



# NETCAST ORIGINAL DEVOTIONALS

**Series:** Knowing Jesus

**Date:** April 27, 2026

**Scripture:** [John 20: 11-18](#)

**Title:** What Do You Expect?

**Author:** Esther Baird

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**Read:** [John 20: 11-18](#)

## Devotional:

If you're a superhero fan, you've probably seen recent versions of Superman and Spider-Man. If you're older (like me), you've seen earlier versions, and spin-offs. Many actors have played Clark Kent and Peter Parker, but the formula is always the same: ordinary, slightly awkward guys who are secretly elite, powerful heroes. And there is only one difference between their two personalities. In Superman's case it's the thick dark glasses. In Spiderman's case it's the incredibly thin mask.

The glasses and mask make them unrecognizable to even their closest family and friends, which is of course, ridiculous. It's a device, and we as the audience know how the device has to work. We have to believe that the superhero is unrecognizable in order for the plot to proceed.

The superhero formula relies on the idea that *we see what we expect to see*.

Our story today is, in a way, the original version of that. The hero, Jesus, was standing right in front of Mary and she wasn't expecting to see him, so she didn't... at first.

Jesus had told his followers he would die and rise again. But they didn't fully understand. They were still trying to grasp that the Messiah wasn't just coming to fix political problems or improve daily life. They were only starting to understand that Jesus was bringing a much bigger kingdom.

But then he was crucified.

So when Mary Magdalene went to the tomb, she expected to find a body. Instead, she encountered angels, which was shocking enough, and then she turned and saw Jesus himself.



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## **Devotional cont.**

No mask. No glasses. No disguise.

It's possible his resurrected body looked different in ways we can't fully understand. After all, unlike Lazarus from last week's devotional, who was raised only to die again, Jesus was raised to eternal life, the first human that death could never touch again.

But it's also possible that Mary didn't recognize Jesus because she wasn't expecting a living breathing bodily resurrection. She wasn't expecting life eternal. She wasn't expecting Jesus.

And so, at first, she couldn't see him, until... he called her by name.

In John 10, Jesus said, "The sheep hear his [Jesus'] voice, and he calls his own sheep by name... and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice."

When Jesus, the Good Shepherd, said "Mary," everything changed. In that moment, she saw him for who he was, her risen Lord.

Our world tells us what to expect: that truth is something you figure out on your own, that knowledge comes from within, that if you work hard enough you will get the life that you deserve. The world says that you are enough.

So is that what you expect?

Or do you hear your name being called by the Good Shepherd? Do you expect to see a Savior—one who meets you, calls you, and leads you?

Do you expect to see Jesus?

Because when he calls your name, everything changes. You begin to see him for who he truly is—the risen King who is alive, and is calling you to follow him, both now and forever.



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## Reflection Questions:

- Mary didn't recognize Jesus at first. Where in your life might your expectations be keeping you from seeing what God is doing?
- Jesus calls Mary by name. What does it mean to you that Jesus knows you personally and calls you individually?
- "We see what we expect to see." What expectations about God or life might need to change in order for you to recognize Jesus more clearly?
- The world says, "You are enough." How does that message compare with what Jesus says about our need for him?
- Mary's recognition led to response. What would it look like for you to respond to Jesus' voice in your life this week?

## Notes:

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