

STRONG WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

MARY MAGDALENE

PART 1

Clinging to Jesus

READ JOHN 20:11-18

INTRODUCTION

Mary Magdalene was certainly a strong woman. We know that she had seven demons cast out of her by Jesus from Luke 8. There are disagreements on whether or not this was a physical healing or a literal demonic exorcism. Either way, she was not only strong for that, but she also followed Jesus closely to the point of His death. She was with Mary (the mother of Jesus) at the cross and went to see where He was buried. She, along with a few other women, went to the tomb three days later to prepare His body for long term burial and found that the stone was rolled away and the tomb was empty. Most Biblical scholars believe that Mary was the first person to see Jesus resurrected. This is where we see her weeping outside of the tomb after the others had gone home.

The connection that she had with Jesus was so strong that she did not want to leave His side, even in death. Our relationship to Him should be the same. We should be dedicated to Him and to His will, desire, and Lordship over our lives to the point of not leaving Him. She was broken because she had lost her Lord. When we follow Jesus we are making a declaration that He is the most important person in our life. When she actually sees Jesus and realizes that it is really Him, she must've been so happy and would have been so relieved to see Him. That would make anyone cling to the person they thought they had lost for a very long time. We should have that same feeling of clinging to Jesus because He is our help and our hope. He has forgiven us and given us life for death and that is enough to make us hold to Him tightly.

For Mary, she needed to let Him go because He still had business to attend to. She never would have let Him go. The beautiful thing for us is that we can cling to Him forever knowing that He can and will take care of all our needs. Mary had the unenviable fortune to know Jesus before and after His death and that meant she had to say goodbye to the One that she loved yet again. This would have been difficult to say the least but we should be encouraged that when we see Jesus Christ in the flesh, we will never have to let Him go or say goodbye for eternity. This is certainly an encouraging thought. Mary needed to be strong. She needed Jesus just like all of us.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you think it meant for Mary to have seven demons cast out of her? Physical or spiritual, how would that make you feel towards the person? Do you think that is the sole reason Mary was attached to Jesus?
2. Why do you think it was women who stuck with Jesus to the end and not (largely) the men? Why was it significant that Mary was the first person to see Jesus?
3. What comfort could Mary take from Jesus being back? Why was it important for us to see this interaction between her and Jesus? Are there any other implications that this passage holds for us and our relationship with Jesus?
4. What are the different ways that you cling to Jesus? How do you know when you are clinging to Him verses when you are not? Why is it important to know the difference?
5. Is it encouraging to you to know that you will never have to say goodbye to Jesus? Why or why not?

WRAP UP

Mary had a deep, personal connection to Jesus and she recognized that. She knew that He was more than just a “good man” or a “good teacher”. She recognized Him as Lord and Savior. This is such an important distinction for us to make as well. We need to cling to Jesus knowing that He is so much more than just a good man. He is God, Lord, Savior, Brother and Friend. This is encouraging.