

Mary Magdalene

I am called Mary Magdalene. I was with Jesus. And I can truly say, if it were not for him, I would not be alive. But now, because he died and conquered death, I know what life really is, share in his life and have a reason for living.

Let me tell you my story: I never thought of myself as a bad person, and yet my life had become a jumble of contradictions. Everything I did, with the best of intentions, turned out to go wrong. I had no understanding of my own heart or the reasons for the things I did.

Then I met him. He was not like any other man I had ever known. At first I was suspicious and wondered what he was after, and then wondered if he were normal. But eventually it was clear that he was a real man who was under complete control, and he really cared about me for my own sake.

He seemed to look deep within me and see past the confusion to the deep desire for meaning. He knew all about the rebellion, the anger, the self-hatred and the envy. Yet he loved me in spite of it. He saw potential and he made me want to reach it.

He also saw the unclean spirits I had allowed to control me. Oh, I did not really know what was happening, but when I continued to do what I knew was wrong, I gave authority to those evil beings. And when I kept charms and idols for good luck, I was inviting the enemies of the true God to be my guides. It never seemed wrong, until I met Jesus and he addressed them and sent them away. I felt helpless and vulnerable at first, but then realized that the empty place in my heart was intended for him.

There were several of us women who followed Jesus and his disciples. We listened and learned, although for the sake of propriety we did not intrude. It was obvious to us that Jesus meant his teaching for us as much as he meant it for the men. And in a way, I think we understood things that the men did not. We accepted the differences. They were to have a more public role and we a more private one.

When he died, I was devastated. But it was also obvious that he meant for this to happen and was at peace with it. Oh, he was not in some sort of a trance state or blind to reality. This was another of those evidences of great power under control for a higher purpose. Still, we were all confused and full of sadness.

When I went to the garden that day, I was again the confused, empty woman he had healed three years before. I began to pour out my frustration, anger and hopelessness to a man I thought was the gardener. Then I heard that voice! All he said was, "Mary."

In an instant I knew it was Jesus and that everything was right again, and was always going to be right, and no one could take him away from me and that I had _a part to play in making the truth known. And even the unpleasant parts of my own past were part of a wonderful story, because if he can change me and make me a valuable and

useful person, he can do it for anyone! He truly is the Son of God and nothing is too hard for him.

Jesus is alive! He was dead but he is alive again! Everything is all right because he is alive. We never need fear anything ever again. He will do everything else that he promised. He is alive now and forever. Do you know what I did after that meeting in the garden? It is what I feel like doing every time I think about it. I ran like a crazy woman shouting, "He's alive! He's alive!"

[Runs down the aisle shouting, "He's alive!"]

Matthew 27 – 28, Mark 15 – 16, Luke 8, Luke 24, John 19 - 20