



EPISODE TITLE: “The (Alleged) Hooker Disciple”

Hookers, Looters and Cheats, Episode 2

Featured Guest: *Emilie Townes*

The Rev. Dr. Emilie M. Townes, a distinguished scholar and leader in theological education, is dean of Vanderbilt Divinity School. She is also the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor of Womanist Ethics and Society. She is the author of the groundbreaking book *Womanist Ethics and the Cultural Production of Evil* (Palgrave Macmillan Press, 2006). She co-edited *Womanist Theological Ethics: A Reader* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2011) with Katie Geneva Cannon and Angela D. Simms. In addition, *Religion, Health, and Healing in African American Life* (Praeger, 2008) was co-edited by Townes with Stephanie Y. Mitchem. The ordained American Baptist clergywoman earned a doctorate in philosophy from the Joint Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary/Northwestern University Program in Religious and Theological Studies in 1989. She also received a doctorate in ministry from the University of Chicago in 1982. Previously, Townes earned her master’s and bachelor’s degrees at the University of Chicago.

Questions:

1. Based on what you know about Mary Magdalene, what do you think her relationship was with Jesus? How does that fit popular portrayals?
2. Which of Mary Magdalene’s traits or actions stand out for you? Why?
3. What stood out for you from John 20: 11-18?
4. Emilie talks about the messiness of faith. Why do you think we try to make it antiseptic? What about this story of Mary Magdalene points us towards something more complex and challenging?
5. What about Jesus do we hold onto too tightly? What can we let go in order to see God in a new way?

Pneuma Divina Scripture: John 20: 11-18

11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹²and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³They said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping?’ She said to them, ‘They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.’ ¹⁴When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?’ Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, ‘Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.’ ¹⁶Jesus said to her, ‘Mary!’ She turned and said to him in Hebrew, ‘Rabbouni!’ (which means Teacher). ¹⁷Jesus said to her, ‘Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, “I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.”’ ¹⁸Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, ‘I have seen the Lord’; and she told them that he had said these things to her.