be examining the portrayal of women in the Gnostic Gospels compared to the New Testament. The Gnostic Gospels were uncovered in Egypt in 1945: a discovery of 52 texts that included “secret” gospels that accounts for Jesus’s sayings and beliefs that were very different from the New Testament.[[32]](#footnote-32) One important figure and message recorded in these texts was the role of Jesus’s female apostle: Mary Magdalene.[[33]](#footnote-33) In the New Testament chapter 17, verse 4 of the book of Acts, it states that “a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women” joined Paul and Silas on their missionary journey in Thessalonica.[[34]](#footnote-34) Among these prominent women that were mentioned in this line was Mary Magdalene. Indeed, she was mentioned numerous times by other gospel writers in the New Testament, for example in Mark 15, verses 40-41, while Jesus was on the cross “some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene… [who] had followed him and cared for his needs” in Galilee.[[35]](#footnote-35) Hence, it could be seen that Mary Magdalene had been an important accompaniment to Jesus’s journey and his ministry work. In the Gospel of John, specifically, Mary Magdalene was portrayed as the first to witness Jesus’s resurrection and hence the “the risen Jesus gives her special teaching and commissions her as an ‘apostle to the apostles’ to bring them the good news.”[[36]](#footnote-36) Hence, it could be concluded that Mary was one of the significant figures which Jesus had entrusted and hence should be a prophetic visionary leader in the Christian movement.

In the Gnostic Gospels, the newly discovered information of the Jesus movement, the portrait of Mary was further elaborated. Most frequently, her title as the “apostle to the apostles” becomes an important topic and her strong faith that made her unique among the male disciples who reject her testimony. In an extended dialogue between Mary, Jesus, Juda, and Matthew, Mary was the only one who asked several questions instead of the other apostles. This shows how Mary was an important member of the disciple group, representing clear leadership and spiritual understanding. In addition, it was clear that the Lord found her to be a spiritual thinker for he replied, “you make clear the abundance of the revealer,” in response to her insightful question.[[37]](#footnote-37) Additionally, during another time after Mary spoke, the narrator also states that, “she uttered this a woman who had understood completely.”[[38]](#footnote-38) Therefore, this confirms that Mary was deemed as one who had truly understood the Lord’s teachings. In the Gnostic text Pistis Sophia, again, the passage highlights her special stance as a disciple: by the Lord himself, he stated that “[Mary’s] heart is directed to the Kingdom of Heaven more than all [her] brothers.”[[39]](#footnote-39) Hence it could be seen that the spiritual enlightenment of Mary was persistently underscored to emphasize the importance of such a female figure.

In addition to receiving special attention for her spiritual understanding of the Lord’s teachings, Mary was also among the people who have received approval by Jesus himself to preach the gospel. In the text, the Sophia of Jesus Christ of the Gnostic Gospels, Mary was mentioned to be part of the seven women and twelve men that were gathered to hear from Jesus after resurrection: only five were named and spoke, and this includes Mary.[[40]](#footnote-40) At the conclusion of their discussion, Jesus says, “I have given you authority over things as children of light,” and so the disciples went forth to preach the gospel.[[41]](#footnote-41) In this section, Mary's name was included again in the group of people that were granted special authentications by Jesus to spread his teachings.

Moreover, in the Gospel of Philip, Mary Magdalene was again revealed to have shared a special bondage with Jesus. It was described that she was one the people who “always walked with the Lord.”[[42]](#footnote-42) In this Gospel, it distinctly stated that the Lord had “loved her more than all the disciples” and often “kissed her on the mouth.”[[43]](#footnote-43) It is crucial to clarify the usage of language used to describe the relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene. The common misconception that may be concluded after reading this passage on the surface level is to interpret this intimate relationship as a sexual act between lovers. However, this must be interpreted through the Gnostic lenses, which emphasizes “kiss” as a symbolism for the breath of spirit and knowledge.[[44]](#footnote-44) Hence, this marks the extent of spiritual elevation that Mary Magdalene was able to achieve much beyond the other disciples.

Last but not least, in the Gospel of Mary, Mary was once more portrayed as the Lord’s favorite disciple. As seen in this passage where Peter asks Mary: “sister, we know that the Saviour loved you more than the rest of women. Tell us the words of the Saviour which you remember—which you know (but) we do not, nor have we heard.”[[45]](#footnote-45) This line acknowledges that Mary had been chosen by Jesus and has a preeminent role among the women. In addition, this line hints that there are “secrets” and teachings that Jesus had only instructed Mary, hence making her a significant figure that holds the vision of the Lord.[[46]](#footnote-46) Then, through 7 out of 18 pages of this book unfolds the vision of Lord in the form of a dialogue with Mary.[[47]](#footnote-47) Although it is obvious that she will face extreme difficulties in acceptance by other male counterparts due to her female status, the Gospel of Mary shows the truth of Mary Magdalene’s true identity as a higher authority in preaching the bible than the male disciples. Hence, one can tell the lack of details to Mary Magdalene's true identity as the “apostle to the apostles” in the New Testament compared to the elaborate recordings in the Gnostic Gospels. Taken together, in account with its historical context, a female spiritual leader chosen above the male followers is an extremely radical idea. However, these Gospels were not included in the Bible, nor were they discovered until the 19th century. Hence, this reveals the extent of which women’s extensive role in fostering early Christianity being intentionally veiled.

**Council of Nicea**

However, despite their honorable efforts in stabilizing the Christian community, women were still not officially perceived or socially accepted to play influential roles in the activities of the early church. A clear shift in the recognition of women’s work could be seen right after Jesus’s death around 30-33 C.E.. After the death of Jesus, detailed records of active women followers were seen to have decreased. Paul the Apostle would occasionally compliment women for their loyalty, but would more often compendiously allude to female followers as “the weaker vessel” and advise men not to marry them unless necessary.[[48]](#footnote-48) In 312 C.E. the conversion of the emperor, Constantine the Great, brought about complete standardization and change in the Christian faith. In 325 C.E. The First Council of Nicea was held, inviting around 300 Christian bishops and deacons from Eastern Roman Empire to settle on the “divisions in the church” and settled on the gospels that would be known in modern day as the New Testament.[[49]](#footnote-49) The First Council of Nicaea symbolized a new beginning for Christianity, from persecuted followers to becoming the official state-religion[[50]](#footnote-50), but at what cost?

Taking into consideration all the paganistic patriarchal culture, a mass conference that consisted only of male attendants, the First Council of Nicaea was not in the favor of female believers. Hence, it was at this meeting when one of the only few official positions given to women was stripped away. Women traditionally held the title of deaconess who visited pagan households to anoint the body of women preparatory to baptism.[[51]](#footnote-51) However, the Council of Nicaea stated that: “with regard to the deaconesses who hold this position we remind [church leaders] that they possess no ordination, but are to be reckoned among the laity in every respect” (Canon 19).[[52]](#footnote-52) This rules that the Council did not recognise the validity of women's ordination to the diaconate, stripping away one of the few official recognitions for women’s contribution in early Christianity.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the extent of involvement in which women had in the development of Early Christianity can be seen throughout this research. The social science research of normal sex ratio compared to sex ratio within the Christian community supports the theory that women had significant involvement in the development of early Christianity. However, it has to be taken in evaluation that the numbers and records are only estimations of the pre-historic population, hence it can only be valid for reasonable consideration and comparison, but is not completely factual. The role of women serving as equivalent ministries are also important evidence for how important women are in contribution to the growth of Christianity. Women traveling with partners have equal importance to their male counterparts in their different areas of service. In addition, many passages in the New Testament also reveal that women have a great proportion of control in house churches and early group worship, even to the point of being heads of house churches. However, the details to their works are often ambiguous and understated. Instead, in the Gnostic Gospel, we can see a clear view of female leadership such as Mary Magdalene and her achievements in spiritual enlightenment. Therefore, it is sensible to conclude that women had, if not equal, greater involvement in the development of Christianity than men. However, due to social conventions and cultural barriers, written records in account of women’s contributions were hindered. Hence, this may be the cause of modern misconceptions of women’s minimal contributions in the early stages of Christinanity. Even in modern day, we can still see a perpetuated pattern of patriarchal belief in the roles which different gender takes up positions in Christianity: women, generally are more involved with communal services, while men hold positions such as pastors or preachers. Thus, I believe that it is important to become aware of a religious upbringing and the possibility of them shaping our modern religious structures.

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2. The Gnostic Gospels are 52 texts that were uncovered in Nag Hammadi Egypt that contain gospels and poems in regards to Jesus’s teachings and beliefs that are different from the conventional beliefs recorded in the New Testament. For more information see Elaine Pagel’s, *Vintage Books*, pp. xiii-xxiii. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
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5. There is general agreement among scholars that Christians in the Greco- Roman world numbered somewhere between 5 and 7 million in the year 300. How this total was reached from a tiny starting point of, say, 1,000 Christians in the year 40 is the arithmetic challenge. At first glance, growth of this magnitude might seem a miraculous achievement. But, suppose we assume that the Chris- tian rate of growth during this period was similar to that of the Mormon rate of growth over the past century, which has been approximately 40 percent per decade (Stark 1984, 1994). If the early Christians were able to match the Mor- mon growth rate, then their "miracle" is fully accomplished in the time history allows. That is, from a starting point of 1,000 Christians in the year 40, a growth rate of 40 percent per decade (or 3.4 percent per year) results in a total of 6,299,832 Christians in the year 300. Moreover, because compounded rates re- sult in exponential growth, there is a huge numerical increase from slightly more than 1 million Christians in the year 250 to more than 6 million in 300. This gives further confidence in the projections since historians have long believed that a rapid increase in numerical growth occurred at this time (cf.Gager 1975). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
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19. Ibid, 56-57. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Ibid, 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Ibid, 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Ibid, 59-60. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out;Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herold’s household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means. (Luke 8:1-3, NIV) [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is a demon possessed and suffering terribly.”... He (Jesus) answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.”...He replied, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.” (Matthew 15:21-24, NIV) [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. “Yes it is, Lord,” she said. “Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.”... And her daughter was healed at that moment (Matthew 15:25-28, NIV) [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Great Priscilla and Quila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus...Great Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Jew who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was...Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the Lord’s people who are with them (Romans 16:3-15, NIV) [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life. (Philippians 4:2-3, NIV) [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Stark, Rodney. "Reconstructing the Rise of Christianity: The Role of Women." Sociology of Religion 56, no. 3 (1995): 229-44. Accessed September 14, 2020. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3711820>. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker— also to Apphia our sister and Archippus out fellower soldier— and to the church that meets in your home. (Philemon 1:1-2, NIV) [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house. (1 Corinthians 16:19, NIV) [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus. They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them. (Romans 16:3-4, NIV) [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. “The Gnostic Gospels,” PBS (Public Broadcasting Service), accessed March 9, 2021, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/gnostic-gospels/#:~:text=The%20Gnostic%20Gospels%3A%20The%2052,these%20documents%20and%20their%20implications>. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Pual and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women (Acts 17:4, NIV) [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the young and of Joseph, and Salome. In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there. (Mark 15:40-41, NIV) [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. “The Roles For Women | From Jesus To Christ - The First Christians | FRONTLINE,” PBS (Public Broadcasting Service), accessed March 9, 2021, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/first/roles.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Stephen Emmel, Helmut Koester, and Elaine H. Pagels, *Nag Hammadi Codex III, 5, the Dialogue of the Savior* (Leiden: Brill, 1984), 140. 17-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Ibid. 142. 11-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. “Pistis Sophia Index,” Pistis Sophia Index, accessed March 9, 2021, <http://gnosis.org/library/pistis-sophia/index.htm>. 26. 17-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. “The Sophia of Jesus Christ -- The Nag Hammadi Library,” The Sophia of Jesus Christ -- The Nag Hammadi Library, accessed March 9, 2021, <http://gnosis.org/naghamm/sjc.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Véronique. “The Gospel of Philip, ‘The Kiss of Jesus to Mary Magdalene’ News.” Magdalene Sacred Journeys, March 11, 2019. https://www.magdalenesacredjourneys.com/the-gospel-of-philip-jesus-and-mary-magdalene/. 59. 6-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Ibid. 63.34-36. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Véronique. “The Gospel of Philip, ‘The Kiss of Jesus to Mary Magdalene’ News.” Magdalene Sacred Journeys, March 11, 2019. https://www.magdalenesacredjourneys.com/the-gospel-of-philip-jesus-and-mary-magdalene/. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. “The Gospel According to Mary Magdalene,” The Gospel According to Mary Magdalene, accessed March 9, 2021, <http://gnosis.org/library/marygosp.htm>. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Ibid. 18. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Ibid. 18. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Tucker, Robert Leonard. "The Place of Woman in the Church." The Biblical World 54, no. 6 (1920): 578-87. Accessed February 3, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3136204. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Bruce L. Shelley, “325 The First Council of Nicaea,” Christian History | Learn the History of Christianity & the Church (Christian History, October 1, 1990), <https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/issues/issue-28/325-first-council-of-nicea.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. “First Council of Nicæa (A.D. 325),” CHURCH FATHERS: First Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325), accessed March 9, 2021, https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3801.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)