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# *the* **FOLLOWERS**

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November 23, 2014  
Celebration | 8:45 am  
Pastor Dave Mitchell

## **Mary Magdalene** How a Follower of Christ Grows

### **A Time of Discovery for the Follower Luke 8:1-3**

*A time to discover many good things Jesus can do.*

*To grow, I need to gain additional knowledge on what it means to follow Jesus.*

- I am aware of my hopeless spiritual condition. “seven demons”
- I experience a healing power from Jesus. “who had been healed of evil spirits”
- I am drawn to the mission Christ practices and preaches. “proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of God...”
- I begin to share in Christ’s good work. “contributing to their support out of their private means.”

### **A Time of Dedication for the Follower John 19:25, Matthew 27:45-61, Luke 23:44-45**

*A time when I learn of the emotional, spiritual and relational cost of following Jesus.*

*To grow, I must be willing to turn from past sins and accept the cost of following Jesus.*

- I closely identify with Jesus’ death and burial and what that means for me. Romans 6
- I realize that following Jesus will impact my relationships causing unfair or unjust treatment.  
“The robbers who had been crucified with Him were also insulting Him with the same words”. (Matthew 27:44)  
“But standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene” (John 19:25)
- I remain faithful even in great loss.  
“And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb... And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the grave.”

### **A Time of Dependency for the Follower John 20:13-18**

*A time when I know the living Jesus and experience a new life more dependent on His power and presence.*

*To grow, I seek to hear the voice of Jesus every day and obey Him.*

- I will move from human ability to divine power.  
“And they said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping?’ She said to them, ‘Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.’”
- I will have an increasing desire to be with Jesus but not always recognize His presence and work.  
“When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus.”
- I will still suffer times of disappointment and loss as I try to remain dedicated to Him.  
“ ‘Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?’ Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, ‘Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away.’ ”
- I will learn a new dependence and intimacy with the living Jesus.  
“Jesus said to her, ‘Mary!’ She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, ‘Rabboni!’ (which means, Teacher). Jesus said to her, ‘Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father’ ”
- I experience a new personal relationship with Jesus as my Lord and God as My Father.  
“...go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.’ ”
- I am excited to tell others that Jesus is alive and He seeks them as well.  
“Mary Magdalene came, announcing to the disciples, ‘I have seen the Lord,’ and that He had said these things to her”

**Reflect on what stage of spiritual growth you are in?**

**Are you willing to do what it takes to grow as a follower of Jesus?**

## Digging Deeper:

Jesus welcomed the ministry of many women in support of His mission to save the world and usher in His new kingdom. One woman highlighted in His ministry was Mary Magdalene. Magdalene is not her last name, but the city that she came from Magdala, mentioned in Matthew 15:39. In today's message, we are able to follow her spiritual growth which began when she was healed of seven demons in Luke 8. Next we see her standing at the cross watching this great leader that she admired and supported die in agony. She likely did not know the spiritual work that Christ was accomplishing on the cross. After He died, she was not anticipating His resurrection but assumed she could care for His body in the grave. But, in her last appearance in Scripture, she realizes that Jesus is alive. His body was not taken by human thieves. She now better understands that Jesus is God and can provide a new life for all. He is alive for us today as well and Mary's life can symbolize the journey that we travel to grow as a follower of Jesus.

## LifeGroup Discussion:

- Reflect on the three periods of growth on this outline. When did you experience some aspect of those periods? Where do you see yourself today? What are you willing to do to grow in your relationship with Jesus?
- Read Romans 6:1-11. What should happen in our spiritual lives if we identify with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus?
- Read Colossians 1:13, 14. How drastic does God see the spiritual change in our lives when we are saved?
- Mary had seven demons removed from her life. This was a dramatic change for her because demons can cause severe physical, emotional and relational pain. Read up on how much damage a demon can cause to a nonbeliever in Jesus: Demonic possession manifested itself in a number of ways. Blindness Matthew 12:22; deafness Mark 9:25; inability to speak in Matthew 9:32, 33; seizures mark 1:26, Luke 9:38-40; General sickness Luke 13:11-13
- Sometimes demons would speak through the people and one time Jesus forced them to acknowledge that He is the authority over them. Mark 5:8-14; Mark 1:23, 24; Luke 4:33-35

## Next Steps:

1. **Attend the Thanksgiving Day service** on Thursday, November 27 at 10:00 am in Samsvick Chapel to express your thanks to God in worship on this special day. For more info, visit [calvarylife.org/thanksgiving](http://calvarylife.org/thanksgiving)
2. **Join a LifeGroup for encouragement and accountability in your growth.** LifeGroups are ongoing small group communities that gather together throughout the week to CONNECT in a smaller setting, GROW together in our faith, and REACH out together to our community. Learn more at [calvarylife.org/lifegroups](http://calvarylife.org/lifegroups)
3. **Use Calvary's new discipleship study called 'Following Jesus' to grow in true dependence on Jesus as our living Lord.** Following Jesus, with editions for both students and leaders, are available in Calvary's Corner Bookstore. [calvarylife.org/grow](http://calvarylife.org/grow)