THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

**CHILDREN’S MEETING LESSON**

# DATE: November 5, 2017

# SUBJECT: GOD’S CALLING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: In the Gospels—Mary the Magdalene

# SCRIPTURE: Luke 8:1-3; Mark 15:40-41; Matthew 27:55-61; John 20:1-18; Mark 16:9-11

# AIM: To inspire the children to want to be like Mary the Magdalene, who out of great love for the Lord diligently sought Him and became one of His most faithful and devoted disciples.

**MEMORY VERSES:** Deuteronomy 6:5 (And you shall love Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.); Jeremiah 29:13 (And you will seek Me and find Me if you search for Me with all your heart); Matthew 25:40b (Inasmuch as you have done *it* to one of these, the least of My brothers, you have done *it* to Me.)

**SUGGESTED SONGS:** 2511(Follow! Follow! I Would Follow Jesus); 147 (Jesus Lord, I Want to Love You…); 41(There Were 12 Disciples); 2820 (God Will Call You); 93 (Jesus Loves the Little Children); 92 (Jesus Loves Even Me); *BSS Eight Great Men in Genesis Song #6* (Hospitality Song)

**CRAFT IDEAS:** Cut out a large heart shape from adhesive contact paper or construction paper. Paste bits of colored tissue paper onto the heart.

**CONTENT:** Although the twelve apostles were men, the Lord also called many women to follow Him. The Lord’s most notable female disciple was Mary, the Magdalene (from Magdala, John 19:25). When the Lord met Mary the Magdalene in Galilee, He delivered her from many evils. She was so happy that the Lord had set her free from her problems that she loved the Lord greatly and had no other desire than to follow the Lord wherever He went. Mary the Magdalene became one of His disciples and most devoted helpers. Mary, along with Joanna, Susanna, Mary (the mother of Jesus), Mary (the mother of James) and many other women followed the Lord and His disciples in His ministry from city to city and village to village (Luke 8:1-3). One way that Mary and the other women helped the Lord Jesus and His disciples was by taking care of their practical needs and supplying them from their own money and possessions (Luke 8:3).

Even when the Lord was crucified, Mary did not leave Him nor forsake Him. Most of the other disciples were hiding in fear that they too might be arrested, but Mary and the other women followed Him all the way to the cross (Matt. 27:55-56). At the scene of the cross, only Mary and the Lord’s closest relatives-His mother and aunts—are mentioned by name. They saw Him crucified; they watched as His body was taken down from the cross and they observed His burial. After a man named Joseph of Arimathea rolled the stone in front of the opening of the Lord’s tomb and went away, Mary and the Lord’s mother stayed and sat opposite the grave (Matt. 27:59-61). Mary was a faithful and devoted disciple, staying with Him even to the very end.

Having kept the Sabbath, Mary’s love for the Lord brought her and other women back to the tomb. It was now the first day of the week. She rose up very early and arrived at the tomb before dawn, while it was still dark. Mary discovered that the stone was rolled away and that the body of the Lord Jesus was gone. She quickly ran to tell Peter and John who, in turn, ran back to the tomb to confirm her report. After seeing that the Lord indeed was no longer in the tomb, the disciples decided to go back to their own home. Mary, however, lingered and remained at the tomb. Even though the disciples went home, Mary could not go home. She had no rest, no comfort. Her Lord was gone. Who had taken Him away? How could she leave?

What did Mary do at the tomb? She wept. The Lord she loved and served had died. And now even His body was gone. Then, she stooped down and looked in the tomb. She saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had laid. They asked her why she was weeping. Mary told them it was because someone had taken her Lord away and she didn’t know where He was. As she turned from the tomb, she saw someone whom she thought was the gardener. She said to him “…tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away”.

The “gardener” was the resurrected Lord Jesus. He was supposed to have ascended to the Father immediately after His resurrection, but instead He had to respond to His loving, seeking disciple Mary. Because of Mary’s loving heart, the Lord appeared to her. It was if He could not help it, as if He were compelled to respond to such a heart. He called her name, “Mary!”, and she immediately recognized Him, “Rabboni!” The Lord Jesus told her to tell His brothers that He was ascending to His Father and their Father, and to His God and their God.

So, Mary was the first to see the risen Lord. She received the first words from His mouth after His resurrection. She was commissioned to be the first announcer of His resurrection (though the disciples did not believe her, Mark 16:11). He appeared to Mary even before He ascended to the Father. What great honor was bestowed upon Mary the Magdalene! What a fitting reward to such a faithful, loving disciple!

**SUGGESTED APPLICATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM:**

* **Mary and the other women loved the Lord and His disciples in a practical way.** These faithful sisters ministered to their practical needs, perhaps cooking for them, or arranging a place for them to stay overnight. Likewise, our love for the Lord should be practical. We can also minister to the needs of others, perhaps by sharing our snack with somebody who doesn’t have one, lending a pencil to a classmate, helping a new one feel comfortable in children’s meeting, giving our room when overnight guests come, or by helping cook a meal for a family. When we help others and take care of others, we are ministering to the Lord. The women also ministered to them out of their own possessions. We can also willingly offer to the Lord.
* **Mary, along with** **the many** **other women, loved and treasured the Lord to the uttermost.** They followed Him wherever He went. They wanted to be in the presence of the Lord. We should treasure the Lord like this, not allowing anything else to take His place. We should treasure the meetings, singing hymns in our homes and spending time in the things of the Lord and with His people. Sometimes parties and sports activities take place on the Lord’s Day morning. Treasure the Lord by choosing to spend time with Him.

References:

The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, Set One, Volume 18, Notes on Scriptural Messages (2), Issue No. 28, Mary. Pages 241-248.

All the Women of the Bible. By Herbert Lockyer. Pages 99-l03.

Adapted from the Church in New York City Children’s Meeting Lessons–2/3/85; 1/27/94; 11/05/00; 10/29/06; 11/11/12