

# The Risen Jesus Reveals Himself to the Women

Here's a **full breakdown** of the Gospel accounts where the risen Jesus first reveals Himself to women:



## Gospel Comparison: Jesus Appears to the Women

Gospel	Text Summary	Recipients	Setting	Key Words / Actions	Theological Emphasis
♥ Matthew 28:9–10	Jesus meets the women as they hurry to tell the disciples. They grasp His feet and worship Him. Jesus says: "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee."	Mary Magdalene & "the other Mary" (likely mother of James)	On the road leaving the tomb	"They took hold of His feet" (physicality, real body), "Do not be afraid"	Resurrection is bodily; Jesus affirms kinship ("brothers") and gives Galilean commission.
♥ Mark 16:9–11	Jesus first appears to Mary Magdalene (from whom He cast out 7 demons). She tells the disciples, but they do not believe.	Mary Magdalene	Outside the tomb	Mention of demons cast out; her testimony disbelieved	Emphasizes eyewitness role of Mary; disciples' unbelief highlights later transformation.
♥ John 20:11–18	Mary Magdalene weeps outside the tomb. Sees two angels inside, then Jesus Himself but at first mistakes Him for the gardener. When He calls her name, she recognizes Him ("Rabbouni!"). Jesus says: "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended... Go tell my brothers."	Mary Magdalene	Garden near the tomb	Personal name recognition; "Do not cling to Me"; angels seated inside tomb	Intimate personal encounter, recognition through relationship. Transition: resurrection → ascension.



## Historical-Cultural Context

- **Women as first witnesses:** In Jewish law, women's testimony was often considered less reliable. Yet all four Gospels place women as the first heralds of the resurrection—an intentional reversal, showing divine validation.
- **Clasping His feet (MT):** A Jewish act of homage before a great king or teacher (cf. 2 Kgs 4:27). It confirms Jesus' physical, resurrected body—not a vision.
- **Weeping at the tomb (JN):** Burial mourning customs included lament at the grave. Mary continues in devotion, and her persistence brings a personal encounter.
- **Mistaking Jesus for the gardener (JN):** Echoes Eden imagery—Jesus as the New Adam in a garden (Gen 2–3). The restoration of creation begins here.
- **"Do not cling to Me" (JN):** Not a rejection, but a redirection. Jesus is moving toward His glorification and ascension; the relationship with disciples will shift from physical presence to Spirit-filled communion.

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## Theological Implications

1. **New Creation Theme:** John sets the scene in a garden—resurrection as the dawn of new creation. Just as Eve was first at the fall, a woman is first to witness redemption.
2. **Faith vs. Unbelief:** Mark highlights the disciples' initial unbelief, underscoring that resurrection faith is not humanly generated but divinely revealed.
3. **Galilee Commission (MT):** Jesus points disciples away from the tomb toward Galilee—the place of ministry and mission. Resurrection propels forward, not backward.
4. **Recognition by Name (JN):** True recognition of Jesus comes not by sight alone, but by His call (cf. John 10:3–4, the Good Shepherd calls His sheep by name).
5. **Family Language:** Both MT and JN have Jesus call the disciples “my brothers”—signaling restored relationship and adoption through resurrection.



## Reflection & Application

- **Mary Magdalene as the “Apostle to the Apostles”:** She is the first to proclaim “I have seen the Lord” (Jn 20:18). Despite her marginalized status, she carries the greatest news.
- **Fear to Joy:** The women run in fear but meet joy. Resurrection transforms dread into mission.
- **Personal Encounter:** Faith in the risen Jesus is not abstract but personal—He calls us by name.
- **Missionary Urgency:** The first command is always “Go and tell”—resurrection compels proclamation.