

The Marys

Galatians 3:28

Christian Women

The three women (of the six in the Bible who are named Mary) to whom we will devote this session are Mary, the Mother of God; Mary Magdalene; and Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus.

St. Mary, the Mother of God (Asd-vadz-a-dzin)

We have included material about St. Mary, the Mother of God, in Unit II, but there is a beautiful story that has not been touched upon in this book that must not be overlooked.

Mary, the Mother of our Lord, spoke the shortest sermon ever given in the Bible, "Do whatever he tells you." (John 2:5) This "sermon" was delivered at the wedding feast in Cana. (John 2:1-11) Mary had the faith which could trust even when it did not understand.

Jesus' answer in the language of the day meant: "Don't worry; you don't quite understand what is going on; leave things to me, and I will settle them in my own way." The word "woman" was a title of respect in Jesus' day. It is the same word he used to address Mary as he left her to the care of John. (John 19:26) "My hour has not yet

Mary, Mother of God
ASDVADZADZIN
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come," may have referred to the fact that the hour of his emergence as the Messiah had not yet come. He said the same thing in John 7:6-8. He saw his life not in terms of his wishes, but in terms of God's purpose for him. Each Christian is called to do

the same; Mary did when she said “yes” to God, as have all the other saints.

As the Mother of our Lord, Mary stands apart from all others in history. No human being in the entire history of the world has been so honored and revered. She is great, not only in being the most perfect human being, but because of her part in the miracle of the Virgin Birth. At the Marriage in Cana, she requests that Jesus begin his public ministry. From then on she remains in the background. Mary’s great lesson to the world is her silent endurance of what she could not change. She was praying with the apostles in the upper room in Jerusalem. (Acts 1:14) In her service to the early Church Mary typifies the quality of complete obedience to the will of God.

Mary of Bethany

Mary, the sister of Lazarus (John 11:1) and Martha (Luke 10:38), was commended by Jesus for choosing to seize an opportunity for spiritual instruction rather than to help Martha with an elaborate meal. (Luke 10:41)

When Lazarus became ill, both sisters sent for their friend Jesus (John 11:3). He arrived after Lazarus had died and raised him from the dead (John 11:5, 17-44), a miracle that led many to believe.

The last appearance of Mary in the gospel record occurs when Jesus was entertained at Bethany; she anointed his feet. (John 13:1-11) Judas Iscariot ungraciously questioned her action as sheer waste. Jesus silenced him by saying that money could be given to the poor at any time, but a kindness done to him must be done now, for soon the chance would be gone forever.

In Mary’s action we see three things about love. Love is extravagant, it does not calculate the cost. Love is humble, it feels unworthy. And love is forgetful of self. Mary wiped Jesus’ feet with the hair of her

head. This was unheard of in Palestine. Many of us are self-conscious about showing that we are Christians because we are concerned about what others will think about us. Mary loved Jesus so much that it did not matter what others thought.

Mary of Bethany poured out her precious ointment in wholehearted devotion to the living Jesus. We can be certain that Martha, too, sanctioned her sister’s lavish gift to their Master. In his appreciation of her gift, Jesus invites us to enjoy God’s many blessings, not only the lovely things of the earth and the sky but also such a creation as fragrant ointment.

Mary Magdalene

Mary was from the town of Magdala, identified today as Mejdal. From the Scriptures it is easy to infer that she was one of the influential women of the town, who gave generously to Jesus’ ministry, for she had profound gratitude in her heart for his healing of the seven demons with which she had been afflicted. (Mark 16:9) Mary Magdalene is not to be confused with the unnamed sinful woman of Luke 7:36-50.

Mary Magdalene displayed the highest qualities of fortitude in moments of anxiety; courage under trying circumstances, love that could not fail, and humility and unselfish devotion to the Savior who had been crucified. Her faith is a monument to the healing power of Jesus. Her action in serving him in life and ministering to him when the mob had turned against him and had finally left him in the grave alone is exemplary.

Mary Magdalene had a more significant role at the time of the resurrection than any other person. (Luke 24:10)

Mary Magdalene did not hesitate to do as she had been commanded. She left the grave and forgot her useless spices. A great transformation had taken place in her own being, for she had witnessed a change from the material conception of life to the

spiritual, a transformation whereby man was ruled not by the flesh but by the spirit. It is no wonder she could report with firm conviction his words, "I ascend unto my Father," for she knew the true meaning of his deity and divine exaltation.

The last glimpse of Mary Magdalene as she hastened to the disciples to say, "I have seen the Lord," has all the dramatic power of victorious faith. What a magnificent commission hers was, to be a witness to Christ's conquest over death and to be the first to go forth to tell others that she

had seen the Lord! No one ever ran to deliver a more triumphant message.

Conclusion

God's call to service and his love are offered to all people, regardless of sex, race, or socio-economic position.

Women of the Bible held positions of leadership in the church. They showed sensitivity to the Holy Spirit in the discernment that Jesus was God incarnate.

What's the Name?

Prophet (Luke 2:36-38) _____

Deaconess (Romans 16:1-2) _____

Teacher and fellow worker (Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Romans 16:3; I Corinthians 16:19; II Timothy 4:19) _____

Helpful wife of (I Corinthians 9:5) _____

Consecrated business woman (Acts 16:14, 40) _____

Are women in the Armenian Church today playing the role that Christ intended? Explain.

Mary (Asdvadzadzin)

Mary Magdalene

Mary of Bethany

