

February 14, 2021

“Called to Support”  
Lesson 3 of Unit

Luke 8:1-3, Mark 15:40, John 20:10-18

**Intro**

Jesus’ ministry was accomplished by traveling from place to place, usually on foot. Along with his core of 12 disciples (plus other disciples), there were women who followed and had a role in His ministry. Our text says, “The opportunity for women to play a prominent role in Jesus’ ministry made it unusual.” There were no women on the Sanhedrin, or among the Sadducees or the Pharisees. There were no famous women rabbis in Jerusalem. So having women be part of his ministerial team was unusual.

Our lesson today looks at three examples from the gospels of women supporting Jesus in his ministry in three different ways.

**Read Luke 8:1-3**

1. vs. 1: Jesus goes from town to town, village to village

Towns had larger populations, with markets and government officials in them

Villages were smaller, usually dominated by farming concerns

Jesus preaches the “good news”

He does this in three ways in Luke 8 (following the 3 verses we’re looking at)

Teaches in parables (8:4-15, others)

Power over demons (8:26-39)

Miracles (healings, raising the dead: 8:43-48, 8:53-56)

The Twelve were with Him

Called in Luke 6:13-16)

2. vs. 2: Some women followed Him, cured of evil spirits and diseases by Jesus

We don’t frequently think of the women who followed Him

Most of the time, we think of the 12 disciples

The word cured suggests total healing, not just the absence of a disease

Named women:

Mary Magdalene (from the town of Magdala (on the w. coast of Sea of Galilee)

Jesus removes 7 demons from her

She is mentioned at least twice in each Gospel

Shows her fame and significance to the believers Luke is writing to

Joanna

Referred to as “wife of Chuza, manager of Herod’s household

Chuza’s position suggests Joanna may have had more money than most women

Susanna

No other references in the NT

Would she have been known by name to believers in decades after Jesus rose?

Were these two and others cured of diseases by Jesus also, or only Mary Magdalene?

3. vs. 3: “Many others” followed Jesus
  - Meaning many other women (vs. 2)
  - Some followed out of gratitude of being healed
  - Provided money, but also as likely, time and effort as support

### **Read Mark 15:40**

1. “Some women” were watching from a distance
  - This suggests that not all of Jesus’ female followers were there, only some of them
  - Some were close enough to hear Jesus speak from the cross (John 19:25-26)
  - Some named specifically
    - Mary Magdalene (again!)
      - Possibly the group leader since she is named first
    - Mary, mother of James, the younger
      - Possibly married to Alphaeus, apostle mentioned in Mark 3:18
      - Called James “the younger” marks him different from James, son of Zebedee
    - Salome, possibly wife of Zebedee
      - Matt. 27:56: notes Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and “the mother of Zebedee’s sons:
      - Matthew and Mark’s gospel tend to contain very similar information
      - Names are the same for the first two Mary’s, so Salome could be wife of Zebedee
  - Their service here is being with Jesus
    - The watch what they cannot stop
    - They wait for the chance to say or do something for Jesus

### **Read John 20:10-18**

1. vs. 10-11: Peter and John go back after examining the empty tomb
  - Mary Magdalene (again!!) stays at the site
    - Neither Mary nor the two appear to understand that Jesus is alive and risen
    - The men leave, and Mary cries as she looks into the tomb
2. vs. 12: Mary sees two angels inside the tomb
  - One sits at the head, one at the foot
    - There’s nothing in between!
    - Emphasizes Jesus’s body isn’t there
    - Mary knows this, but doesn’t completely understand
3. vs. 13: The two angels ask her a question and she responds
  - Their question should be taken as sincere concern and kindness, not a rebuke
  - Mary responds genuinely and normally
    - Shows she doesn’t appear to recognize them as angels
    - Her words show she thinks Jesus’ body is somewhere else, but close by

4. vs. 14: Mary sees Jesus but doesn't recognize Him

We are told it's Jesus, just like we're told the two men are angels (vs. 12)

Others didn't recognize Jesus post-resurrection

The disciples on the Emmaus road (Luke 24:30-32)

His own disciples (at first: John 20:19-26)

His post-resurrection body is different in some way

The Emmaus disciples don't recognize Him, nor do His own disciples

The impossibility of His being alive again makes it harder to recognize Him

5. vs. 15: Jesus asks the same question as the angels did

He surely knows, so this may be a way to have her hear His voice

Mary thinks He's the gardener of the burial site

Suggests the place has a gardener

Suggests it is well taken care of

Tomb was Joseph of Arimathea's (who was a wealthy man)

Mary again wants to find the body; it must be nearby

The gardener of the place would surely know where it is

6. vs. 16: Jesus says her name, and she knows

She finally recognizes His voice (maybe He spoke differently here than in vs. 15)

She calls Him "Rabboni"

Rabbi means "teacher"

Rabboni is more like "my teacher" or "my honored teacher"

Shows greater respect and affection than saying "rabbi"

7. vs. 17: Jesus gives Mary two commands

1) Don't hold on to me

Could be "don't touch/hug me"

Could also mean "don't try to make me stay here"

He must go back (ascend) to the Father

2) Go tell "my brothers" (the disciples) that I am ascending

Be the first witness to report what has actually happened to my body

8. vs. 18: Mary goes back to the disciples

"I have seen the Lord!"

Not fancy, just what she saw and knows

Her words suggest that telling others about Jesus doesn't need to be fancy

Just tell what we know...

Application: All three passages this week show women in service to Jesus. Some give money or perform needed tasks. Others stay with Him when He needs them, at His death. One was given the opportunity to be the first to tell others that Jesus was alive and risen.

Mary Magdalene features in all three stories, showing her importance in being with Jesus continually, serving faithfully. It's interesting that she was determined to find Jesus' body, but instead Jesus found her. Likely that's the way it was/is for all of us as well.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for the opportunity to serve You. Help us to see where and how we can serve you either more, or better, or both. In Jesus' name, Amen.