

## Gazing into the Empty Tomb

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In John 20, we read the story of Mary Magdalene, who epitomizes the Bride whose heart is totally given to Christ. Apparently a woman of means, she ministered to the needs of Jesus with love and affection along with the other Mary's in his life. She did this out of sheer gratitude, for the Bible says Jesus had cast out seven demons from her (see Luke 8:2).

As far as the world was concerned, Mary Magdalene was not an intellectual, and when the male disciples discussed deep theological things, she probably kept her thoughts to herself. Women of that day rarely spoke openly of spiritual matters in the presence of men. But Mary had something these learned intellectuals did not have — yes, something even deeper than Jesus' disciples. She had a revelation!

“On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb” (John 20:1). Mary had gone to the tomb very early in the morning, while the others were still asleep. When she found the tomb empty, she ran to find Peter and John, but after a while, when they saw that Jesus was no longer there, they went back to business as usual (see 20:2-10).

But not Mary! She wept as her spirit cried, “This world is intolerable without Jesus! I can't go home without knowing where he is.” She was determined to stand there, gazing into the tomb, until her breaking heart was satisfied. “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him” (20:13).

Mary would not let go. Her devoted heart could be satisfied only by Jesus — he was her life! And sure enough, her devotion brought a wonderful revelation. While the other disciples rested in their homes, Mary had a visitation of the divine, seeing things nobody else could see — because her heart was given to Jesus (see 20:11-17).

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