



## SHEROES & CHAMPIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Women Disciples – Mary called Magdalene

Joanna-Susanna-- and Many Others

Women's Discipleship Group - Terri McFaddin

Series #1 Lesson #4

**Scripture Focus:** *The Twelve were with Him (Jesus), and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities – Mary called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna, and many others who were helping to support them out of their own means (Luke 8:2).*

**Key Word: Disciple** (Greek) – Mathetes: A learner. A disciple is not only a student, but also a close follower who imitates the teacher.

### **OPENING STATEMENT:**

The women that traveled with Jesus and “The Twelve” were also his disciples. I say this because a disciple is a follower who learns from and imitates the teacher. According to the gospels there was a key group of women that traveled with Jesus and made generous financial contributions to his ministry. These women were champions. When most of “The Twelve” ran away and hid during the crucifixion, it was the women that stayed by the cross and in spite of the Roman soldiers, came to the tomb of Jesus the following morning. There was a stigma placed on women that followed men around from town to town, but these women ignored the social norms. Some are mentioned by name and some remained anonymous but because Jesus healed and delivered them, they served him with love, devotion and gratitude.

### **Mary called Magdalene:**

She was a leader among the women and her name was always mentioned first. The scriptures tell us that she had seven demons that were cast out by Jesus. Many people assume that she was an immoral woman, but it is quite possible that she suffered from some other type of demon possession that manifested as depression, mental or physical illness. Once delivered, Mary Magdalene dedicated her life to the Lord. She was probably there when He fed the 5000 and when he challenged the Pharisees. Mary was also there during the crucifixion and was first to tell the world that Jesus had risen from the dead (Lk.24:10). Think of the wisdom and power this champion of the faith must have possessed after walking so closely with the Lord.

### **Joanna, the wife of Chuza:**

In two important passages of scripture, Joanna's name directly follows Mary Magdalene. This makes her a high-ranking disciple among the women. She is mentioned in Luke 8:2 and after the crucifixion in Luke 24:10. Although she was the wife of a government official and could have lived her life in luxury and comfort, she humbled herself and followed Jesus. No doubt she was healed or delivered by Jesus. Her husband, Chuza, also must have been a grateful believer because he never stopped Joanna from serving the Lord. Chuza was the business manager of Herod Anipus, the Roman ruler who beheaded John the Baptist and feared Jesus. Joanna's activities could have cost Chuza his job, but God protected them. She took the money that came from Herod and assisted Jesus in his ministry. How's that for favor and boldness?

### **Susanna:**

The story of this champion woman of the faith is laced with both legend and fact. Luke mentions her third among the women that followed Jesus. Nothing is said about her background or how she came to know Jesus, but some scholars call her the cook that prepared meals for Jesus and his disciples. After a long day of traveling and preaching, nothing could have been more welcomed than a hot plate of food. This was her gift to the Lord. Perhaps, this is why Luke gave Susanna this one honorable mention. For certain, she was a faithful servant and follower.

### **Many Others:**

We live in a culture where people are obsessed with the need for significance. They will do anything to be seen, heard and recognized by name and reputation...even if it is an evil deed. The scriptures tell a different story about women that were powerful yet anonymous. They are simply referred to as the "many others" that followed Jesus. The following women may have been a part of this group: The woman that was healed from the issue of blood. (Luke 8:44). The sinful woman that broke into the Pharisees house to see Jesus (Luke 7:37). The woman who was bent over with a spirit of infirmity for 18 years (Luke 13:11). The "certain women" that arrived at the tomb after the crucifixion (Luke 24:22). The Samaritan woman at the well that told the city about Jesus (John 4:28-29). The woman caught in adultery, then forgiven. (John 8:3).

The women that followed Jesus found real significance even though some were nameless. As we follow Jesus we find our purpose and the plan for our lives. There are many examples of troubled women that are well known. They suffer from addiction, heartache, and legal and financial problems. I would rather be among the nameless and find joy, peace, purpose and fulfillment.

**OBSERVATIONS:**

Search for stories in the Book of Luke for women that were healed from sickness or delivered from demon oppression. Could any of these women possibly have been Mary Magdalene, Joanna or Susanna? Give your reasons.

**INTERPRETATION:**

What does *Mary of Magdalene* or *Mary called Magdalene* mean?

**PERSONALIZATION:**

How has Jesus changed your life? What is it like for you to follow Jesus personally? How are you serving the Lord?

**APPLICATION:**

Examine your life and determine what you need to do in order to follow Jesus more closely.