



## Called to Support

### Lesson Overview

#### Week of February 14

#### *Suggested Material for As Your Students Arrive*

- Two or more pictures of incidents in which the testimony of a person is vital

#### **1** Life Need:

Discuss the uniqueness of each Christian's testimony about Jesus.

#### **2** Bible Learning:

Study women's prominence in the New Testament testimony about the risen Jesus.

#### *Suggested Material:*

- *Adult Teacher's Resource Kit:* Poster and Reproducible Sheet—Women in the New Testament

#### **3** Bible Application:

Appreciate one's own testimony about Christ.

#### *Suggested Material:*

- *Adult Teacher's Resource Kit:* Reproducible sheet—Testimonies about the Risen Christ
- A large sheet of paper, felt pens

#### **4** Life Response:

Promise to testify to what Jesus has done for you.

**Church/Home Theme:**  
Christ Jesus Is Our Savior

#### **Lesson Focus:**

Listen! Jesus calls you by name to testify.

#### **Lesson Scripture:**

Luke 8:1-3; Mark 15:40; John 20:10-18

Luke specifically named women who followed Jesus and provided for the needs of Him and His disciples. Jewish men failed to highly esteem women in Jesus' day. A husband or father could ignore them or treat them harshly. But Jesus paid attention to women as well as men and ministered to their deepest needs. Think of the woman with the hemorrhage of blood (Mark 5:25-34), the Syrophenician woman and her daughter (7:24-30), and the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11-17), for example.

**Women Following Jesus**—Mary Magdalene's conversion story is a great example of God's care. Demons possessed her body until Jesus set her free (Luke 8:2). Another follower of Jesus was Joanna, the wife of one of the stewards for Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee. She would have been from the upper class of that day. It's surprising to see two women from such different backgrounds joining hands to follow Jesus. Mark also mentioned several women who wholeheartedly supported Jesus: Mary, Jesus' mother; Mary, mother of James and Joses; and Salome (Mark 15:40).

**Women at the Tomb**—Women were the first ones to discover the Resurrection when they went to the tomb to wrap Jesus' body with spices after His crucifixion. They hadn't expected an empty tomb. Mary Magdalene stood outside the tomb, heartbroken, weeping, figuring His body had been stolen, but then she saw two angels in the tomb who asked, "Why are you crying?" She explained that she thought others had taken His body and she didn't know where.

**Jesus Called Mary's Name**—Then Mary turned around, and there stood Jesus, though at first she did not recognize His resurrected body and assumed Him to be a gardener. But Jesus called her name, and she knew—it's Jesus! He commissioned her to go and tell the other disciples about His resurrection.

**The Shepherd Knows Every Name**—God knows everyone by name because we are His sheep. Like a little lamb, God's children are allowed to curl up in the Shepherd's lap, experience His love, and listen to His voice tenderly calling your name. Out of this abundance of compassion, believers tell their stories and spread His Gospel.

#### **As Your Students Arrive**

Prior to class, collect two or more pictures of incidents in which the testimony of a person is vital. Examples might include a car accident in which a person will testify who is at fault, a robbery in which a person will testify as to the identity of the

thief, a wedding in which a person testifies so that it's official, the signing of a document, such as a will, in which a person testifies to its legality, and a public testimonial in which a person testifies to someone's character or achievement. As students enter the classroom, ask them to briefly explain why the testimonies of people in these situations are important.

### Link to Last Week

Talk about sharing the Gospel this past week or about people you are praying about sharing the Gospel with.

# 1 Life Need

Discuss the uniqueness of each Christian's testimony about Jesus.

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## Called to Support

A small group of young men was assembled in the house the church owned. Jalen, a new Christian of eight months, loved attending the young men's group. Minister Duane was talking about choosing the right paths—and the sometimes-brutal consequences of choosing wrongly.

Jalen's friend Martel was currently in the hospital in critical condition. Jalen, Martel, and a group of other friends had gone out last weekend. Before the night was over, there was a police chase involving the car that Martel was driving.

"Jalen, would you share your experiences about following the leading of the Holy Spirit?" said Duane.

Jalen had a feeling that Duane would call on him. Jalen's old friend had come to town and had wanted to get together with some of their old friends, which included Martel and Damien. The night had started with dinner and drinks. Jalen had abstained from the drinks, and his old "crew" ribbed him about finding religion. After dinner, the group went in search of more exciting nightlife. Martel was driving, and wanted to pick up something to liven up the evening.

That's when Jalen bailed. Martel and a few others had made cracks toward him. However, Jalen's friend Damien had not. "Sure, I'll share my testimony," said Jalen as he looked around the group, and his eyes rested on Damien.

**1. Why is a person's testimony usually highly valued in our society?**

**2. Why is the reliability of that testimony dependent on the character of the person offering the testimony?**

**3. Have you ever had to provide your testimony for something? If so, describe the circumstances.**

**4. Do you believe your Christian testimony is unique? Explain your answer.**

LESSON FOCUS: Listen! Jesus calls you by name to testify.

Ask your students to form small groups and answer **Questions 1, 2, 3, and 4.**

The answer to Question 1 focuses on how a testimony helps support facts about an occasion, an incident, a document, or a person. People tend to feel more assured when one or more person(s) can give a firsthand account.

Question 2 further supports the reliability of the testimony. Students can note such trustworthy character traits as objectivity, insightfulness, and eloquence.

For Question 3, urge students to describe the circumstances pertinent to their testimony—even in an informal situation. Probably all of them have given a personal account to someone of an incident that they witnessed. Ask them how their testimony was valued, what questions arose concerning their testimony, and how their answers to those questions further validated their testimony.

For Question 4, because the Christian community often celebrates startling stories of conversion, many Christians view their own testimony as uninspiring and inconsequential. However, remind them that each of them has a deeply personal relationship with Christ and that He has carefully molded their character and crafted their spiritual skills to reach specific people God has brought or will bring into their lives.

# 2 Bible Learning

Study women's prominence in the New Testament testimony about the risen Jesus.



Women were essential to Jesus' earthly ministry: They traveled with Him when He preached and healed at one town after another and even financed the expenses of Jesus and the Twelve during

their travels; unlike many of the apostles who abandoned Jesus in fear of their lives, they were present at Jesus' death on the cross; and they were the first to

witness the Risen Christ! Truly, their individual testimonies about their Lord Jesus were especially personal and unique, particularly the testimony of Mary Magdalene.

On the poster handout, read paragraph three, then point out the photo on the poster of a statue of Mary Magdalene leaving Jesus' tomb, seeing Him, and shouting, "Rabboni!" (John 20:16).

## BIBLE EXTRA

### God's Kingdom

"Kingdom" in Luke 8:1 translates the Greek noun, *basileia*, from which we get our English word *basilica*. In a broad sense, the term refers to the rule of God over all creation. Yet, in a narrower sense, the term denotes God's reign in the lives of His born-again children.

Some people identify God's kingdom with heaven, the place where believers go after they die. Others equate the kingdom with the Church, to the point where they are the same thing. Still others think the kingdom is just a code word for ethics, in which Jesus' summons believers to only social action.

However, Scripture depicts God's kingdom as His sovereign rule over the entire universe, including heaven, earth, and the Church (Ps. 45:6; 47:2; 93:1-2; 103:19). However, the kingdom is also God's rule over the hearts and minds of people who submit to Him. Jesus said His kingdom is spiritual; it is not of this world (John 18:36), but repentance now is necessary to enter His kingdom (Matt. 4:17). God's kingdom is both coming (Luke 11:2) and at hand because the arrival of Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies, inaugurated the new covenant, and defeated Satan at the Cross.

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## Women Healed by Jesus

Luke 8:1-3, KJV

1 And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him,

2 And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

3 And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

Luke 8:1-3, NIV

<sup>1</sup>After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, <sup>2</sup>and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; <sup>3</sup>Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.

Luke's Gospel spotlights several women positively. In the male-dominated culture of Jesus' day, women were frequently demeaned, mistreated, and excluded from the groups of men who became followers of popular Jewish rabbis. Yet, with Jesus were also several women whom He had "cured" (vs. 2) of invasive "evil spirits" and crippling "diseases."

First on the list is Mary, who was originally from the city of Magdala on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. For this reason, she was also known as "Magdalene." Jesus had expelled "seven demons" from her. Verse 3 mentions a woman named Joanna, who was married to "Chuza," the household "manager" (NIV) of Herod Antipas (who ruled over Galilee). Luke also briefly referred to a female disciple named "Susanna," about whom nothing else is stated. These followers sacrificially used their own financial resources to "support" Jesus and the Twelve.

5. What did Jesus do as He journeyed about?

6. Who accompanied Jesus during His ministry tour?





Further commentary on this Scripture passage can be found on pp. 825-827 in *The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: New Testament*.

## WOMEN HEALED BY JESUS

Read Luke 8:1-3, and highlight these key points as you discuss the Scripture:

- During Jesus' evangelistic ministry, He journeyed from village to village in and around Judaea and was accompanied by His closest disciples, as well as some women.
- In fact, these women supported Jesus' ministry by providing Him and His apostles with funds to acquire food and to meet daily living expenses.
- The author of the Gospel of Luke even named

some of these women: Mary Magdalene, whom Jesus cast out seven demons; Joanna, the wife of Chuza who managed Herod's household; and Susanna.

## SUGGESTED ANSWER TO QUESTION 5

Throughout Jesus' ministry in Galilee, He went from one city and hamlet to the next. While on the move, He heralded the wonderful news about God's reign. It seems Jesus declared the Gospel to whomever would listen to Him.

## SUGGESTED ANSWER TO QUESTION 6

Luke 8:2-3 indicates that Jesus was not

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## Some Women Witnessed Jesus' Crucifixion

*Mark 15:40, KJV*

40 There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome.

*Mark 15:40, NIV*

<sup>40</sup>Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joseph, and Salome.

At Jesus' crucifixion, only the apostle John of the Twelve was present, but numerous female followers were present. It was "from a distance" that these devoted women watched as the Savior gave His life on the Cross.

Among those whom Mark noted were Mary Magdalene, along with Mary, who is described as being the "mother" of two sons, James and Joseph. This Mary was not only present at Jesus' crucifixion (Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40), but also at the initial discovery of His empty tomb (Mark 16:1; Luke 24:10).

At both events, this Mary was accompanied by Mary Magdalene and "Salome" (Mark 15:40). They were part of a larger group of female disciples who traveled with Jesus and the Twelve and helped them during His ministry (vs. 41).

### 7. Who was present at Jesus' crucifixion?

## Mary's Encounter with the Risen Lord

*John 20:10-18, KJV*

10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre,

12 And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

*John 20:10-18, NIV*

<sup>10</sup>Then the disciples went back to where they were staying.

<sup>11</sup>Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb <sup>12</sup>and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

<sup>13</sup>They asked her, "Woman,

## BIBLE EXTRA

### Roman Crucifixion

The context for Mark 15:40 is the Roman crucifixion of Jesus. It was a form of torture and execution invented in the East and adopted by the Romans for rebels, lesser criminals, and slaves. Crucifixion was one of the most cruel and degrading methods of capital punishment ever contrived in the ancient world.

The process first involved the executioners using iron nails to pin the convict's wrists to the horizontal beam of the cross. Then they lifted this beam and attached it to another beam placed upright in the ground. Next, the executioners nailed the convict's feet or ankles together to the vertical beam, with the person's knees bent to one side. They erected above the head of the convict a placard stating the offense for which the person was being executed.

Many victims of crucifixion lingered for two or three days before dying of exhaustion, exposure, and their wounds. If the executioners wanted to make the convict to last longer, they would outfit the cross with a block of wood as a footrest, which would give the person support and improve circulation. Oppositely, if the executioners wanted to shorten the convict's life, they would break the person's legs with a club, which removed the convict's ability to support the weight of the body.

alone as He traveled from town to town. His 12 disciples journeyed with Him, but a number of women, whom Jesus had healed, also joined the larger throng of His followers.

## SOME WOMEN WITNESSED JESUS' CRUCIFIXION

Now read Mark 15:40, and assess these following statements:

- While Jesus perished on the Cross on Golgotha, "the place of the skull," several women, who were faithful followers of Jesus, witnessed His agonizing execution.

- These women included Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James and Joseph; and Salome.

## SUGGESTED ANSWER TO QUESTION 7

Mark 15:40 says a variety of people were present at His crucifixion. Numerous female followers witnessed His execution at Calvary "from a distance."

## BIBLE EXTRA

### What If Jesus Had Not Been Raised?

In 1 Corinthians 15:14-19, Paul addressed the dilemma facing believers if Jesus had not been raised. For instance, if He was still in the tomb, then Paul's preaching and the believers' faith were both useless. That's because the resurrection of the Savior is at the core of the Christian faith. Without the Resurrection, the Gospel is neither worth spreading nor believing (vs. 14).

Next, if Jesus was not raised, then Paul had taught a blatant falsehood about God, since the apostle had declared that the Father had raised the Son from the dead. Put differently, Paul was a liar and believers could not trust his teaching (vs. 15).

Finally, if the Son was not raised, then the believers' trust in Him had done nothing to solve their sin problem. They were all still hell-bound. In that case, no one was more pitiable than a Christian. This is because believers were hoping for salvation while remaining under divine, eternal condemnation for their sin (vss. 17-19).

## MARY'S ENCOUNTER WITH THE RISEN LORD

While reading John 20:10-18, note these important points for your class discussion:

- After Jesus was crucified and buried in a tomb, the apostles dejectedly returned to their homes.
- Mary Magdalene, however, went to Jesus' tomb to care for His body, and while she wept outside the tomb, she saw two angels reclining where Jesus' body should have been.
- One of the angels asked her why she was crying, and she replied that she was distressed because Jesus' body was missing and she didn't know where it had been taken.
- Mary then turned around and saw the Lord,

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KJV

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

NIV

why are you crying?"

"They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him."<sup>14</sup> At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

<sup>15</sup>He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

<sup>16</sup>Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher").

<sup>17</sup>Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

<sup>18</sup>Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

John 20 describes what happened after Jesus' resurrection. Early Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene (and other women according to the other Gospels) came to the tomb and saw that "the stone had been removed from the entrance" (John 20:1) and Jesus' tomb was empty. Mary dashed to Peter and

but as of yet she didn't recognize Him.

- Jesus inquired as to the cause for her tears and to whom she was seeking.

- Presuming this inquisitor was a gardener and had taken her Lord, Mary beseeched Him to tell her where He had buried the body so she could retrieve it.

- When Jesus spoke her name, she recognized Him and cried out, "Teacher!"

- He then cautioned her not to grasp Him because He had not yet ascended to His heavenly Father.

- Instead, Jesus instructed Mary to go to His disciples and tell them that He had surely risen from the dead and would be returning to His Father,

the "other disciple" (most likely John) and told them that people had transferred Jesus' body to a place she and the other women did not know (vs. 2).

When Peter and John ran to investigate the tomb, they saw that it was empty, but they did not yet fully comprehend what had happened and returned to their lodgings in Jerusalem. Mary evidently had returned to the tomb with them, and at some point she decided again to look inside, where she now saw two white-robed angels sitting at the head and foot of the place where Jesus' body had been lying.

The angels asked Mary, "Woman, why are you crying?" (vs. 13). When she explained that she was grieved over the possibility that Jesus' body had been stolen, she turned to see a man she thought was the "gardener" (vs. 15), perhaps because it was common in that day for groundskeepers to perform their duties early in the morning. Like the angels, He asked Mary why she was weeping and who she was seeking. Mary did not answer His questions, but implored Him to reveal the whereabouts of her Lord's body.

The "gardener" then said "Mary" (vs. 16), and she recognized the Lord when she heard Him say her name. She turned toward Jesus again and exclaimed, "Rabboni!" which means "my teacher" in Aramaic.

Jesus then said to Mary, "Do not hold on to me" (vs. 17). The phrase conveys the idea of "Don't cling to me." Mary was to return to the disciples with the marvelous news of Jesus' victory over death and His coming ascension to the Father. Mary obeyed Jesus by rushing to the disciples, telling them that she had actually seen the risen Lord. She also related the message Jesus had entrusted to her. Mary's abrupt ascent from the depths of grief to the heights of joy most likely astonished the rest of Jesus' followers (vs. 18).

**8.** *What was Mary doing outside Jesus' tomb?*

**9.** *Whom did Mary initially encounter at Jesus' tomb?*

**10.** *How did Mary respond to Jesus' presence?*

**11.** *How did Jesus resolve Mary's confusion?*

which she did, relating that she had seen their risen Lord, as well as all that He had said to her.

### **SUGGESTED ANSWER TO QUESTION 8**

Mary was distraught by what she found. Mary assumed that thieves had removed Jesus' dead body. Even worse, Mary could not figure out where the alleged grave robbers had taken the Savior's corpse (John 20:11-13).

### **SUGGESTED ANSWER TO QUESTION 9**

At first, Mary was left all alone at Jesus' tomb, since Peter and John had already departed (John 20:10). Evidently, not long afterward, Mary spotted two angels within the empty tomb. Each of them was sitting at the place where the head and feet of Jesus' body, respectively, were previously located (vs. 12).

### **SUGGESTED ANSWER TO QUESTION 10**

When Mary sensed Jesus' presence, Mary did not recognize the Savior (John 20:14). Even though He was standing right in front of Mary, she failed to identify Jesus as the risen Lord. Instead, Mary mistakenly presumed Jesus was a local "gardener" (vs. 15).

### **SUGGESTED ANSWER TO QUESTION 11**

Jesus understood that Mary was upset over the sight of the empty tomb. Instead of chiding Mary for misidentifying the Savior, He clearly and compassionately spoke Mary's name (John 20:16). In doing so, Jesus helped to pull Mary out of her dazed mental state to see that her beloved "Teacher" (NIV) was standing in front of her.



# 3 Bible Application

Appreciate one's own testimony about Christ.

This step discusses how we can shine His light to others in the world. Allow students to select the activity they would like to do. If possible, photocopy this page and give instructions to each group. Give a large sheet of paper and pens to the group doing the mural. Make copies of the handout from the Resource Kit for the group using it.

## Handout:

### 'Testimonies about the Risen Christ'



Lydia was an enterprising woman who was well respected within her household. Philip possessed a brilliant command of Scripture. Eunice and Lois helped establish a strong foundation of faith in Timothy.

## GROUP ACTIVITIES

### Discussion Group

Read "An Aroma That Brings Life" and answer **Questions 12, 13, and 14**. Some commendable qualities could be being a good parent/grandparent, a good host, and a good teacher in terms of conveying the true character and teachings of Christ. Every Christian should regard being an ambassador for Christ very seriously, since what we say and how we behave reflect not only on ourselves and our faith in Jesus but also on Him. We have the aroma of Christ by knowing what the Bible teaches about Christ and being able to convey that Christian message, by being obedient to Jesus' teaching to be merciful and kind and forgiving, and by empathizing with those who have struggled with hardships and being able to describe to them how Jesus helped them.

### A Mural of Testimony

On the large sheet of paper, as a team draw a picture of Jesus in the center. In a circle around Him, sketch the women mentioned in this week's Scripture with their names identifying them. Then, in a circle around the women, sketch the people in your group with their names. How is each person in the group connected to the women and to Jesus? How could our testimony affect a circle of friends, relatives, and acquaintances we could draw around ourselves?

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## An Aroma That Brings Life

It is said that you may be the only person by which someone will see Jesus. If that is true, then every Christian has the responsibility to be a godly ambassador for Christ (2 Cor. 5:20). Paul said we're "an aroma that brings life" (vs. 16). We're like a fragrant flower, God's handiwork in the world's garden.

Lilias Trotter (1853–1928) grew up in a wealthy family in Victorian England that emphasized walking daily and humbly with the Lord. A talented artist, she caught the attention of art critic John Ruskin, who said her paintings challenged his idea that women could not paint well. But rather than pursuing just an art career, Trotter felt God's call to help others so she could feel closer to Him. She wrote, "To bear His name with all that is wrapped up in it of fragrance and healing and power, to enter into His eternal purpose, is the calling for which it is well worth counting all things as loss."

She began working with the new YWCA organization in London to help train prostitutes for honorable jobs. Ruskin told her she must "give herself up to art" if she wanted to be "immortal," but she told him she could not do that and continue to "seek first the kingdom of God." She continued to paint and draw, but in 1887, when she heard about the need for missionaries in North Africa, she set off with two friends for Algeria, not knowing anyone or any Arabic. She set up 13 mission stations to bring the Gospel to everyone from native tribes to Muslim mystics and Muslim women. By the time she died in 1928, 30 others were helping her bring the Gospel to Algeria. She helped translate Luke and John into everyday Arabic and illustrated her writings so that everyone could see God in His Word and in the beauty of His creation.

**12.** *What qualities do you have to be Christ's ambassador?*

**13.** *Why is being Christ's ambassador so important?*

**14.** *How are you an aroma that brings Christ's life to others?*

# 4 Life Response

Promise to testify to what Jesus has done for you.

Because Jesus delivered demons out of Mary Magdalene, she became His devoted follower, hearing His teachings firsthand, seeing His excruciating death on the Cross, and being the first to witness His bodily resurrection. Her particular Christian testimony undoubtedly was truly powerful. Our individual testimony certainly is not the same as that of Mary Magdalene's, but, nevertheless, it is personal and transforming and shows what Jesus is still doing in the world today.

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## Jesus Is the Reason

Many women witnessed Jesus' life and each could claim a unique testimony about Jesus, and although we weren't there as they were, we still have our own individual, unique relationship with Him and can personally testify about Him as our Lord and Savior.

► Describe briefly how Jesus changed your life through the Holy Spirit and is transforming you into the image of Christ. You have a unique testimony of how He has personally entered your life and delivered and changed it. Use this testimony with people who don't know who Christ is and what He has done.

### KEY VERSE

And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him. And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils. —Luke 8:1-2, KJV

After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out. —Luke 8:1-2, NIV

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

Week of February 15 through February 21

(See *The Quiet Hour* and *Cross* devotionals on these passages.)

- Mon.** 2 Timothy 4:9-18—Paul Reflects on His Ministry.
- Tues.** Colossians 4:7-15—Greetings to Saints in Jesus Christ.
- Wed.** 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-28—Encourage One Another.
- Thurs.** Acts 18:4-11—Corinthian Ministry Shifts from Jews to Gentiles.
- Fri.** Acts 18:12-17—Roman Official Refuses to Settle Dispute.
- Sat.** Romans 16:1-2, 6-7, 12-13, 16—Greetings to All Sisters in Ministry.
- Sun.** Acts 18:1-3, 18-21, 24-26; Romans 16:3-4; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19—Priscilla, Key Outreach Minister.

For this step, have students read "Jesus Is the Reason" in *Comprehensive Bible Study* and write their testimony. They may want to return to the small groups they had in Step 1 to have them relate what unique ways God has called them to testify to others about how Jesus has touched their lives. A simple format to follow is what my life was like before Jesus, how He reached me, and how my life has changed for the better since He is in my life. Be conscious, however, of people in the class who have not accepted Christ. Do not make them feel alienated but wanting to have the special relationship that the others in the class have with the Lord.

End the lesson with a closing prayer. Thank our heavenly Father that He has formed a unique and intimate relationship with each Christian in this class. Ask God to guide us as we faithfully and boldly and compassionately testify on behalf of Christ Jesus. And praise the Lord for giving us the high honor and privilege of being an advocate for our Savior in our own special way.



As the class members are leaving, hand out copies of this week's *Power for Living*. Take or mail copies of *Lesson Leaflet* to those who couldn't be with you today, or send them to those you would like to join your class.

## Before Teaching Next Week's Lesson

Before next week, read Acts 18:1-3, 18-21, 24-26; Romans 16:3-4. Ask your students to think of things that are best done when people work together.