

# Mary Magdalene: First Among Apostles

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Questions to consider, discuss or journal.

1. Consider the comparison between how Mary received Jesus' words and how the twelve apostles received them. Mary listens, understands, learns, and is impacted enough to respond with loving action from her emotional resonance and deep spiritual understanding of Jesus. Where are you in your journey of listening, understanding, learning and responding to Jesus? How can you move towards responding to knowing Jesus with loving actions?
2. Jesus' love for Mary is apparent in his tears shed over her pain at the death of her brother Lazarus. In doing what Jesus does, we know him in deeper ways. How many of us have wept over pain felt by our friends? How does this affect the way you connect with Jesus?
3. When Mary anoints Jesus we see Simon the leper, falling back on Pharisaical superiority. The other eleven may have complained because Mary's intimate dedication placed her closer to the Lord than any of them. They were blind to the heartfelt outpouring of Mary's love for Jesus, and her reflection of God's grace because of their competition, judgement, and pride. What have you missed out on because of your own competition, judgment, and pride?
4. Jesus' support of Mary, his refusal to see her demeaned by evil-spirited men, like Judas, is not only counter-cultural, but may have been the trigger for his betrayal. Are there women in your community that you could support, in the face of being counter-cultural in some circles and at personal risk?
5. The twelve apostles, who should have been the spiritually closest to Jesus, failed to determine why the tomb is empty. Jesus called on Mary, a woman, to teach and the men didn't listen to her. Are there women in your life that are teaching you about Jesus? What can you do to listen more closely?
6. Mary refused to be separated from Jesus, in life or death, at all four events surrounding his crucifixion. Disciples came and went. But Mary stayed. This defines Mary's character in the spiritual realm as well as the physical: she is the one who remains. What does staying with Jesus look like in your life?
7. Bethany was where Mary was born, but Magdala was where she was reborn, and that second birth holds the true essence of life. Mary of Bethany chose prostitution, Mary of Magdala

chose Christ. That's why she's known as Mary Magdalene. Mary's life was transformed by meeting God's son. How has knowing Jesus transformed your life?