

Not so LITTLE WOMEN



Easter 2024:
MARY MAGDALENE

LUKE 8:1-3
LUKE 7:37-38
JOHN 8:1-12
JOHN 19:39
LUKE 23:55-56
MARK 16:9
JOHN 20:11-17
GALATIANS 5:6

Read: JOHN 20:1-18

Ask/Discuss:

- What did you learn about God in this passage/message?
- What did you learn about yourself/humanity in this passage/message?
- How can we better reflect Jesus together as we live in diverse community?
- How do you feel led to foster healthy, Gospel-centered community this week?

Sermon Recap: MARY MAGDALENE

Luke's Gospel highlights female disciples and gives us three names from among that group: Mary Magdalene, Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna.

Mary Magdalene's story is an Easter story.

Who was Mary Magdalene? She is one of the best-known and least-understood names in Scripture. She is distinguished as the first person to whom Jesus showed Himself after the resurrection, and the first to proclaim the resurrection.

What is Mary Magdalene's story? Mary was a woman Jesus liberated from demonic bondage. She was from the village of Magdala (which is why she is called Magdalene), and is named as such to distinguish her from the other women named *Mary* in the New Testament. Possessed people were regarded as outcasts, but Scripture shows them as victims with ruined lives that Jesus came to restore—that is Mary's story.

What do we learn from Mary Magdalene? When the 3rd day comes (what we celebrate on Easter Sunday), none of the male disciples are at the tomb, but Mary is. When Mary saw the tomb empty, it didn't occur to her what had actually happened.

1. **Christian faith rests in truth** – What kind of objective evidence would it take to change your worldview and bring you to trust that Jesus was physically raised from the dead?

In that day, if you were making up stories based on an “eyewitness account,” no one would have made that eyewitness a woman! This was known as the “criterion of embarrassment.” The only possible reason why Mary Magdalene is in these accounts as the very first eyewitness (in all four Gospels) is that she was actually there.

2. **True faith comes through grace** – When seeking Jesus on her own, she was lost.

She had no idea God was working and likely felt like God had abandoned her. Jesus had to break into her myopic life to wake her up. Our salvation doesn't come from working hard to FIND Jesus; you see here that salvation comes through Jesus finding us.

3. **The Christian life is grounded in love of the Gospel.** As soon as Mary realized Jesus was back, she grabbed hold of Him like a vice.

The mark of saving faith is when we realize that, at infinite cost to Jesus, we have been saved by grace. Mary is the only one who goes to the tomb on the third day, stays there, and is even willing to take on one of the graverobbers...that comes from love.

The depth of our perceived need for grace is the depth of our understanding of God's love. *Galatians 5:6 in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.*