

Read: *Luke 8:1-2, John 20:1-18*

MARY MAGDALENE

In a culture that rejected women as witnesses, she was written about in all four Gospels as the first to help share the good news. She came from a troubled background, yet Jesus healed her and welcomed her into his band of followers.

To be empowered like Mary Magdalene, we must:

- Be freed from the torment and sins in our lives. We must also be freed from our past. (Luke 8:2)
- Be seen for who we really are and engage in a ministry that is motivated by gratitude and love. (Luke 8:1-2, Mark 15:40-41)
- Not give up or quit in the face of utter defeat (Mark 15:40-41, John 19:25, John 20:1-2,11).
- Having done all these things, we must proclaim the good news out of a heart of joy, victory and love! Mary Magdalene was empowered by gratitude and love!

1

In preparation for her ministry, God first delivered her from how many demons? (Luke 8:1-3). How is this number significant? What could her former life have been like? What was her response to the ministry of Jesus?

2

Gratitude and love are often empowering qualities. Read Mark 15:40-41 and Mark 16:1-2. Mary was determined to focus on and follow what one thing? As she attended the cross and the grave, how could her being a woman helped or hindered her?

3

Read John 20:1-10. Mary's assumed final connection with Jesus was His dead body. How did she respond to its disappearance? Why?

4

Now continue with John 20:11-18. A weeping Mary expresses her grief to the angels and a "gardener". Where do you go when overwhelmed in some way? Matthew 11:28, John 6:37.

5

Read John 20:14-16. In her great grief, Mary didn't recognize Jesus immediately. She was still seeking him – when He was standing right in front of her and answering her cries. Have there been similar times in your life? What was the key to Mary finally recognizing her Lord? See Isaiah 43:1, John 10:3, and Exodus 33:17. Are you blessed that He knows you by name? Why? How does that speak of His character?

6

What was the significance of Mary being the first person to see the risen Lord? Recall that Jesus revealed Himself as the Messiah first to The Woman at the Well. How is this empowering?

7

How can your testimony, like Mary's, spur you to follow Jesus to the end? What were you delivered from and what has changed? Read Revelation 12:11, Matthew 10:32 and 1 Peter 3:15.
