Women We Should Know and Honor: Clotilda, Bertha, and Balthild: Three Women of the Early Medieval Church

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[0:00] Wonderful, thank you. Well, it is our privilege today to have Kevin Hoffman with us to leaven this series by throwing in some seeds from the early Middle Ages. And even though I have heard of these women, you could torture me on the rack and I probably couldn't supply a whole lot. So I am very much looking forward to this. Kevin is a fifth year, you'd think sixth year given all the knowledge he has, but fifth year PhD student here in history.

And he with his wife has been part of the fellows program too at Rivendell. So glad to have him here. You will very much enjoy this as I will. We're going to tag team today. So Kevin's going to begin and cover three women, and then I will bring up the caboose with another profile or two, depending upon our time. But please, Kevin, take your time and come on and inform us about some women we should know. Good morning. So last week we were in the world of the Roman Empire in late antiquity, a world which for all its drawbacks was a more civilized world than the world which we will be exploring this morning. The world I'm speaking of is the early Middle Ages.

Not only that, we are looking at the earliest of the early Middle Ages. Often called the Dark Ages, I hope to shine a couple of spotlights on some women whose names are almost certainly unfamiliar to most of you, perhaps with the exception of John. If there are times where John has to make heroic leaps and bounds from one source to another to string together a story we can follow, imagine how some parts of the early Middle Ages make one want to throw their hands up in despair at our lost and confusing sources. This world is also strange and foreign to us. It has been said that the past is a foreign country. They do things differently there. Because of our unfamiliarity and the poor survival of our sources, I will perhaps spend a bit more time on context than in previous weeks. But you might say, why, if the Dark Ages are so dark, ought we to study them? Well, this period seems to me to be a good one to investigate for three reasons. First, history is cool and it's my area of research, so you're kind of stuck with me talking about it. Better get used to it. Second, this period is not well known and is helpful to explore all the periods of the church. Because the church of the past is the heritage of the church present. Third, we are in the church formerly known as St. Bonifaces, about whom I would be happy to talk at some point, but that's for a different discussion. He has a wonderful letter that he wrote about being a missionary in pagan lands of Europe, essentially saying, it's cold, rainy, dark.

Please send books. He, like these women I am going to talk about, were early medieval Christians. But to make sense of the world of barbarians, we will need to briefly explore the end of the mighty Roman Empire. Just before 300, the Roman Empire was split down the middle into two main administrative regions. Each with two emperors. Right here is the split. Although these divisions were often ignored, on the whole, the system lasted until the end of the western half of the empire. Due to a series of civil wars, great power competition to the east, barbarian incursions, plague, climate change, and collapsing central authority, the western half of the Roman Empire broke apart, while the eastern half managed to stick around until the 15th century. And finally, by 476, there was no emperor in the west.

There were, however, lots of barbarians in what was Roman territory. Now, I think we have an image in our mind of barbarians. They probably look a bit like this. They have become quite popular in, well, pop culture. This is from a recent video game, actually. Big hairy men dressed in dirty furs, smelling of stale sweat and beer, worshipping pagan gods. Well, some of that might be true. But this doesn't capture one thing. The barbarians wanted to be Roman. In fact, the office of the

commander of all the Roman armies was often held by a Romanized barbarian. Look at this image. So this guy actually is a Romanized barbarian. He's the head of all the Roman armies in the end of the fourth century, and he is the picture of late antique Roman general. Part of that's because the Romans had begun adopting barbarian styles. He's wearing pants. And partially, the barbarians have adopted a lot of Roman-ness.
[5:15] But back to barbarians. A major difference between the Romans and these barbarians was their faith. When the fourth century began, Christianity was not a legal religion. In a little over a decade, it was a tolerated religion. And by the late fourth century, Christianity was the only legal religion within the empire. The barbarians, however, were not Christians. When they arrived in contact with the Romans, they were, without exception, pagan. Once they reached the borders of the empire, they often converted to Arianism rather than Orthodox Christianity. Now, when I say the name Arian, I don't want you thinking 1930s and 40s Germany in racial politics. This Arianism doesn't imply anything about race.

It is named after a man called Arius. For those not up on their fourth century church controversies, Arians believed that the son was created, not begotten. In other words, Christ isn't God in the same way the father is. This was a major controversy of the fourth century. And now we recognize this as problematic, as did the church of the period. But if that weren't enough, the issue went deeper than heresy. Deeper than heresy? How is that possible? Well, Arianism had become not only the religion of these barbarians, but also a cultural marker. Once religion passes into culture, it becomes almost impossible to disentangle. To these barbarians, their Arianism was bound up with their German-ness, and vice versa. They couldn't abandon their German-ness, so too they couldn't abandon their Arianism. And this is where our story begins. You see where it was divided? That's actually the last bit of the Western Roman Empire. He dies in exile. We begin our story in what is modern France.
While Southern Europe was ruled mostly by Arian tribes, so these were Arians, these were Arians, these were Arians, these were Arians, some of these were Arians, these were Arians. Everybody except these guys and these guys, who were pagans, were Arians. Orthodox Christianity was not a barbarian religion at this time. The Franks arrive in the north of France over the Rhine River. That's right over here.
We don't really know much about their early history, but their kings claim to be descended from a sea monster. I take this to mean he was a pirate, but make of it what you will. When the Franks enter onto the scene, they had not yet abandoned their old gods, and when they came into the Roman Empire, they arrived in a world of mainly Christians. Perhaps it is understandable, but the Romans living in France didn't feel overly inclined to evangelize to the angry-looking, long-haired kings of the Franks. Remember, hairy barbarians. The Franks began to expand all throughout France, destroying little kingdom after little kingdom. This doesn't even capture the number of little, little kingdoms and petty kings that existed at this time.
And eventually, the Franks had expanded to most of France. But rather than destroy the little kingdom of the Burgundians, the king, Clovis, married a Burgundian princess named Clotilda. This marriage dramatically altered the course of European history, for you see, Clotilda was an Orthodox Christian. And by Orthodox, I mean mainly here that she was not an Arian.
[9:10] As with most individuals in the pre-modern world, we aren't quite sure when Clotilda was born. Given that she was born at her father's new capital, where he took up residence in 473, we can guess that she was born sometime after that. So let's say around 474.

Likewise, it isn't really clear how or when she became a Christian. Perhaps it was part of her father's submission to the dying Roman Empire in 475, two years before the last Roman Emperor was kicked out. We don't entirely know. What we do know is that in the late 480s and early 490s, the Burgundian kingdom descended into a civil war between four brothers, and Clotilda's father was killed by one of his brothers in 493. She fled to a different brother of her father's. A little confusing, I recognize. Clovis, the king of the Franks, took advantage of the civil war.
In marrying Clotilda in 493, he joined in on this civil war. Clovis thus became a major power player in the former territories of the Western Roman Empire. But unknown to him, or at least not understood by him, there was an ongoing war for his soul. Clotilda vigorously sought the conversion of her husband. Soon after their marriage, their first son was born, and Clovis, perhaps surprisingly, allowed his son to be baptized into the Catholic faith. Sadly, the son fell ill and passed away soon afterwards. Clovis, perhaps understandably, blamed Clotilda's god. But he allowed her to have their

second son baptized. Clearly, the conviction of Clotilda was such that it was persuasive to a barbarian king. And a little grace from God could help her, please. But an intense moment of our story, this son, the second, also fell ill. But he recovered. The future kings of the Franks would be raised in their mother's faith, rather than that of their father. But Clotilda was unable to reach her husband yet. The warrior king continued pushing southwards, doing his warrior thing. In either 496 or 507, depending on which battle it was, Clovis found himself in a difficult military situation, and the battle was going poorly. Our historian from the period says that he called on God, the God of his wife, when the battle was going poorly. And after winning the battle, he was baptized. Perhaps he was looking for support from the Catholic clergy that still were around in
France. Or perhaps he was hoping that the Eastern Romans might come and help them against the other barbarian tribes. Maybe it was actually a true change of heart. We don't know. But this meant that the Frankish leadership moved from paganism straight to Orthodox Christianity, unlike all the others that went to Arianism first. We do know that Clovis had Arian family members. And he certainly had pagan family members. But he didn't turn to them. The faith of Clotilda was his closest tether to Catholicism.
This not only meant that the Franks had Christian leadership, but it made it acceptable to be a Christian at all levels of society. One king becoming a Christian among many wouldn't have been significant on its own. But as it happens, the Franks became the most powerful kingdom in Europe, thereby assuring Christian Orthodoxy would supplant Arianism across all of Europe.
[12:38] The church hierarchy soon would not be looking east to the Roman Empire, but to France to protect them from the Arian barbarians. All of this goes back to Clotilda. Moving forward from this point, it would be Catholic Orthodoxy which spread to the new barbarians. This brings us to our second woman.

Bertha was a Frankish princess, and we know even less about her than we did about, well, Clotilda. She was the great-granddaughter of Clovis and Clotilda, who was engaged to be married to a barbarian king from England. Now, in the end of the 6th century, there were somewhere between seven and ten kingdoms in England, Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in England. That's ignoring all the British, that is, Celtic-speaking kingdoms. It may come as a bit of a surprise, but it is really hard to find good maps of places we aren't quite sure of the borders of for a time we aren't entirely certain of from about 1,500 years ago. The man that Bertha was engaged to was Ethelbert. Great name. Let's bring it back.
The King of Kent down here, right next to France, about as close as you can get. Now, we don't have any lifetime depictions of him or her. However, this one's pretty close. This is a depiction of him from, I think, the 8th or 9th century, so a couple hundred years off, but that's as close as we can get sometimes.
However, we do have some depictions or things of lifetime contemporaries. So, I study coins mainly, and this is a wonderful coin.
[14:27] This is not Ethelbert, but his son, Eadbald, another wonderful name. The Anglo-Saxons could name them. So, see the legend above his head? Yes, those are, in fact, letters.

Aud, Wald, Re. Eadbald. Kind of close. On the next slide, we see the next-door neighbor to Kent, the Kingdom of East Anglia.
If you saw the recent movie, The Dig, about the excavation of the Sutton Hoo ship, this is what the site looked like. And this is the reconstruction of the helmet found there, in the boat burial.
Just looking at the helmet and the type of burial, it's clear that if we are in a Christian world, it is a Christian world which is very attached to its pagan past. But in all likelihood, England was almost entirely pagan.
I think we should be reminding ourselves here of the hairy barbarian image. This is perhaps a little surprising, that England was pagan, not that barbarians are hairy.
[15:36] England was part of the Roman Empire, but when the Roman military left the island in 409, there were definitely still Christians there. I'll tell you a story you might know.

There was a British boy, who was born a little before the Romans left. He was picked up by slavers and sold in Ireland. Slavery will be a recurrent theme in this talk, so keep that in mind.
This boy would escape and find freedom before going back to Ireland and becoming their patron saint. Yes, I am talking of St. Patrick. The world of Celtic Christianity was alive at this time, but the Anglo-Saxons seem not to have noticed.

Just like with the Romans in France, the British were none too keen to evangelize to their axe-wielding, fur-wearing, Thor-worshipping barbarian neighbors. In the coming century, once Christianity became firmly ensconced in Ireland, they began sending missionaries to England. A country which had never been part of the Roman Empire became Christian before the rest of those regions that had been a part of the Roman Empire. But I digress.
[16:42] Enter Bertha. You remember the legacy of faith that Clotilda left to her sons?

Bertha was a Christian, and she insisted that if she were to marry this pagan king, that she be allowed to worship her god. Sorry.
That she be allowed to worship her god. She brought her chaplain with her, a bishop, Lüthard. There we go.
Isn't he handsome? We can see his name right here. Well, if you can't make Lüthard, however that's spelled, out of this word soup, I can't really blame you.
Yeah. That's an L. Looks like an X. E. Only has two arms. U-D-A-R-U-S.
[17:54] Lüthard. Oh, there's a D here. Düs. E-P-S. Bishop. So, yeah. This isn't a very literate world. In fact, it's a very, very illiterate world.

But anyways. Bertha made sure that she had a chapel in which to worship, right in Canterbury, the capital of Kent. Although, again, the stubborn husband refused to acknowledge his wife was correct.
And it would take another historical happenstance for him to be converted. Over 1,000 miles away in Rome, Pope Gregory the Great noticed two boys being sold as slaves. It is reported that when he asked where they were from, he was told they were Angli.
Angles, English. His response was, Non sunt Angli, said Angli. They aren't Angles. They're angels. Presumably, Gregory wasn't very familiar with those with blonde hair.
Or perhaps they had particularly nice voices. In any case, it spurred the Pope to send a mission to these angels in the north. Remember, hairy barbarians. Gregory sent for a couple of monks to be apostles to the English.
[19:04] Augustine of Canterbury, not his more famous namesake, who was from North Africa. This Augustine led the mission to England. When they arrived, you can guess which kingdom they set up in.

Yep, they arrived in Kent and set up their new church right next to Bertha's Chapel, which is the oldest continuous place of Christian worship in England.
Now, I don't doubt that God could have orchestrated a favorable reception even among the pagans. But surely, Queen Bertha's faith made her husband more naturally inclined to accept these foreign leave, that he would have viewed these foreigners as representatives of a foreign power.
Now, it is usually Gregory the Great and Augustine who get credit for the conversion of the English, and on one level, they do deserve considerable credit. But the English had a bad habit of civil wars and one kingdom taking over another and missionaries getting kicked out repeatedly, sometimes the same one.
The church had a beachhead in England with Bertha, and it wasn't going to be pushed back across the channel. Then again, that doesn't mean that England didn't start sending their own missionaries, like Boniface, for whom this church used to be named.
[20:19] But some of those missionaries weren't sent to France with the intention of preaching. With the intention of preaching, some of them arrived in, like St. Patrick, as slaves.

A woman named Baltild arrived in France as a slave. Now, I said I would come back to this, and here seems like a good place to do so. Slavery was common in the ancient and medieval worlds. While it was certainly the case that the economy of the early Middle Ages was not slave-based, like the ancient world, at some times and in some regions, there were a considerable number of slaves. Some have argued that the slavery was the basis of the early medieval economy, with the barbarian kings selling what they had lots of, people, in exchange for what they had none of, gold, to North Africa, the Eastern Roman Empire, and the Middle East.
Slavery in the ancient world didn't have the same racial connotation it has today. Typically, most were prisoners of war from the next-door little kingdom. Another category of slave were those who were temporarily, usually, sold themselves into slavery to receive protection or to pay off a debt or a bit of both.

[21:42] So what was Baltild's status? There seems to be some debate. The earliest sources we have don't mention her status at all. But about a century after her death, it was said that she was aristocratic or royal.

We can't be certain, but I think there are good indications that she was actually low-born. Born around 626, she was sold into the house of the most powerful man in one of the Frankish kingdoms after the king.
At some point, he, the second most powerful man, wanted to marry her. But apparently, he had competition. So did the king. One might immediately suspect, aha, proof that she was royal.
Why else would a king want to marry her except to solidify an alliance? And there are other things that might indicate that she was royal.
there you go. This is a seal matrix. So the part that's inserted into wax to create the image.
[22:47] These are actually concave. So this would have been pressed into that. But this was actually found in England, not in France. And again, this is more literate than some, although the A is in fact upside down, as is the L, B, A, L, D, Balde, Hildes.

Baldehild. But the Frankish kings are a bit odd. No fewer than three kings and perhaps four married slaves who then rose to be queen.
And sometimes, after the king's death, ruled in their own name. A source about a hundred years after these events describes the king as descending to insanity before his death at the age of only 18.
It is possible that he was considered unstable and was thus married off to a slave. This happened in the Frankish world that feeble-minded kings were often married to slaves.
Perhaps they were seen to be able to control the king sufficiently for the second most powerful person to be able to actually do the real running of the country. But this, the fact that he dies or that he descends into insanity before he's dying might imply that she was just a run-of-the-mill slave with no aristocratic background.
[24:08] With the death of her husband and her sons in minority, she took sole rulership of the kingdom as regent on behalf of her son. She had a powerful coalition backing her, including the man who purchased her and a bishop named Eligius.

So, I thought this was kind of cool. E-L-I-G-I-L-E-G of Eligius.
And here's a modern one. He is a saint, he is a bishop, and he was also the king's monnier for a period. That's pretty rare that we actually know who the monniers are.
They usually aren't bishops. He's lowborn. He's not an aristocrat. This coalition that she established actually was fairly successful.
She had a very successful regency. And her son eventually ascended to the throne, a success in times where assassination was the norm.
[25:23] during her time as regent, she sent missionaries to Germany, fought simony, the buying or selling of church offices in the church, and founded numerous monasteries for the preservation of knowledge.

One scholar has contended that she was the last competent monarch of the dynasty that began with Clovis in the 470s. This is 130 years later, the last competent monarch of this dynasty.
Her husband is sometimes thought of as the first of the, they're called the Roi Fainel, meaning the do-nothing kings, which seems particularly harsh.
But if that is all she had done, been a successful regent, she would have been really interesting. In the 19th century, jumping many centuries here, in the Luxembourg gardens in Paris, a series of 20 sculptures of the Queens of France were commissioned.
Among these, 20, Baltild is represented. Why her? Well, she might be considered an abolitionist.
[26:38] It is perhaps no coincidence that the promulgation of a new decree ending slavery in the French colonies where it remained. It had already been removed in some of the colonies and then added back during the Napoleonic period.

A promulgation of a new decree ending slavery in the French colonies where it remained was from the same year as the statue. France had actually been at the leading end of abolition in the modern era, but also in the pre-modern.
Baltild made huge reforms in France, including making the purchasing of slaves illegal. Much in the way that the Atlantic slave trade was made illegal before the extirpation of slavery within the boundaries of the U.S., Baltild could not go so far as to free slaves within France.

Her position was far too precarious for something so wide-sweeping. She promulgated a law that made slaves free upon arrival in France.
This would be reiterated in 1315 by a subsequent French king. Could her experience of being a slave have led to this result? I think so.
[27:50] But let's tie up the story I've been telling today in a nice, neat bow. Returning to the map we began with, maps are great, we follow the story of a Burgundian princess.

Here we are. A Burgundian princess named Clotilde who married the Frankish king. Brought him not only to Christ, but kept the kingdom of France away from denying the divinity of Christ.
That legacy of faith left by Clotilde was picked up by her great-granddaughter, Bertha, who married an English king. From over here. Insisting that she be allowed to practice her faith in the pagan land of England.
When missionaries were sent from Rome to England, they found a home in this little kingdom of Kent. And from there, Christianity would spread throughout England. Decades later, an English slave would be sold into France.
She would become queen and would begin the long fight to extirpate slavery from Christendom.
Perhaps we don't have all the details of the lives of these women, but their impact is clear.
[29:01] Thank you. Thank you. Any questions?

Comments? Kevin, is there any evidence that the abolition of the slave trade, I guess purchasing slaves, do we notice any sort of effect?
did it, or is it just, is it just in, in legislation or we're aware of that or is there a way to trace or pick up any effects of this?
So, on the extirpation of slavery, did it have an impact? Actually, the Merovingian period, so that's the period in Frankish history we're looking at, is at a low point for finds of slave shackles.
So, archaeologically speaking, in the late antique period, slave shackles are found all across Europe in the ruins of Roman-style villas all over. In the Merovingian period, it's at an all-time low that it drops precipitously.
[30:23] Now, I don't remember exactly when the dating of it dropping is, but it is in this period. And subsequently, after the Merovingian period, when the second most powerful people, the mayors of the palace, as they were called, they rise up and create their own dynasty, kicking out the do-nothing kings, they actually re-institute slavery and you start finding slave shackles again on the periphery of the kingdom, but not within the heartlands of France.

So, we do see impacts. Now, to what extent is it just, they just had the Scandinavians sell the slaves, let them pass through, they weren't keeping the slaves, but picking up some tolls?
Well, we don't entirely know, but there seems to be an impact, at least archaeologically speaking.
Yeah. John, would you like to...
Yes, yes. All right, thank you. One thing was absolutely certain.
She would not be staying in India. And she was not going to become a missionary. Never. India was altogether too hot, too dusty, too overcrowded, with most of its seething masses dirty or destitute, leprous or lice-ridden.
[32:18] Besides, a missionary bungalow was no place for a blossoming young lady fresh out of college. There she is. With dreams of balls and bows, dresses and dances, and eventual marriage to a millionaire.

neither would the expectation generated by the Scudder family tradition sway her. What if her grandfather, John, was America's first foreign medical missionary?
What if all his sons had followed in his footsteps? What if all the other grandchildren were planning on doing the same?
not Ida Scudder. She would not be forced into the family mold. She had only returned to India to nurse her ailing mother back to health.
Then it would be back to the good life in America. That much was certain. Or so she was quite sure until all suddenly changed that one terrible night.
[33:38] She was up late in her bungalow when her reading was interrupted by a knock. It was a high-class Brahmin. Amal, I desperately need your help.

My wife, a young girl of 14, is dying in childbirth. Oh, exclaimed Ida in swift sympathy. It's my father you want.

He's the doctor. He's right next door. I'll take you to him. What? exclaimed the Brahmin in haughty outrage. Permit a man to look upon my wife.
It is better that she should die. Ida was aghast. There's nothing you can do, explained her father. It's the custom. It would violate his caste law. Shaking, she returned to her book. Then, again, footsteps sounded on the veranda, this time a Mohammedan.
[34:46] Salaam, madam, may Allah give you peace. if you could help me. It is my wife. The child will not come. I am afraid she is dying.

Ida gasped. My father will help. He's... Madam, the voice was apologetic but firm. You don't understand our ways.
Only men of the immediate family enter a Muslim woman's room. It is you, a woman whose help I seek, not a man's.
But I can't help, sputtered Ida. I'm not even a nurse. Then my wife must die, returned the Muslim in stalled resignation.
It is the will of Allah. Ida was left with her book but could not read. She lay awake on her bed. It was then the third knock came.
[35:53] To her horror, another with the same plea. He too had a young wife dying in labor. Would I to come?

Don't you understand? There is nothing I can do. I could not sleep that night. It was too terrible, Ida later recalled.
Here were three young girls dying because there was no woman to help them. I spent the night in anguish and prayer.
I think that it was the first time I ever met God face to face. with the first light came the beating of the tom toms, the death message.
For all three girls had died that night. Ida remained in a room wrestling with God. When she finally emerged, she found her father and mother and resolutely announced, I'm going to America to study to be a doctor so I can come back here and help the women of India.
[37:09] And that's just what she did. Cornell Medical College had just opened its doors to women.

and Ida was among the first of its graduating class, the class of 1899. The Cornell Quarterly tells us that when the women entered the class or the operating theater, the men students would stamp their feet and blow kisses.
I suppose some things never change. And that was not the only thing that the men did to harry the poor women. Ida received a marriage proposal just before she had to take her final round of exams. She passed the exams and she passed on the proposal. As for her residency, she determined to fulfill it under her father. Who better to prepare her for the peculiar challenges India would afford?
One week away from sailing, it was suggested she ought to raise $8,000 to build a women's hospital in India. Not a lot of time, but she threw herself into the task, calling on anyone she could think of.
[38:38] But dollars came in at a trickle, an ounce of water to quench an elephant's thirst, as she put it.

Hopes were pinned on one final interview where Ida poured out her heart and told of that terrible night of the three knocks.
Yet no commitment came, and it seemed there would be no women's hospital. But, by chance, there sat in an adjacent room a man who overheard Ida's plea.
Much moved, the man came forward. Name the hospital in memory of my beloved wife, Mary Tabor Schell, said the stranger, and handed her a check for $10,000.
Ida had her hospital, but there was one more thing she would not leave for India without. A woman evangelist who could labor with her to bring gospel to the women within the dark, secluding walls.
[39:53] November 22nd, 1899, Ida set sail. With her was her girlhood friend, Annie Hancock, to labor at her side as an evangelist.

It was a challenging start. Her father, from whom she expected to receive her residency, died just months after her return.
Her first patient, so far gone by the time she was summoned, died, as did the next. Scarcely a good commendation for her medical skills for the locals.
But finally, after a successful conjunctivitis case, her miraculous healing powers were proclaimed. and the veranda of her 8-by-10-foot room, which served as her dispensary, was thronged from

dawn to dusk.
One day, a mother came in, too terrified to hold her diseased baby. Ida called upon Salome, the cook. Salome appeared, sporting spotless hands and a smile of unmistakable eagerness.
[41:13] See, Missy? Scrubbed with soap. Don't have to tell Salome. She held the baby firmly, but gently. Then, while Ida attended to the mother, Salome turned to the next patient.

Parvati wishes more medicine for her baby's sore eyes. Shall I give her some of this? Pointing to the bottle of boric acid solution. Why, yes, Salome, but how did you know?
I know. I have been watching Missy. Ida's eyes lit up. Yes, of course, I will start a nursing school and Salome will be the first pupil.
And so it was. There's an old photo of the first nurses she had in her school. Am I right in front of this?
This is being seen at all. Okay, okay. Don't want you to miss the pictures. But soon, Dr.
[42:28] Ida had set her sights higher. If she could train nurses, why not doctors?

The inspiration met with incredulity all around. Indian women become doctors and compete against men from India's seven medical schools?
girls? But you scarcely had to be sexist to think the situation implausible. With Dr. Ida, the sole instructor at a school that possessed only two books, one microscope and one skeleton?
There she goes, training them. But Ida was indomitable. She didn't cut her clinics, there she is, some of her clinics, or her roadside peripatetic dispensary.
She'd have this ox cart, well here it is, this ox cart that would go around into the countryside where she would bring her medical expertise and aid to the locals.
[43:46] So kind of a traveling dispensary. that she is there. She's the one in her clear medical garb of the time. No, she continued all those things, but added teaching the entire medical school curriculum to her 14 lambs, as she called them.

Widespread prediction was that not one of her girls, would pass their board exams. As the results were announced, stress mounted, for 80% of the men across India had failed.
The women's scores were revealed last. Every one of them had passed, and several of them in the top rank, placing Ida's Women's Medical College at the head of all the medical schools of India.
There are some of the first women graduates. Teaching the girls is no headache in comparison to feeding them, joked Ida.
For with Christian, Hindu, and Mohammedan students, many with caste or religious culinary obligations, there was no simple ladling out of the same pot of stew.
[45:22] Finally, she divided them into three menu groups, vegetarians, meatarians, and agarians, she called them. A great day of rejoicing was the long-awaited opening of the Mary Tabor Shell Memorial Hospital.

There it is. Although, the new white iron beds, as you can see, were objects of terror as well as wonder to the first patients.
Accustomed to sleeping on mats at floor level, the frightened occupants felt as if they were being placed on dangerously high shelves.
Ida would regularly discover patients wrapped carefully in their sheets lying under the bed instead of on them. Well, if only all the trials were that trivial.
Keeping the hospital funded and supplied proved a Herculean task, especially in the years coinciding with the two world wars and the depression.
[46:42] Thankfully, Ida found a Scotch administrator, literally from Scotland, but also Scotch, who could stretch a rupee to Rangoon, and the hospital never had to close its doors.

Neither were these years always free from political turbulence. Once, during a tense time of martial law, Ida, in order to visit a critically ill Mohammedan patient, donned a disguise and countervened the curfew.
Another experience she would never forget involved delivering a wealthy young Muslim woman of a beautifully formed, but precariously delicate baby girl.
Day and night, Ida wrestled to keep the infant alive, and did not rest till she was sure the tiny life was out of danger.
But the family regarded the might with glum disfavor, not only for her gender, but her birth, they said, had occurred on an inauspicious day.

[47:58] Ida was confident, however, that given little time, the child would win their hearts. Sometime later, while about other things, Ida suddenly felt a strong impulse to check on the baby.

She flew through the hospital to S-ward. All was quiet behind the screen concealing the bed. Too quiet.
Pulling aside the curtain, she saw a pillow being pressed hard against the surface of the bed. Snatching it away, there was the baby, already blue in the face, only moments short of being smothered.
How could you? Born on unlucky day, will of Allah she die? You don't want her to die, you take her. All right, said Ida, I will. And she named the girl Mary Tabor after the hospital, the first of what would become a great number of unwanted daughters, Ida took under wing.
[49:21] Never married, she had children galore. It was not just love her patients received, it was Christian love.

And according to her earnest prayer, none would linger long without learning something of it. Once a Muslim woman recovering from a sudden attack of acute malarial mania seized Ida's hand.
Tell me why you did not lose your temper with me when I was quite out of my mind. Before Ida could answer, a Hindu woman in the next bed responded, don't you know why?
That's what their god is like. Long suffering and slow to anger. Well, on her 88th birthday, Cornell University Medical College conferred upon its first woman graduate its highest honor, the award of distinction.
The usual requirement of receiving the award in person was kindly waived, for Dr. Ida was loathe to leave her beloved hospital, a hospital so much more now than even she could ever have imagined that night of the three knocks.
[50:58] beds. The one bed for healing in her father's mission bungalow had now become more than 1,000 beds.

The first class of 14 lambs had swelled to 900 each year. the staff of two, herself and a cook turned nurse Salome, had multiplied to include 380 doctors, 400 nurses, and 270 paramedical workers, serving nearly 2,500 patients in a single day.
Okay. I wonder what we might undertake that is worthy of our life investment.
Have we heard any knocks in the night which might serve as a clue? How far we have come, said the aged Ida at the last.
Oh, God has been so very good to us. Indeed. Well, let me stop there and open it up for any questions.
[52:36] Look at that smile. Isn't that a wonderful expression of a good life well lived?

What paramedia was she? It was in Velour. So, yeah, I should have had maps.
I should have had maps. It is. It is. In fact, I had a couple of these from old transparencies, but I jumped on Google, and you can actually Google, like they've got this thing called Google image, and you can go there.
And they had pictures, some old ones, of her, and they have pictures of the hospital. Now, I had a missionary friend. Well, you remember Dan Nicholas.
He had gone over and he had visited the hospital and he sent me some wonderful pictures of it, and it's still going strong. still there, a wonderful heritage.
[53:50] There's Dorothy Clark has written a wonderful biography of her. It's a fun one if you want to read it. And there's also one that kind of chronicles the history of the entire Scudder family.

It's called A Thousand Years in Thy Sight, because they totaled up all of the years of medical labor that was done in India by all of the family, and it totaled up to about a thousand years.
It's a wonderful title. A thousand years in thy sight. And in that hospital and from some of that family, some of the cutting edge research globally, worldwide, has been done, apparently, on things like leprosy and other things, really, really remarkable accomplishments from there.
So, yes. All right. Well, team, it looks like we're at time, so I will not do, but maybe sometime in the future, we'll just have to pick up this series again, because we have by no means exhausted the extraordinary women whose names and lives we should know and honor.
So, hopefully, there can be a part B sometime, because I even have more prepared, ready to go at some point. It would be lots of fun to do, but thank you for your time, and hopefully, this will be an inspiration to us all.

[55:30] I think of how Paul said, imitate me as I imitate Christ, and what makes these women such extraordinary leaders is what makes any leader an extraordinary leader, which is simply this, that they are good followers of Christ.

They are exemplary followers of Christ. So, if you follow Christ well, you are a leader. You are exemplary in that, and you can be a great blessing to those of us that can look and be inspired by your lives as we seek to follow Christ faithfully to both women and men.
Well, thank you. We will see you next time as we have occasion to do so. Ming for to her father decision