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Mary Magdalene

Loving Jesus in Practical Ways

*Luke 8:1-3;
Mark 15:37-47; John 20:1-18*

Twelve men followed Jesus. They are so well known that children recite their names. But Jesus had women following him too. Some are nameless. Others appear with their sons. And some walk through the pages of Scripture with their own names intact.

These women also assisted in Christ's work. They too learned from his teachings. They showed their love for Jesus in practical ways. Mary Magdalene was one of them.

GROUP DISCUSSION. What are some practical ways that you have seen people express love?

PERSONAL REFLECTION. Create two journal columns. For the first, mentally sweep through your past and note small, practical expressions of love that you have received. Reflect on what those gestures meant to you, and thank God for the people who cared for you in this way. For the second column, note practical ways that you express (or can express) love. Ask God to use these gestures of love for the joy and encouragement of those who receive them.

Mary Magdalene was one of a substantial number of women who followed Jesus and helped to care for his needs and the needs of others who traveled with him. Her story is told in small snippets spread throughout the Gospels. *Read Luke 8:1-3; Mark 15:37-47; John 20:1-18.*

1. In view of all that you have read here, what kind of person is Mary Magdalene?

2. Focus on Luke 8:1-3. What do these verses reveal about Mary Magdalene? (Consider her past, her work, her friends.)

3. Focus on Mark 15:37-47. Why do you think Mary Magdalene chose to be present at Christ's death?

4. What would she have seen and heard and learned and felt as she watched Christ die?

5. What changes had to take place in Mary Magdalene for her to grow from a person inhabited by seven demons to a person who followed Jesus all the way to his death?

6. Jesus delivered Mary Magdalene from seven demons. What influences of evil has Jesus defeated in your own life?

7. Focus on John 20:1-18. If you were a detective observing all the events in these verses, what “clues” would you record?

8. What variety of feelings do you sense in the meeting between Mary Magdalene and Jesus?

9. Study Christ’s statement in John 20:17. What does it reveal about the relationships between the various people mentioned?

10. What effect would Mary Magdalene’s message have on the disciples—and on the future church?

11. Meditate for a moment on the ways Christ’s death and resurrection have influenced your own life. How are you different because of the events Mary Magdalene witnessed at those times?

12. Skim all three passages. What all do you find that shows Mary Magdalene as a person who exercised her love for Jesus in practical ways?

13. What are some practical ways you can show your love for Jesus by loving others?

Pray wordlessly for a few moments, silently absorbing the love of Jesus for you as demonstrated by his death and resurrection. Ask God to show you practical ways to live out that love as you return it to him and as you share it with people around you.

Now or Later

Is there a Mary Magdalene in your circle of acquaintances? Look for someone who needs the healing love of Christ, who might blossom into a loving disciple and servant under his care. Be ready to share the love of Jesus with that person.