



## MARY MAGDALENE: A DEVOTED FOLLOWER

### INTRODUCTION

A person's life is never the same once they encounter the Savior. This was especially true in the life of Mary Magdalene, a woman who had been possessed by seven demons. After she met Jesus face to face and He set her free, she then became one of Christ's most devoted followers.

Mary Magdalene was a passionate servant, who gave her whole life to the Lord's work. She faithfully followed Jesus in His ministry, and served Him with her time, energy, and substance. When Jesus was arrested many of His closest followers fled in fear. They lost hope when He was crucified, but Mary Magdalene remained ever loyal to her Savior.

She stayed close to Him, lovingly devoted, all the way to the cross. Inseparable even after His death, she followed Him to the tomb where He lay. Mary Magdalene was a privileged disciple: she was the first person to witness the risen Christ.

### SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

*And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, and Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance (Luke 8:2, 3).*

## Names Given to Mary Magdalene

Mary . . . *Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils* . . . (Luke 8:2).  
*Mary* in Hebrew means - bitter. Mary is always identified as Mary Magdalene.

Magdalene *Magdala* in Hebrew means - tower. Magdala was a thriving town at the time of Christ.  
Mary was from Magdala, thus she was called Mary Magdalene after her place of birth.

## SECTION 1 - A Freed Follower

READ Luke 8:1-3.

In Luke 7:36-50, an unnamed, sinful woman washes Jesus' feet with her tears of repentance and anoints them with ointment from an alabaster box. In Chapter 8, He continues on His ministry journey.

1. Where do we find the Lord and what was He doing (v. 1)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Who was with Him? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Who else accompanied Jesus throughout every city and village (vv. 2, 3)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What had Mary Magdalene been freed from? \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup>

## LOOK DEEPER

The New Testament describes people who were demon possessed. What symptoms do they experience?

Matthew 9:32, 33 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 12:22 \_\_\_\_\_

Mark 1:23-26 \_\_\_\_\_

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Luke 9:37-42 \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>1</sup> Joanna - Greek Jehovah is a gracious giver.

<sup>2</sup> Susanna - Greek Lily.

<sup>3</sup> devils: demons, evil unclean spirits; fallen angelic spiritual beings of the underworld; demon-spirits: Demonic spirits operate above the laws of the natural realm and are invisible and incorporeal. As spirit personalities, demons have an intellectual nature through which they possess superhuman knowledge and strength; they are mentally, morally, physically, and spiritually depraved.

Whether Mary Magdalene's demon possession was mental, emotional or physical is not specifically mentioned. However, when her life was in Satan's grip, she experienced torment, anguish and despair – until she met Jesus.

4. Who cast seven devils from Mary and healed her (Mark 16:9)? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What were Mary and many other women doing for Jesus (Luke 8:3)? \_\_\_\_\_

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### PERSONAL

Are you a follower of Christ? Is there a way in which you provide for Jesus and His ministry? \_\_\_\_\_

There were other women who followed Jesus throughout every city and village who were also healed from demon possession and various infirmities, but once they met Jesus they were all healed spiritually. They became an integral part of His ministry.

### LOOK DEEPER

What insight does Ephesians 2:1-3 give to us concerning the spiritual condition of man before he meets Jesus?

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What has God so richly done for them (Ephesians 2:4-7)? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. These women demonstrated their praise and thanksgiving to Jesus by their actions. What do the following Scriptures say about praise and thanksgiving?

Psalm 34:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>4</sup> substance: property and possessions, means; wealth, goods.

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Psalm 95:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_

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Psalm 150 \_\_\_\_\_

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Philippians 4:4-7 \_\_\_\_\_

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**PERSONAL**

How can you offer praise and thanksgiving to God for your spiritual freedom today? \_\_\_\_\_

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How is this demonstrated in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION 2 - A Passionate Follower**

Mary Magdalene followed Jesus throughout His ministry. After three and one half years Jesus is arrested. He was scourged, mocked and sentenced to crucifixion. Most of His followers forsook Christ at this time, but Mary Magdalene was one of the very few disciples that continued to passionately follow Him.

READ John 19:1-30.

1. DESCRIBE how Jesus suffered (John 19:1-25). \_\_\_\_\_

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Where do you find Mary Magdalene? \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>5</sup> moderation: gentleness, patient.

**LOOK DEEPER**

Isaiah predicted Christ’s suffering. What can you learn from Isaiah 53? \_\_\_\_\_

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Jesus’ passion and love for us was expressed openly on the cross. Mary’s passion and love for Jesus was expressed openly as she stood by Him at the foot of the cross in His darkest hour.

**PERSONAL**

How passionate is your love for Christ today? \_\_\_\_\_

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In what ways could you cause your love for Him to grow? \_\_\_\_\_

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**LOOK DEEPER**

DESCRIBE the love of God, and how it moves and works through us.

John 15:13 \_\_\_\_\_

II Corinthians 5:14a \_\_\_\_\_<sup>6</sup>

I John 3:16 \_\_\_\_\_

I John 4:19 \_\_\_\_\_

Mary watched the Lord suffer. The love of Christ permeated her being. How is this love<sup>7</sup> described in the following verses (I Corinthians 13:1-8a, 13)?

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

<sup>6</sup> constraineth: to hold together; to compel; to arrest; keep in; be taken with.

<sup>7</sup> love: in the King James Version, the word *charity* is used for love. This love is *agape* love, sacrificial love, love of choice, Christ-like love, divine love.

2. What other women demonstrated loving devotion for Jesus (John 19:25)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What did the women observe (John 19:28-30)? \_\_\_\_\_

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The women continued in vigilance.

3. What happened beginning at the sixth hour<sup>8</sup> (Mark 15:33-41)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What statement did the centurion make concerning Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

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Who were those looking from afar off at the cross? \_\_\_\_\_

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### SECTION 3 - An Active Follower

READ Matthew 27:55-66, Mark 15:42-47, Luke 23:50-56, and John 19:38-42.

Mary continued to follow her LORD.

1. After Jesus' death on the cross, who asked for His body (Matthew 27:57, 58)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What steps did Joseph take to acquire the Lord's body? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. DESCRIBE the details of how Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus carefully buried the Lord from the following verses:

Matthew 27:59, 60 \_\_\_\_\_

Mark 15:45, 46 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 23:53 \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>8</sup> sixth hour: about mid-day.

John 19:39-42 \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. What were Mary Magdalene and the other women doing at the tomb?

Matthew 27:61 \_\_\_\_\_

Mark 15:47 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 23:55, 56 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Mary Magdalene and the other women demonstrated an active faith by following Jesus to the cross and even to the sepulchre. What do the following Scriptures say about faith in action?

Romans 10:17 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 11:1 \_\_\_\_\_  
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Hebrews 11:6 \_\_\_\_\_  
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James 2:26 \_\_\_\_\_  
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#### PERSONAL

Does your life demonstrate an active faith in Jesus Christ? What have you done to deny yourself, and completely surrender your life and service to Him?

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#### SECTION 4 - A Faithful Follower

Mary's encounter at the tomb is recorded in all four Gospels. Although, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John's accounts may appear to contradict one another, they do not. Just as two reporters can witness the same event, but their stories will vary according to what impacted them, the same is true of the accounts written by them.

READ Mark 16:1-11 and Luke 24:1-12.

1. Why did Mary Magdalene and the other women return to the tomb after the Sabbath<sup>9</sup> (Mark 16:1)?

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2. When, specifically, did they return (v. 2, 3)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What problem did they foresee? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. What did the women find when they arrived at the tomb (v. 4)? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. How did the stone roll away (Matthew 28:1-3)? \_\_\_\_\_

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DESCRIBE the angel of the Lord. \_\_\_\_\_

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5. When they entered the tomb, what did they discover (Mark 16:5, Luke 24:3)? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. What instructions did the angel give to Mary and the other women (Mark 16:6, 7, Luke 24:5-7)?

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7. How did the women respond to the angel's instructions (Mark 16:8)? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. What was the disciples' response to the news given them by the women (Luke 24:8-11)? \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>9</sup> Sabbath - Hebrew *shabbath* to desist, cease, rest: the weekly day of rest and worship of the Jews; it was instituted at creation (Genesis 2:3).



9. How did Peter react (v. 12)? \_\_\_\_\_  
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### PERSONAL

Mary Magdalene and the other women acted in faith by believing and sharing the news of the risen Lord. The lives of these women were dedicated to the service of Christ, whatever the need. How can you serve the Lord and His servants today?

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### SECTION 5 - A Privileged Follower

The disciple mentioned as *the other disciple whom Jesus loved*, is John, the author of this Gospel. This is his account of the resurrection.

READ John 20:1-31.

1. John gives a more detailed account of Peter and himself on resurrection morning. What additional information does he give? COMPARE these two references: John 20:1-10 to Luke 24:12.

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2. What was John's reaction to the empty tomb (John 20:8)? \_\_\_\_\_

3. How did Mary Magdalene respond, as she stood outside the empty tomb (v. 11)? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Who did Mary see in the tomb (v. 12)? \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

5. What did the angels ask Mary (v. 13)? \_\_\_\_\_

Why was she grieving? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Though she did not recognize Him, who appeared to Mary (v. 14)? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What did Jesus ask her (v. 15)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Supposing He was the gardener, what did she request of Him? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. What happened that caused Mary to recognize her Lord (v. 16)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What did she call her Lord? \_\_\_\_\_

At that moment Mary Magdalene became the first person to witness the resurrected Christ. The central truth on which the Gospel<sup>10</sup> stands was first revealed to her! What a tremendous privilege she was given.

9. Jesus gave Mary instructions. What were they (v. 17)? \_\_\_\_\_

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Who is the Father? What is His relationship to Christ and to us? \_\_\_\_\_

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10. How did Mary follow the Lord's instructions (Mark 16:9-11)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What is recorded about the disciples? \_\_\_\_\_

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## PERSONAL

God desires each one of us to faithfully follow His every instruction. We find His instructions to us in His Word. Mary Magdalene was a woman who followed after Jesus wholeheartedly. She was blessed and privileged to be the first person to see the risen Lord. Do you obey the Lord by faith even when His directions seem frightful?

LOOK back on the lesson. What kind of follower are you? How do you feel you still need to surrender to God to be a:

freed follower \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>10</sup> Gospel: good news: the birth, death and resurrection of Christ to redeem man of his sins.

passionate follower \_\_\_\_\_

active follower \_\_\_\_\_

faithful follower \_\_\_\_\_

privileged follower \_\_\_\_\_

## MEMORY VERSE

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\_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 8:2, 3).

**M**ary Magdalene truly loved God. Her passion for Him overflowed in thanksgiving and loyal service to Him. By following close to Jesus, she lived to witness Christ as He defeated Satan on the cross and conquered death and the grave; thus granting to all who will believe on Him, eternal life.

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His holy name, and His Word have been capitalized.

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