

# A Moment with Mary



Luke 8:1-3; Mark 16:9; Matthew 27:55-56;  
Mark 15:40; John 19:25; Matthew 28:1-7;  
Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-22



The Encounters Bassline series takes us through the moments when Jesus met with his followers between his resurrection and ascension to Heaven. Many women played an important part in the life and ministry of Jesus, but today we are going to focus on just one of them. Mary Magdalene followed Jesus throughout his ministry and was by his side during Holy Week. She played an integral part in laying the foundations of the Church we know today. In this Bassline session, we are also going to consider the role of women within the ministry of Jesus and the part they play in the story of The Salvation Army.

## You will need:

- Mary Magdalene handout
- William Booth handout
- Resources for thanking women in Selah section



## Beat

### Say:

Today's Bassline centres around Mary Magdalene, who played an important role in the life of Jesus. Before we discover more about her, let's check your general Mary knowledge.

### Leader's notes:

The Beat section today consists of a Mary quiz, which can be used as a whole group or individually. See how many Mary-based questions the group can get right.

## Mary Quiz

1. Which Mary was the only child of Henry VIII, and what was her unfortunate nickname? [Mary I (Tudor), Nickname - Bloody Mary]
2. In what year did goalkeeper Mary Earps win BBC's Sports Personality of the Year? [2023]

3. Which Dame was a judge on seven series of Britain's most famous baking show? [Dame Mary Berry (on *The Great British Bake Off*)]
4. The sister pop duo 'Mary Mary' had an unexpected Christian hit song which reached number 5 in the UK charts in 2000. What is the name of the song? ['Shackles (Praise You)']
5. PL Travers created which fictional nanny who came to care for the Bankses' children (and their parents)? [Mary Poppins]
6. Which iconic women's fashion item did Mary Quant create in the 1960s which is still worn today? [Mini skirt]
7. Which Mary had a famous sister who lost the affection of a king, along with her head? [Mary Boleyn (sister of Anne Boleyn, who was married to Henry VIII)]
8. Which British nurse, born in Jamaica, was famous for her nursing work in the Crimean War? [Mary Seacole]
9. What is the full name of Spiderman's love interest? [Mary Jane Watson]
10. What is the name of the monster in Mary Shelley's famous Gothic novel? [This is a bit of a trick question. The monster is never given a specific name and is often referred to as 'the creature'. Frankenstein is the name of the scientist who created him.]

 **Bridge****Leader's notes:**

For a bit of fun, the group can watch and sing along with the Mary Mary classic 'Shackles (Praise You)'.

**Watch:**

Mary Mary - 'Shackles (Praise You)' (3:29)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iL2lToMIB4>

 **Amplify****Say:**

Many women played important roles in Jesus' life and ministry, but today we are going to focus on just one of them. Mary Magdalene followed Jesus throughout his ministry and was by his side during Holy Week.

**Leader's notes:**

Give each group member a Mary Magdalene handout. Ask them to find and read each Bible

reference and jot down what they discover about Mary. Once they have had time to explore each Bible verse, ask them to share what they have found. Encourage the group to look at the wider context of each of the verses. They may wish to do this alone or in small groups.

- Luke 8:1-3
- Mark 16:9
- Matthew 27:55-56; Mark 15:40; John 19:25
- Matthew 28:1-7; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-22

**Ask:**

Why was Mary Magdalene's encounter with Jesus at the tomb so important?

**Say:**

The most important encounter Mary experienced was the moment she met the resurrected Jesus. She was the first person to see Jesus alive after his resurrection and became an integral part of the ministry of the early Church. We're going to watch a clip that shares how Mary has often been misrepresented. As you watch, jot down three new facts you discover about the life of Mary Magdalene.

**Watch:**

The Untold Truth of Mary Magdalene - Grunge (stop at 2:50)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IscCROIJQUg>

**Leader's notes:**

Ask the group to share their facts and then discuss the importance of Mary Magdalene within the Christian faith.



 **Bridge**

**Leader's notes:**

If your group would like to discover more about the significant role of women in witnessing the resurrection of Jesus, then watch and discuss the clip together.

**Watch:**

Why Testimony from women showed Jesus' Resurrection - Juston Brierley (stop at 0:54)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4cmqKGX9aw>



## Sound Check

**Say:**

For our Sound Check section today, we're going to shift our focus from biblical times to the role of women within the Church in Victorian England. In its early days, The Salvation Army took what was seen as a radical position regarding the role of women within the organisation. To set the scene of conditions for women at the time, decide whether the following statements were true or false at the time that The Salvation Army started (in 1865).

- After divorce, women generally gained custody of their children.

*FALSE: Until 1839, fathers automatically gained custody of their children.*

- Anything women earned was handed over to their husbands.

*TRUE: Until 1807, when the Married Women's Property Act of 1870 finally allowed married women to own property and earn money in their own right, and to inherit property in their own names.*

- Women could serve as part of a jury in the court system.

*FALSE: In the UK, women became eligible to serve on juries only in 1921.*

- Women were not permitted to hold positions of leadership within most denominations of the Church.

*TRUE: Women would often participate in charitable work or teach in Sunday school, but they were almost never allowed to preach or lead worship services.*

**Say:**

Due to the influence of one woman, The Salvation Army pushed against the restrictions of Victorian England, and Christian tradition, to place equality at the centre of its mission.

**Watch:**

Anne Read – Catherine Booth (3:16)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EyljXNduoNg>

**Say:**

Catherine Booth played an integral role in ensuring that women stood in equality with men regardless of the society around them.

**Ask:**

Place yourself in the historical context of The Salvation Army. How do you think the equal role of women was received by people at the time?

**Say:**

It would be naïve to suggest that women's pathways to leadership within The Salvation Army was straightforward, but their recognition as equals within the Church was counter-cultural.

Following Jesus' example, William Booth valued women and spoke out when they were not treated with respect by society or even members of The Salvation Army.

**Leader's notes:**

Give each member of the group a copy of William Booth's statement made in August 1908 and read through it together. You can find it on the William Booth handout or the following website

**<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/aug/25/there-must-be-equality-for-women-in-the-salvation-army-says-general-booth-archive-1908>**

Working in smaller groups ask the young people to discuss the following questions:

- What was the key message William Booth was trying to communicate to members of The Salvation Army?
- What do you think prompted him to create a message like this?
- Read through the statement again. Is this message applicable to The Salvation Army today? If so, how?

**Leader's notes:**

Bring the group back together and ask them to share their thoughts.

**Ask:**

What surprised you most about William Booth's statement? Explain your response.

**Leader's notes:**

There may be some in the group who would like to explore The Salvation Army's history in this area in more detail. If so, then share the following link for them to read at home. It will take them to a digital copy of Catherine Booth's pamphlet *Female Ministry - Woman's Right to Preach the Gospel* written in 1859.

**<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/2020-10/Pam.R.4%20%27Female%20Ministry%27.pdf>**

**Ask:**

What is your response to the following quote by Catherine Booth? Do you think she is right? If so, why?

**'You are not here in the world for yourself. You have been sent here for others. The world is waiting for you'**

– Catherine Booth

## **Selah**

**Say:**

Many women in our lives show us what it means to follow Jesus. In our Selah today, we are going to take time to give thanks for them.

**Leader's notes:**

During this time the young people can give thanks for the women who are a strong Christian influence in their lives. Provide resources to support any of the following ideas.

- Write a thank you card filled with encouragement.
- Write a prayer of thanksgiving.
- Send a text message.

To bring the session to a close, invite each young person to name a woman who has had a positive influence on their Christian life. Pray with the group to bring the session to a close.

## **Coda**

**Say:**

In a piece of music, the coda brings the different aspects of the melody, harmonies and bassline to a conclusion. It pulls together the different themes and often, but not always, brings resolution to a piece of music.

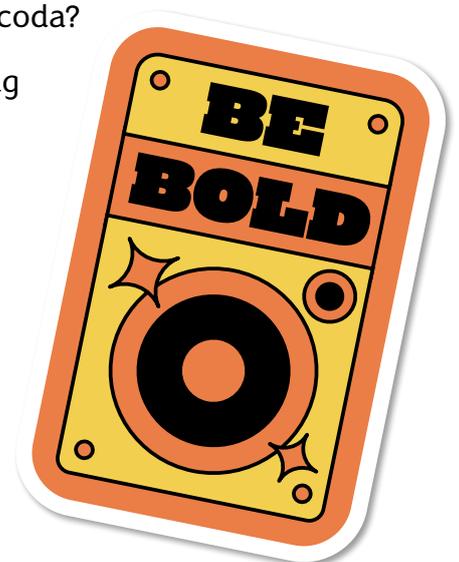
**Ask:**

As you reflect on everything you have learned today, what is your coda?

What is the one thing you will take away from this session regarding the role of women in God's Church?

**Leader's notes:**

Give the young people a moment to think about your question and briefly share their coda with the group before the session comes to an end.



**Luke 8:1-3**

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**Mark 16:9**

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## Mary Magdalene

**Matthew 27:55-56; Mark 15:40;  
John 19:25**

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# William Booth

'My feelings and opinions with respect to woman generally are known throughout the world. My standard on this subject is ever before you, and I want the entire Army to embrace it. First and foremost I insist on woman's equality. Every officer and soldier should hold to it that woman is as important, as valuable, as capable, and as necessary to the progress and happiness of the world as man. Unfortunately a large number of people of every class think otherwise. They still cling to the notion of bygone ages – that as a being woman is inferior to man.

To many she is little more than a plaything for their leisure hours. To others she is like a piece of property, a slave in everything but name. Ofttimes she is treated with less consideration as to health and comfort than the horses that run in omnibuses or beasts that are fattening for slaughter. Now The Salvation Army has done and is doing something to combat these hideous and heathen notions.

To begin with, the Army has maintained that the sexes are equal alike in birth; alike equal in the value of the soul and the capacity for joy and sorrow; alike equal before God and in the love of the Heavenly Father; alike equal in their share in the redemption of Jesus Christ; alike equal in responsibility for spreading salvation and extending the Kingdom of God; alike equal in accountability at the Judgement-Day; alike equal as citizens of the Celestial City; and alike equal in capacity for the employments and enjoyments of the eternity to come.

I do not say that every individual faculty in woman is equal to the corresponding faculty in man, any more than I would say each particular capacity possessed by man is equal to the same in woman. They differ both in character and degree. But where one is weaker the other is stronger. For example, in the power of will and in the possession of physical force the man will often be found to excel the woman. On the other hand, in quickness of perception, in powers of endurance, and in strength of love (the quality in us which is most God-like), woman is generally the superior of man. Taken as a whole, therefore, I say that woman is equal to man in the value of her gifts and the extent of her influence; and I maintain that if she be given a fair chance she will prove it to be so.

Now I want you to think over and accept this truth. Nay, more, I would have all of us stand to it, and show it forth to the world, by our own treatment of our women comrades. Above all, let us teach it both in theory and in practice to the young people around us. Let the boy be taught from his earliest infancy that his sister is as good as he is, in all that is important to life, except, perhaps, in the physical force which he possesses in common with the brute beasts. Let the girl be made to feel that her value to God and man is as high as it would have been had she been a boy. Let the grown-up people set before the children and the voting people a constant and living example of that gentleness and kindness to woman which was ever manifested by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Whether married or single, let every man treat the woman with whom he is acquainted with respect, with patience, and with care. Every man to whom has been entrusted a wife must – and will, if he has any proper sense of manliness in him – champion her interests, fight her battles, watch over her soul, and even die, if need be, as Christ died on her behalf. Let us then determine to pay woman more regard in the position assigned to her by the providence of God, as a wife, as a mother, as a daughter, and as a comrade in the Salvation War.

– Your affectionate General,  
(Signed) William Booth.'