

September 12, 2021

## 2. Be Bold to Join— Luke 7:36-50 NRSV

As I read the key verse for this study, “Do you see his woman?” I wondered how many women in the *history of humanity* have wanted to scream, “Do you see me? Look at me, look at all the good I can do! See me!”

I’m not a big movie buff, but I love the 2016 award-winning *Hidden Figures*, a true story about women who “served as the brains behind one of the greatest operations in U.S. history.” Three of them, known as “human computers,” joined many of history’s “greatest minds specifically tasked with calculating the momentous launch of astronaut John Glenn into orbit, and guaranteeing his safe return.”<sup>1</sup>

My favorite scene depicts the lead character, Katherine Goble Johnson—a smart, soft-spoken, dignified Black woman—finally standing up for herself to the boss, just for the right to go to a “Whites Only” bathroom. I cheer and cry when her superior, Al Harrison, finally lets her use it, smashing down the “Whites Only” sign.

If I were teaching this session, I’d invite participants to think of or research other modern-day examples of women who breached barriers.<sup>2</sup> I’d want to show a clip or two from *Hidden Figures*, especially of Katherine running through pouring rain to use a far-away “Blacks Only” bathroom. I’d also find a game to play with the group that demonstrates exclusion/inclusion and how exclusion feels.<sup>3</sup>

The stated purpose of this session is “to see the boldness of a marginalized woman meeting Jesus in a place where she didn’t belong and be inspired to emulate her courage and devotion.” How about we all stand up and cheer (literally and figuratively) for the courageous woman in Luke 7 who dared break down a cultural barrier and paved the way for all women after her? How about we shower with love and worship the God-man Jesus who really “saw” women and elevated them to their rightful place of dignity?

Can the women *and* men in your group bring themselves to do that?

- Who are the courageous, female Jesus-followers today who show us how to love and live faithfully? (vv. 47, 50)

—Helen Tellez

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1. “[Hidden Figures](#)” (2016) - Plot Summary - IMDb

2. Search for “modern women who breached barriers.”

3. Search for “inclusion/exclusion games.”



**Helen Tellez** has been a writer, editor, and copy editor for church and secular organizations for more than four decades. Formerly from northern Indiana, she now resides in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, with her husband, José, where they run a clothing alterations business. Being married to José for 18 years has opened her eyes to the world beyond rural, white America, and she is grateful for the changes in her Christian perspective.

## Resources for this session

### *Salt & Light Videos*

These teaching videos are great for leader preparation or introducing each session. They are available on [MennoMedia's YouTube channel](#). **Joe Yoder** is the presenter for Unit 1, Belonging to God. He attends East Goshen Mennonite Church in Indiana.