MARY MAGDALENE

Read her story closely • Luke 8:1–3; Mark 15:40–16:8; John 20:1–18

READ FIRST: Luke 8:1–3; Mark 15:40–16:8; John 20:1–18. Notice what the passage says, what it leaves unsaid, and whose voice you hear.

Named among Jesus' followers

Luke identifies Mary Magdalene as a woman from whom seven demons had gone out. She traveled with Jesus and the disciples, along with other women who supported the ministry from their resources. Scripture does not explain the details of her earlier suffering. It also never identifies her as a prostitute or as the unnamed "sinful woman" in Luke 7. Those popular claims should not be attached to her story.

Present through loss

The Gospels place Mary Magdalene among those who witnessed Jesus' crucifixion and burial. John describes her coming to the tomb early, seeing the stone removed, and telling Peter and the beloved disciple. She stood outside weeping after they left. Her grief is not treated as a failure to believe; the story allows us to see her love and disorientation.

Called by name

Mary encountered the risen Jesus but at first thought he was the gardener. When he said her name, she recognized him. Jesus entrusted her with a message to his brothers, and she told the disciples that she had seen the Lord. Her witness is part of the resurrection account. The story moves through grief and recognition without erasing either one.

Hold this question

How does listening closely to her actual story change the way you understand her?

MARY MAGDALENE

What her story can teach us today • Luke 8:1–3; Mark 15:40–16:8; John 20:1–18

The Bible gives us a particular woman’s story. These connections invite reflection; they do not claim that every woman’s situation is the same.

A past experience does not define the whole person

Mary’s deliverance is important, but so are her faithfulness, resources, grief, and voice. We can tell a fuller story than a single crisis or label.

Grief and devotion can coexist

Mary stayed near the tomb and wept. We do not need to demand immediate certainty from someone who has just experienced loss.

Being called by name

Recognition came through a personal encounter. For someone who has felt reduced to a diagnosis or rumor, being addressed as a whole person can be deeply meaningful.

Women’s testimony matters

Mary carried the news to the disciples. Our communities should listen when women describe what they have witnessed, learned, and experienced.

MARY MAGDALENE

Reflect, discuss, and pray • Luke 8:1–3; Mark 15:40–16:8; John 20:1–18

1. What have I heard about Mary Magdalene that the biblical texts do not say?

2. How does her presence at the cross and tomb deepen our understanding of faithfulness?

3. When have I needed someone to see more in me than my past?

4. Whose testimony might our community be overlooking?

A step to take this week

Name one safe, practical response this story invites: a prayer, a conversation, a boundary, a request for help, or a way to care for someone else.

Closing prayer

Risen Jesus, call us by name in the midst of confusion and grief. Help us remember that our past is not our whole identity. Give us ears to hear women’s testimony and courage to share the hope we have truly encountered. Amen.