

## The Mind of Christ - Lesson 100

April 2, 2021

Welcome to another edition of The Mind of Christ. We are making our way through the Gospels and we're following the sequence of A. T. Robertson's "The Harmony of the Gospels". We're looking at everything Jesus said and everything He did in order to determine the mind of Christ; how Jesus thinks.

Today we have a relatively short section to cover and I'm going to limit myself to this one section today. It's Section 60 if you are following along in A. T. Robertson's sequence and this is about the second Galilean tour that Jesus made and it really focuses on the women who traveled with Jesus in that second tour. So we're going to be looking at what we know about the different woman that are mentioned in this section.

This section is found in **Luke 8:1-3** and we will begin by reading. I am reading from the New American Standard Bible because it is a very literal translation and that's what I have used to study the Mind of Christ. So, starting in verse one of Luke Chapter 8:

### **Luke 8:1-3**

And it came about soon afterwards, that He began going around from one city and village to another, proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of God. The twelve were with Him,<sup>2</sup> and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and sicknesses: Mary who was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out,<sup>3</sup> and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, Susanna, and many others who were contributing to their support out of their private means.

So, we have a number of facts, if you will, to consider here in this particular section. It would be interesting to know if Jesus had some particular strategy in these visits that He was making. Remember, this is the second Galilean tour that He has made. I can't imagine they were just random visits, He just "happened" to go here or there. Jesus was an itinerant preacher. This was typical of Jesus' work. In the pioneer days this was more common. I think they were called circuit preachers. The churches could not afford to have a "full-time" preacher so one man on horseback or buggy would travel from place to place preaching. Paul seemed to do much of this. This pattern is still practiced by some but I rarely hear of anyone saying it is a pattern that we must follow to be like the early church. We do tend to pick and choose the patterns that we want to follow.

Perhaps the distinction between a city or a village was maybe, one of size. He visited both but He did the same in both. He both preached and proclaimed and there is very little, I think, difference between the two. He preached, or proclaimed or evangelized, it says; just different aspects of the same principle or practice. He was in communication with the people concerning the kingdom of God. This is where His kingdom ministry began and He's still on this subject. Remember, He started His ministry by talking about the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, and He's still talking about the same thing. He has a theme that runs throughout His ministry in His Kingdom of God. Jesus had good news to share and He's getting the message out in the cities and villages that He's visiting.

Luke details those who traveled with Jesus. We would expect the Twelve, as they came to be known, to accompany Him. Now that He has designated them as Apostles, their training is fully underway. But travelling with such a group required support. It seems a bit strange that the support came from these women. I am not sure what to make of this, really.

In general, He says they had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, they were grateful women who had received a specific touch from the hand of the Healer, and they obviously wanted to help and to be near Him. I am sure their individual stories would be very interesting to hear and to know, but little is known about them. Of the three named, Mary Magdalene is the most well-known.

**Mary Magdalene** was exorcised of seven demons. So much conjecture has been conjured up surrounding this woman. The most tantalizing is the notion that she and Jesus were lovers and actually married and had children whose descendants live on the earth today. Here is what we have on her from Scripture though. We're not going to get into all of those speculative things out there floating around. Here's what we know from several Scriptures where she's mentioned: **Matthew 27:56**, **Mark 15:40** and **John 19:25**.

#### **Matthew 27:56**

“Among them was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.” Mary was among the women which included Jesus' mother, at the cross watching from a distance. **Matthew 27:61** it says she sat across from the grave when Jesus was buried. She was accompanied by the “other” Mary.

#### **Mark 15:47**

“Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses were looking on to see where He was laid.” Mark tells us that this other Mary was the mother of Joses. They wanted to see where Jesus was buried. In **John 20:1** it says that Mary Magdalene arrived at the tomb very early, while it was still dark, and saw the stone had been taken away. **Matthew 28:1** tells us she was with the “other Mary” at dawn at the tomb. **Mark 15:40** says the “other” Mary was also the mother of James the Less and Joses. **Mark 16:1** says Mary Magdalene and the “other” Mary was also accompanied by Salome and that they brought spices with which to anoint Him. *Some think* this indicates that Mary was center of Luke 7 who *anointed His feet with perfume*. Remember, Jesus said on that occasion she is preparing me for burial. So, some have associated the two here.

**Mark 16:9** says, “After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons.” **John 20:18** says that Mary was the one who announced the resurrection to the disciples. She says, “I have seen the Lord.” These are the only recorded words of Mary Magdalene; “I have seen the Lord.”

#### **John 19:25**

But standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

So, here is what we know to summarize this.

First, Mary Magdalene was among a group of women, not a single tagalong, who traveled with Jesus at least on the second tour of Galilee. Number two, she was at the cross with the other women including Jesus' mother. Number three, she, with others, was at Jesus' burial, and number four, she was one of the first to see the empty tomb. Number five, Jesus appeared to her after His resurrection, number six, she announced Jesus' resurrection to the apostles and lastly, she called Jesus, "Lord". Perhaps, there is one more thing we need to add here that has already been stated: she had seven demons who Jesus cast out. Now that's what we know about Mary Magdalene directly from Scripture.

In **Matthew 28** the angel speaks to the two Mary's who have come to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body with spices. They were shown the empty tomb, they were sent to inform the disciples that the tomb was empty, and that Jesus was going before them into Galilee. As they were going to report, Jesus appeared to them and they took hold of his feet and they worshipped Him. Jesus gave them the same message about meeting in Galilee.

**Mark** says three women came to the tomb. Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James and Salome. They brought spices and wondered how they would move the stone away from the cave. They had the encounter with the angel called 'a young man' here. Fears and astonishment gripped them, and **Mark 16:9** adds that He first appeared to Mary Magdalene.

**Luke 12:55** indicates the women saw where the tomb was. They prepared spices to anoint Him after the Sabbath was over. "They" of **Luke 24:1** and following is "the women".

**Luke** says that two men appeared in dazzling apparel and a similar message was given. *The women were identified as Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James and also the other women with them.* It seems to be many women at the tomb though Mary may have been singled out for a special audience with the risen Jesus.

**John** says that Mary came to the tomb early and reported to Peter; but later, after the disciples went home, in **John 20:10**, Mary stood *outside* the tomb weeping. She looks into the tomb and she sees the two angels and then Jesus appears and asks her why she is weeping. *She thought He was a gardener* and when Jesus said her name, "Mary", she recognized Him and she was "clinging" to Him. In other words, she was attaching herself to Him; she was touching Him and Jesus told her not to do that.

Okay, let's ask the question? *Did Mary Magdalene have a romantic attraction to Jesus?* Well, who knows; and even if she did, so what? As Jesus walked the earth, and as people were figuring out who He was, there had to be a variety of responses that were maybe, some, not proper, had they realized exactly who He was. But these are normal, human experiences. Did these inappropriate "responses" present a temptation to Jesus?

I assume they did, just as those who saw Him as a king. Satan used that to tempt Jesus to bow down to him in order to gain lordship over the entire world. (**Matthew 4:9**). The Bible says Jesus was tempted in every way as we are, and He experienced temptations common to man."

So, did traveling with these women, especially with Mary Magdalene present some difficulty? Perhaps.

Where did they stay when they traveled? What types of conversations did they have on the road? Did others expect any attraction or flirtation etc. and was anything said? But Jesus managed, whatever it was, whatever happened; He managed it well *all without sin!* So, I am going to allow the possibility that there was some attraction there, but for Jesus' part, He managed it well and even if He were tempted; the Bible says He was tempted in every respect like we are; then he obviously did not allow it to go into becoming a sin.

**Hebrews 4:15.**

Let's talk now about Joanna for a minute. Joanna was married to Chuza and it says that Chuza was Herod's steward (**Luke 8:3**). This was Herod Antipas who we're talking about here. Herod Antipas was the son of Herod the Great who tried to kill Jesus as a baby. Antipas had a steward, perhaps his treasurer, and his name was Chuza who perhaps was a believer in Jesus himself. This presents an interesting insight that Jesus' spiritual influence extended even into Herod's court, and wealth from that court flowed to Jesus.

Was Herod aware that he had believers or disciples among Him or in His midst? This shows the leaven of Jesus as it permeates every segment of society. Was Joanna at risk for her service to Jesus? Remember, this is the Herod before whom Jesus stood on trial before His crucifixion (**Luke 23:8-12**). Perhaps he had been encouraged to believe in Jesus by his steward, but maybe he mocked such an idea as he did at the trial of Jesus. Did Joanna provide "intelligence" regarding what the Jews were doing to try to silence Jesus? In other words, she had a kind of inside track of what was going on politically, and when Jesus was becoming more the focal point of the ire of the Jews, perhaps she had some insight into what they were planning, and perhaps, and all these are speculations, perhaps she alerted Jesus and the apostles about what was happening. Well, all of this is ... 'maybe' ... and if it did happen, it would certainly be interesting.

We're switching to a new journal here; we're in book number 7. This is 7 of 21 journals so we're almost a third of the way through The Mind of Christ.

Other than the note here, we know nothing about Susanna other than the fact that she was healed by Jesus and that she had some wealth or some 'means' by which to support Him. So, what are we to make of this reference? Some have inferred women's leadership in the church. Some have inferred a harem! Can either be justified by evidence given? I think not. ***But it does show that Jesus included these women in His ministry.*** They were allowed to be with Him and to help. They are held up, in the text, as 'useful' to Him and 'respected' for their services. Some have assumed, and it is not far-fetched, that these women had a special ministry to hurting women in the towns and the villages where Jesus went. So I don't think it would be far-fetched to think that these women who travel with Jesus would have had a special opportunity to minister to other women in the places where they visited. They were not Apostles but they were certainly disciples and were in a perfect position to testify to Jesus' ministry.

I wonder if Luke interviewed these women in preparation for his Book. It seems likely that he would. I wonder what perspective he got from a woman's point of view. Certainly, boundaries are important when men and woman travel and work together, but such is possible for them all to keep holy.

Now, that's all I've written on the subject of the women in this section. I told you this is a relatively short section, but I also want to tell you why I'm not going to go ahead and start the next section at this point.

**Section 61** is a rather long section. It is recorded in **Mark 3:20-30** and **Matthew 12:22-37** so you can see it's a very long section. It deals with the subject of the blasphemous accusations against Jesus, basically saying that He was in league with Beelzebub; that He was doing the things that he was doing because of Beelzebub.

Now, this is the section where it's going to talk about the unforgiveable sin and there's a lot contained in this section. I don't even know if we're going to get through all of it in the next recording that we do because it is quite long and it is involved and it has some very difficult material in it.

But I wanted to let you know that that was why I'm going to separate these two subjects. So, even though this is a relatively short version of The Mind of Christ today, that's just the way it happens sometimes because of the material and the arrangement of the material.

But again, thank you for joining us and if you would like to go back to listen and view other editions of The Mind of Christ you may go to our website at <https://www.centralsarasota.org/>.

You will find links to everything we've done as well as other series that we have done. We just invite you to explore on our website. If there's anything we can do to help you or to encourage you, please go to our website where there's a place you can e-mail us. There are some phone numbers there too so you can give us a call.

But again, thank you for joining us today and I hope you have a blessed day. See you next time.