

## Chapter 5: A Hidden Crisis of Belief

*"For man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."  
-1 Samuel 16:7 (KJV)*

I had several big moments where I would scream up at the sky, I would constantly walk away from my faith in some dramatic, final goodbye. It was dangerous, in a way. Like a slow leak in a tire—you don't notice it at first, until one day you realize you're completely flat, and you don't even know when it happened.

I just stopped believing, little by little. Not in God's existence, necessarily—but in His goodness. His presence. His care for me. I started wondering if God was actually the enemy here. I started thinking... maybe it was all in my head. Maybe people like me didn't get rescued. Maybe I was too far gone. Too messed up. Too ordinary.

And so I kept going—living, working, depressed, angry and resentful. I still said the right things. I still nodded at the prayers and the "God bless you's." I even still whispered my own prayers now and then, but with zero expectation they'd be heard. It was more muscle memory than faith. More habit than hope. I didn't tell anyone how I was feeling. I was too ashamed. It felt like failure. Like betrayal. Like something I wasn't allowed to say out loud, especially not after all God had already brought me through. So I carried it quietly. Numb. Disconnected. Lost in my own head and pretending I was fine.

But the truth was—I was in crisis. I was walking through life with a broken compass, and I didn't even know which way was north anymore.

I tried to fill the ache with anything and everything. Work, friendships, relationships that didn't last. Shopping sprees, wine nights, and I mean many wine nights, and even more rum - a lot more rum. Whatever gave me a hit of distraction—just enough to forget that I felt hollow inside. Hanging out with my “friends” gave me the sense of belonging I was yearning for and it allowed me to not feel anything. I was numb inside. I didn't want to admit it, but nothing satisfied. Nothing reached the part of me that was quietly bleeding out.

There were moments—brief ones—where I'd get this strange longing in my chest. A flicker of something I couldn't explain. Like a whisper I couldn't quite hear or a stirring in my spirit. It would happen when I least expected it, like a quiet rush. I thought it was coming from my “physic” abilities that I learned growing up from my aunts. My intuition was nothing more than an ability of power I had learned. But it was in the middle of a crowd when I felt the loneliest. When I was surrounded by the most people. It felt like I was standing still screaming, while the world moved around chaotically around me. I didn't know what it was then—but now I do. It was God, gently knocking. Not demanding. Not condemning. Just knocking. Waiting for me to answer.

But I didn't. Not yet. I was too angry, too tired, too unsure. I thought He had already left the building. I thought I had run too far. I had made a life without Him, and I convinced myself that was enough. I kept thinking, “If I can just fix this one thing in my life, everything will fall into place.” But it never did. Something was always missing.

And then there was the guilt. The deep, suffocating shame that came with pretending. Pretending to be okay. Pretending to believe. Pretending I wasn't drifting further away. I didn't want to be a hypocrite. But I also didn't want to be honest—because being honest meant facing how lost I really was.

I know now that the enemy loves this kind of crisis. The kind that hides in the quiet places of your soul. The kind that persuades you to suffer in silence. The kind that isolates you and makes you believe you're the only one who's ever felt this way. That you should just "get over it." That you're a disappointment to God. *That you're wasting His time.*

But friend, let me tell you something I've come to understand: **God can handle your crisis.** He can handle your doubt. Your anger. Your disappointment. He's not afraid of your questions. He's not shocked by your silence. You don't have to pretend with Him. He already sees it. And yet—*He stays.*

Even in the middle of the mess, God doesn't retreat. *We do.* He doesn't abandon us. We just stop looking. I didn't realize it then, but He never stopped chasing me. Even while I was walking in the opposite direction. Even while I was building a life without Him. He never stopped calling me back to His heart.

## **Mary Magdalene: From Darkness to Devotion**

Mary Magdalene's story doesn't begin with faith—it begins with brokenness. *In Luke 8:2*, we learn that Jesus cast **seven demons** out of her. That's significant. The number seven in the Bible often symbolizes completeness—so her torment wasn't small or partial. It was total. Complete darkness.

Her life was likely one of deep inner torment, confusion, shame, and spiritual oppression. If anyone knew what it meant to have a crisis of belief, it was Mary. But when Jesus delivered her, He didn't just cleanse her spiritually—He gave her back her identity, her worth, and her purpose.

### **She became one of His most devoted followers.**

She stood by Him at the crucifixion. She was there when others scattered. And in one of the most profound moments in Scripture—she was the first person Jesus appeared to after His resurrection. That's no accident.

Before Jesus, Mary Magdalene was a woman consumed by darkness—tormented, discarded, and likely overlooked by society. But when Jesus found her, He didn't see what the world saw. He saw her heart. He saw her potential. He saw her worth. She went from being bound by demons to being entrusted with divine news.

### **She was the very first to witness the risen Christ.**

## Scripture Reflection:

“Mary!”

—John 20:16 (NIV)

That one word—her name—spoken by the resurrected Savior, shattered every doubt and fear. She didn’t recognize Him at first. Her grief clouded her faith. But the moment He said her name, she knew.

In our darkest moments, when we don’t feel seen or heard, God still calls us by name. When belief is hidden beneath pain, when the silence feels too heavy—He still shows up.

“I have called you by name: you are mine.”

—Isaiah 43:1 (ESV)

*Mary’s story reminds us: God doesn’t forget us in our crisis. He meets us there, calls us tenderly, and restores us completely.*

