



LIGHT IN THE SHADOWS

*The light shines in the darkness, and
the darkness has not overcome it.
John 1:5*



Desert Rose

WEEK ELEVEN

LIGHT IN THE SHADOWS

Opening Prayer

God of Light,

You bring Light to our Shadows, Hope for the
hopeless, joy without ceasing.

Bring the Light of Your Love into my heart; dispel the
darkness, and heal my wounded heart.

Help me remember that You are always with me.

In Jesus' Name. Amen.

*The light shines in the darkness, and the
darkness has not overcome it.
John 1: 5*



Song for Reflection:
Adagio for Strings - Albinoni



OUR GUIDE

St. Mary Magdalene

The Apostle to the Apostles



"I was one way, and now I'm completely different. And the thing that happened in between was Him."

- St. Mary Magdalene (The Chosen)

THEIR STORY

- ✦ **Who She Was:** Other than Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene was one of His first and most faithful disciples. She is often called the "Apostle to the Apostles."
- ✦ **What We Know:** She was healed by Jesus of seven demons. She stood at the foot of the cross as He died. She was the first person to whom He appeared after His resurrection.
- ✦ **Her Name:** Women in Jesus' time were usually named by their relation to men — "wife of," "mother of," "daughter of." That she was called "Magdalene" suggests she had no close male relationships the early writers knew of.
- ✦ **Seven Demons:** When Scripture uses the number seven, it often means "complete" or "total." Her possession was all-consuming — a constant torment. She likely lost everything to her suffering.
- ✦ **And Then, Healing:** Jesus cast out her demons, and from then on, she followed Him. She supported His ministry from her own resources. She never left.
- ✦ **At the Tomb:** When she went to anoint His body and found He was not there, she wept bitterly. A man she didn't recognize asked why she was crying. Believing Him to be the gardener, she asked if He had taken her Lord. Then Jesus called her by name — "Mary" — and she immediately recognized Him.
- ✦ **Her Legacy:** Mary Magdalene is a beautiful example of turning from a life of shadow to a life filled with Light. She walked into the darkest place carrying her grief — and that's where Jesus met her and called her by name. She shows us that no darkness is too deep for Him to reach.

THE RHYTHM OF YOUR SONG

- ✦ In music, rhythm is more than the beat — it is the pattern of sound and silence, tension and release.
- ✦ Rhythm gives music its pulse, its breath, its sense of movement through time. Without it, even the most beautiful melody becomes formless.
- ✦ Our wounds create broken rhythms — patterns we developed to protect ourselves that now run on their own.
- ✦ The brace before a criticism that hasn't come yet. The pulling away before someone can leave first. The keeping moving, keeping doing, keeping proving — because stillness feels dangerous.
- ✦ These are not character flaws. They are learned rhythms. Patterns written into us by pain.
- ✦ God is not afraid of broken rhythms. He is the One who restores them. The Conductor holds the time when we have lost it — and when the wounded rhythm is healed, the music becomes richer for having been broken and made whole.

AN OVERVIEW

What is a wound?

- ❖ A wound is not a sin. It is a place where pain settled in and never fully left.

- ❖ Every woman carries them. The question is not whether you have them — but whether they are running your life in the dark.

- ❖ Christ kept His own wounds in His glorified body. Wounds, held in God, can become glory.

- ❖ Today we name what we carry — not to wound ourselves further, but because you cannot bring something to the foot of the Cross if you won't first pick it up.

LET HIM SEE IT

Open your heart to the Lord. He is with you. Be not afraid.



What the Spirit brought to my heart:

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WHAT CAME UP

Whatever just happened in your heart is real. Write whatever came — a word, a name, a memory, a feeling. There is no right answer.



When you pictured Jesus seeing you with it — what did you notice in Him? In yourself?

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Has this shadow had a name you've been avoiding? What is it?

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Is there anything you want to say to Him right now?

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THE WOUND OF HUMILIATION

I will never be enough as I am. I must earn my place. Who I am is a problem.

This wound takes root when those who should have built us up tore us down instead — through harsh words, shaming, or comparisons that said we were somehow less than we should be.

We spend our lives working to be acceptable, forever trying to prove the verdict was wrong — while quietly fearing it was right.

The opinion of others becomes more real to us than the truth of who God made us to be.

You might carry this wound if you apologize for who you are, drive yourself to please others at the cost of yourself, or cannot rest in the knowledge that you are already enough.

The lie whispered: "You don't deserve good things. You are worth less than everyone else."



Truth: "You are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you." — Isaiah 43:4



This one is familiar to me

THE WOUND OF BETRAYAL

I cannot trust anyone. If I let you in, I will be hurt. It is safer to stay behind the wall.

This wound is carved out when someone we depended on broke that trust — physically, emotionally, mentally. It leaves us hypervigilant, always scanning for the next moment love proves unreliable.

We keep people at arm's length and build walls around our hearts — because at least if we're alone, no one is close enough to break us again.

We are safe inside our walls. And completely alone.

You might carry this wound if you find it difficult to be vulnerable, struggle with cynicism in relationships, or find yourself waiting for people to disappoint you.

The lie whispered: "Trust no one. People will always disappoint you."



"Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him." — Jeremiah 17:7



This one is familiar to me

THE WOUND OF INJUSTICE

I must be perfect to be loved. I can't be myself. I must always be "okay."

This wound forms when love was conditional — rationed to those who performed and withheld from those who were simply human. We were held to standards we could never quite reach.

We are always going, always doing, never resting — because if we do enough, we might finally deserve the love we desperately need.

The finish line always moves — and we are always running.

You might carry this wound if perfectionism drives you, rest feels dangerous or selfish, or you believe your worth is measured by what you produce.

The lie whispered: "You must always be perfect to receive the love you want."



"He saved us, not because of any works we had done, but according to his mercy." — Titus 3:5



This one is familiar to me

THE WOUND OF CONTROL

If I'm not in control, I will get hurt. Weakness is dangerous. I cannot let go.

This wound grows in environments where unpredictability taught us that staying in control was the only way to stay safe. Letting our guard down led to pain — and so we grip tightly to everything around us.

When plans change, fear is triggered — and often anger rises up to mask it.

If I'm in control, at least I know what is going to happen.

You might carry this wound if you struggle with anxiety when things shift, find it hard to trust others with what matters most, or feel a persistent need to manage everything around you.

The lie whispered: "If you don't control it, something terrible will happen."



"Be still, and know that I am God." — Psalm 46:10



This one is familiar to me

THE WOUND OF ABANDONMENT

Everyone will leave me. I am not safe. I am not loved.

This wound speaks to the part of us that was left — physically, emotionally, spiritually — by those who were supposed to stay. It creates a vigilant, aching watchfulness for signs that those we love are pulling away.

Sometimes we push people away first — because if we're the ones who leave, at least we aren't the ones who weren't worth staying for.

We have learned to leave before we can be left.

You might carry this wound if you fear being left behind, cling tightly in relationships, or push people away before they can disappoint you.

The lie whispered: "You will always be left. You are not worth staying for."



*"I will never leave you or forsake you." — Hebrews
13:5*



This one is familiar to me

THE WOUND OF REJECTION

No one could ever want me or love me. I am unwanted. I am unloveable.

This wound is born from being pushed away or unaccepted as we are by those who claimed to love us. Even small or neutral comments can trigger the feeling that we are unwanted.

We stay withdrawn, or work to do everything perfectly so we don't draw attention — because it is better to be invisible than to be seen and rejected for who we truly are.

We perfect the art of disappearing — and call it safety.

You might carry this wound if you hold yourself back in relationships, struggle to believe you are genuinely wanted, or find yourself performing to avoid being turned away.

The lie whispered: "I am too much / not enough / unwanted / unloveable."



*"I have called you by name, you are mine." — Isaiah
43:1*

This one is familiar to me

THE WOUND OF NEGLECT

I am not worth caring for or about. My needs do not matter. I do not matter.

This wound settles in when our needs — for attention, validation, emotional closeness — went unmet by those we should have been able to count on. We come to feel that a deep loneliness is simply the condition of our life.

We become hyper-independent — because if we don't need anyone, then no one is able to let us down.

We became very strong. And very, very alone.

You might carry this wound if you feel deeply lonely even when surrounded by people, have become fiercely self-sufficient, or feel guilty for having needs at all.

The lie whispered: "Your needs are an inconvenience. Learn to need less."



"Your heavenly Father knows what you need before you ask him." — Matthew 6:8



This one is familiar to me

THE WOUND OF INVISIBILITY

I am unseen. I am unheard. No one really knows me.

This wound forms when we are overlooked, ignored, or forgotten. It causes us to feel small, to carry a deep and quiet loneliness — as if not being seen has made us somehow less real.

Even when we are not alone, an invisible wall seems to exist between us and everyone else — and rather than risk being forgotten again, we withdraw instead of reaching out.

We have stopped asking to be found.

You might carry this wound if you feel unseen even by people who love you, carry a quiet ache to be truly known, or find yourself withdrawing rather than risking the pain of being overlooked.

The lie whispered: "You are not worth knowing. Your presence makes no difference."



"O Lord, you have searched me and known me... you are acquainted with all my ways." — Psalm 139:1,3



This one is familiar to me

THE WOUND OF SHAME

I am broken. I am ruined. There is something wrong with me.

This wound burrows deepest because it doesn't say 'you did something wrong.' It says 'you are something wrong.' Our inner voice is relentlessly critical, even when no one else is saying a word.

We punish ourselves — not as protection, but in agreement with the voice that says we deserve the pain.

Shame lives in the dark — and so we learn to live there too.

You might carry this wound if you feel deep unworthiness or self-disgust, carry things you believe are unforgivable, or feel a persistent need to hide parts of yourself from God and others.

The lie whispered: "I am worthless / ruined / unforgivable. I deserve to feel this way."



"Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow." — Isaiah 1:18



This one is familiar to me

THE WOUND OF UNWORTHINESS

I am not enough. I can't do anything right. I don't deserve anything good.

This wound echoes in us when we learn that love must be earned. We come to believe we don't deserve good things, because we haven't done enough to merit them.

We desperately try to be perfect, hoping that maybe, if we are, we can finally deserve the love we long for.

We have been working our whole lives for something that was always meant to be freely given.

You might carry this wound if you struggle to receive love or praise, feel that goodness belongs to other people, or find yourself in constant striving with no sense of arrival.

The lie whispered: "You are only loved when you are useful, perfect, and without fault."



"My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." — 2 Corinthians 12:9

This one is familiar to me

THE WOUND OF COMPARISON

I am not good enough. I do not measure up. And I never will.

This wound takes hold when we are measured against those deemed somehow better. We end up defining ourselves not by who we are, but by who or what we are not.

We either overachieve to prove we can do it — or check out completely, because if we don't even try, then no one can say we failed.

We know exactly what we are not. We have forgotten entirely who we are.

You might carry this wound if you define your worth against others, struggle to celebrate someone else's gifts, or feel the chasm between where you are and where you think you should be.

The lie whispered: "You will never be as good as you should be. You do not measure up."



"God arranged the members of the body, each one of them, as he chose." — 1 Corinthians 12:18

This one is familiar to me

THE WOUND OF BURDEN

I am too much. I need too much. Needing help is weak.

This wound develops when we are made to feel that our needs, our wants — our very selves — are 'too much' or an inconvenience. We come to feel that people would be better off without having to worry about us.

We over-extend, struggle to say no, and keep doing for others — because if we do enough for them, maybe we can earn our keep.

We are exhausted. And we cannot tell anyone — because even that would be too much.

You might carry this wound if you find it nearly impossible to ask for help, feel guilty for expressing needs, or carry things alone because sharing them feels like one more thing you'd be doing to someone.

The lie whispered: "You are too much. You are a burden. Make yourself smaller."



"Come to me, all you that are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." — Matthew 11:28

This one is familiar to me

KNOW THYSELF

Look back at what you checked. Sit quietly and let the Spirit settle you before you write.

The wound(s) I recognize most in myself:

When I read it, I felt:

A relationship or situation where I have felt this most:

What this wound has told me about myself:

BRING IT TO GOD

The Divine Physician

You don't have to understand your wound fully to bring it to God. You only have to be willing to name it. Pick just one wound you identified for the following exercise.

Step 1 — Name it. Say it out loud if you can.
My wound is:

Step 2 — Name the lie. What has this wound told you about yourself? About God?
The lie I have believed:

Step 3 — Receive the truth. Write the scripture from your wound's card as a declaration over yourself.
God says over me:

LIVING IT OUT

Pause in Prayer: Bring your wound — and whatever the Spirit surfaced today — into prayer this week. Ask God what He sees when He looks at this place in you. Ask Him what He wants to do with it.

“Lord, You have seen what I have been carrying. You were not afraid of it. Show me what You see when You look at this wound. Show me what You want to grow in its place.”



Discern: Is there a pattern in your life that this wound has been running? A relationship, a habit, a way of protecting yourself that you can now see more clearly?

What would it look like to offer that pattern — fully, honestly — to God?

THIS WEEK

Write a one-sentence prayer for your wound — and pray it every day this week. Something like: “Lord, I carry the wound of abandonment. Teach me that You stay.” Or: “Lord, I carry the wound of shame. Help me believe I am not what it says I am.”

My prayer for this week:



Closing Prayer

God of Light,

Thank you for shining Your light on the shadows of my life. You redeem all things, and work all things for my good. Help me to remember that even in my darkest night, You are there. Teach me to ask You for your light when I feel the shadows creeping in.

Amen.

