1. General Reflections on the Material about Women in John
   1. We cannot be sure the writer intended to portray the women as they appear
   2. How women are portrayed in the fourth gospel
      1. “Positively and in intimate relation to Jesus” in contrast to men
      2. Women are not one-dimensional nor stereotypical in contrast to men
         1. Nicodemus was stereotypical, shallow character
      3. Women do unconventional acts
         1. Samaritan woman has uncommon knowledge of scriptures and becomes a witness to Jesus
   3. What this suggests about the Johannine Christian Community
      1. There were real women who had active and prominent roles in the Johannine Christian community
   4. What this suggests about discipleship of Christian women
      1. Women relate to Jesus directly, without mediation or permission of men
      2. Women have no set defined role; instead, each individual woman through their love of Jesus find the religious role that suits them.
      3. Women should be independent and have the power to make choices. “initiative and decisive action”
2. Specific Reflections on the Pericopes about Women
   1. The Samaritan Women (4:4-4:42)
      1. The mission to Samaria most likely reflects Johannine missions, not the ministry of Jesus.
      2. Main Points
         1. Jesus reveals himself to the Samaritan woman. She leaves her water pot (symbolic for leaving sins and other things behind to follow Jesus), follows Jesus, and bears witness to him.
         2. Even though she lead others to Christ, John makes it clear that it is not her own doing. Those that came to faith “believed in because of the word of the woman witnessing.”
         3. The Samaritan woman is the embodiment of the theme of the fourth gospel: Jesus being revealed to others and in turn those becoming saved by him. The woman reveals Jesus to her community, which lead them to “come to him” (4:30)
   2. Mary and Martha (11:1-53; 12:1-8)
      1. Background
         1. Sisters to Lazarus
         2. The raising of Lazarus in the fourth gospel is considered the inciting incident that lead to Christ’s crucifixion
      2. Points on Martha in John 11:1-53
         1. Martha confesses in Christ as savior and giver of eternal life even though physical death is still present. Her confession Jesus is Christ represents the Johannine community making the same confession.
         2. Martha’s confession to Jesus as Christ was not a result of the raising of Lazarus since it came before.
         3. Just as Apostle Peter was given primacy (importance?) by confessing Jesus as Christ, Martha confessed Christ and should receive the same primacy.
      3. Mary John 12:1-8
         1. Setting
            1. With eucharistic overtones and connecting to the Johannine community structure, Mary and Martha could be considered to be ministers and Jesus is the guest of honor
         2. Points
            1. Disciples who were male were supposed to wash teachers’ feet, so Mary washing Jesus’ feet is unconventional and suggests women can also be disciples.
            2. Jesus defends Mary from Judas
   3. Mary Magdalene
      1. Like Peter, Mary Magdalene she received the first appearance of the glorified Jesus. This matters, since the church ranked apostles by the order in which they saw Jesus glorified. Both John and Matthew state Mary Magdalene was the first.