



# Do Not Cling To Me



■ by Erin Davis, MSW, LCSW

*There is an emptiness beyond sadness; a deep well that I have fallen into. The sunlight sprays in during the day, just enough to keep hope alive, but by night despair takes it hostage. I try to gather words or meaning, but they all fall short. I don't understand—why did the Rabbi have to go? He left and it seems like for nothing—to die a criminal's death?*



*These thoughts plague me as I journey to the cave where his body lies. As I approach, I see the boulder has been moved. That's strange, was someone anticipating me coming? I peer inside, holding my breath. Why am I so afraid of what I'll find? Oddly enough, I find nothing—damp, black nothingness. A wave of confusion rolls through my insides and beads of sweat form on my brow. What is this? I step in a bit closer because I see something limp on the ground. I pick up a pile of cloth—bloodied and dirty.*

*Fear begins to form and I'm paralyzed. What has happened to the Rabbi? I need to know. I have to see him. This empty tomb is full of darkness and death—it holds nothing for me. Have I not died enough in this life already? This man finally brought me hope, and now he's dead and missing.*

*I'm startled out of my trance by the gardener shuffling around. I demand to know what he's seen—*

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*desperately reaching for some crumb to satiate my fear. The gardener pauses and says my name with familiarity..."Mary." I feel a knot loosen in my gut and I turn to look upon the gardener. Bewildered, I cry out "RABBI?!" Is it really him? "I'm here, he says, I'm alive...but you must not cling to me."*

*My countenance drops—this feels like a death sentence. What do you mean not cling to you?! Clinging to you is the only thing I have—it's what holds me together. Do not cling to me?! What is it you are asking of me? My insides tighten up again. I don't want to let Him go. Life has opened up for me since I met him. It feels like He is dying all over again. I just found him and now I have to let go. It feels like falling, yet a part of me knows it must be done.*



*I will go back. I will tell the others He is alive...but I'm realizing what I must do. I have to keep living. I have to trust this moment. I have to rise and take a step. This feels new—like I'm leaving something behind. My hope has not died after all—I will let go and step out of the tomb. So for today, just one step. ■*

*Erin Davis is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and sees clients in our Oak Park, IL location.*

*This reflection is based on the following Bible passage: John 20:1-18*



## *An invitation to reflect...*

*This reflection came about from a desire to understand the humanity of the stories in the Bible. Often, I would read scripture looking for a promise of certainty to stand on, instead of as an invitation to reflect. When I see the humanity of the experiences of Mary or even of Jesus, the words take on new life and meaning. I begin to explore, question and discover more in myself and my experience with God. When I read these with clients, I use them as tools of exploration...to notice what God is eliciting in them. What do they feel in their bodies, or what word or phrase jumped out at them? ~ Erin Davis MSW LCSW*

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