

The Gospel of Mary: Listening to the Beloved Disciple

Esther A. de Boer



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The success of Dan Brown's Da Vinci Code has raised new interest in Mary Magdalene and in the Gospel of Mary. Here, the author examines Mary Magdalene's influence on the beginnings of Christianity and asks what was her impact and her message? And furthermore, what became of her and her ideas? Esther de Boer studies the Gospel of Mary (the only Gospel to be named after a woman) to discover what it reveals about Mary Magdalene and to determine the origin of its portrayal. She argues that the Gospel of Mary is not a Gnostic writing but is more closely related to the writings of Philo, the letters of Paul and the Gospel of John. She demonstrates that esteem of Mary Magdalene did not just belong to the Gnostic tradition but to a broader Christian context. In order to determine this context, the study identifies the different portrayals of Mary Magdalene in the New Testament, analyses their concepts of discipleship and their views on women, and investigates their historical 'reality'. Esther de Boer concludes that the portrayal of Mary Magdalene in the Gospel of John, and investigates the possibility that she is concealed in the Johannine disciple loved by Jesus.

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