**Mother's Day: Mary**

**Luke 1:30-2:35**

**Mother’s Day 2017**

**May 14, 2017**

**Kid President Video**

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQ4Rnba85o8**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQ4Rnba85o8)

**Today is a special day because we can come together like this as a family for two primary reasons.**

One is to honor our Lord Jesus Christ.

The other is to honor our mothers.

Both are lifetime tasks and neither can be confined to a one-hour get-together on Sunday mornings.

**I struggled this week to put together a Mother’s day sermon because I don’t suppose that anything has ever been said or ever will be said that is eloquent enough, or expressive enough to articulate the true value of a mother.**

Few things are more powerful than the tears and prayers of a mother.

Few things are more tender and loving than a mother’s hug or compassionate touch.

Someone once pointed out that of the sixty-nine kings of France, only three were truly loved by their subjects, and those three were the only ones reared by their own mothers as opposed to tutors and guardians.

What Napoleon said may just be true: “The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.”

**So, let me pose a hypothetical question to you:**

If you had to choose someone else to raise your son or daughter, who would you choose?

And why?

If you were looking for the perfect mother to leave your one and only child with, who would she be?

Would she be wealthy?

Would she have other children?

Would she be famous or well educated?

Mature?

Experienced?

What would she be like?

For God, that question wasn’t hypothetical.

When God determined to send His Son to save the world, He had to choose a mother—a mother who would be responsible for the rearing of a God cloaked in human flesh.

**As the mother of Jesus, Mary is better known than any other woman in world history and has held a place of highest honor since those days of the manger in Bethlehem.**

She was hand-selected by the God of the universe to bring the Son of God, our Savior, into the world and to nurture and care for Him until the day of His death on the cross.

She’s the LeBron James of motherhood, the standard by which parental excellence is measured.

So as we honor mothers today, I’d like to take closer look at Mary, the mother of Jesus.

What was her life like?

What can we learn from her?

How do her experiences reflect those of every godly mother to every live before or since?

**Let’s start this morning by considering Mary’s SURPRISE.**

Mary was living a simple, small-town, secluded life when suddenly everything changed.

Mary was shoved from the shadows into the spotlight when an angel appeared to her and said:

“Don’t be afraid, Mary; God has shown you his grace. Listen! You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High” (Luke 1:30-32 NCV).

**Mary must have been dumbfounded.**

All she could manage to say was, “But how can I have a baby? I am a virgin” (Luke 1:34 NLT).

Can you imagine her surprise?

Her shock?

Keep in mind, Mary was probably only about fifteen years old when this happened.

You think kids grow up quick now-a-days?

Back in Mary’s day they were usually married and juggling a couple kids by the time they were sixteen or seventeen.

She must have been terribly overwhelmed by it all.

And then it probably hit her—she wasn’t married yet!

How was she going to explain this to her folks?

To Joseph?

Can you imagine the pain in his eyes when she tells him her story?

Who would believe it?

Joseph didn’t.

He was ready to write her and send her packing.

Her parents might have kicked her out of the house.

For that matter, maybe they did.

Mary spent three months at her cousin Elizabeth’s house.

**It just takes two little words to change your life forever—you’re pregnant.**

Once you hear them—or in these days, once you see the little plus sign—your life will never be the same.

While some couples struggle for years to have children and even use expensive fertilization treatments, most children are a total surprise.

Our first two were all part of the plan.

Number three was quite the surprise.

We had just moved into the parsonage of the Olive Branch Church of God outside of Ohio City, Ohio and soon discovered that Matt was on his way (only we didn’t know it was Matt).

And Denise said to me, “I’m pregnant.”

My response was not exactly one of my most brilliant statements that I ever made.

I said, “What? How did that happen?”

And she just looked at me.

I know, pretty dumb response.

We had just celebrated Andy’s first birthday, Tim wasn’t even use to being the big brother at 3 years old, and we were going to add to the collection one more?

Now?

Those two little words changed my life forever, just as they did the first two times I heard those words.

And I wouldn’t have it any other way.

**When Mary found out about her unplanned pregnancy, she didn’t see it as an inconvenience.**

She didn’t look for a way out or, God forbid, sneak off to the nearest abortion clinic.

She saw her pregnancy for what it was—a gift from God.

**In fact, Mary actually wrote a song about the whole situation.**

Listen to how she tells it:

“Oh, how I praise the Lord. How I rejoice in God my Savior! For he took notice of his lowly servant girl, and now generation after generation forever shall call me blest of God. For he, the mighty Holy One, has done great things to me” (Luke 1:46-49 TLB).

**The tiny little embryo taking shape within Mary’s womb was not only the light to the nations, but He was the light of her life!**

He was the joy of her heart.

**Every single one of us here owns our salvation to Mary’s decision to love and accept the gift God had given her.**

We owe our lives to our own mothers for making the same decision.

Thank God for moms everywhere, who, although they might have been shocked and surprised, were also willing to adapt, to take life as it comes, and to graciously accept the precious gift of life that God had placed within them.

**James Keller has said, “Every mother has the breath-taking privilege of sharing with God in the creation of new life.”**

And when God places a child or children in your arms, His will for you is to bring them up in a home where they will know God and His amazing love.

Mary’s pregnancy may have come as a surprise, but she responded with unwavering love and devotion for the beautiful baby boy who would grow up to be the Savior of the world.

**Next, let me draw your attention to Mary’s SERVICE.**

What amazes me about Mary is the way she accepted the angel’s announcement.

After he explained to her that nothing is impossible with God and that the Holy Spirit would come upon her, Mary said:

“I am the Lord’s servant, and I am willing to do whatever he wants. May everything you said come true” (Luke 1:38 TLB).

I’m sure Mary had no idea what her service to the Lord would entail (no parent does really), but she certainly found out along the way.

**What we cannot forget is that Mary not only gave birth to Jesus, but she mothered Him from childhood to adulthood and she did everything a devoted mother could do for the Son whom she knew was no ordinary boy.**

Granted, Mary had a bit of an advantage with Jesus—she had a little boy who would always be obedient.

Always!

Parents, can you imagine that?

Never having to tell your two-year-old twice?

Or your sixteen-year-old twenty times?

That’s really what every mom want for Mother’s Day, isn’t it?

A loving and obedient child would be better than chocolates, better than cards, better than flowers.

That’s what Mary got every year.

But before you start thinking that Mary had it easy, think again.

**Mary had the job of constantly protecting her Son.**

From the very moment Jesus was born his life was in danger.

The wicked King Herod was on the throne and he sought to destroy Jesus, forcing Mary and Joseph to flee to Egypt.

Mary protected Jesus from Herod and from so many other things that would hurt Him.

**Mary also protected Jesus’ identity.**

Although Mary knew who Jesus was and who He was to become, she couldn’t tell anyone about all the wonderful, supernatural things she knew about her baby boy.

Rather, as Luke says, “Mary quietly treasured these things in her heart and often thought about them” (Luke 2:19 TLB).

The Greek word used here for treasured is a word that means “an intense, protective keeping.”

Mary protected her Son.

**And who could forget that little stunt Jesus pulled at the temple?**

Remember that one?

Mary, Joseph and Jesus make their annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem and twelve-year-old Jesus decides to stay a couple extra days on His own.

Sure, He had the best possible intentions and sure He was just trying to be closer to His heavenly Father; but don’t you know that little incident made Mary’s heart stop?

Any parent whose lost their little boy or little girl in a crowded department store or shopping mall has had a taste of what Mary felt that day.

Denise and I still talk about the time we took the family to Florida and we lost Matt at the beach.

We were frantic—we had no idea whether he was in the water, or someone had snatched him, or worse.

Imagine losing your little one for three days!

That must have been the second worst experience in Mary’s young life—we’ll talk about the first in minute.

**And don’t forget, Jesus wasn’t an only child.**

The Word tells us that Jesus had several brothers and sisters.

Mary had a houseful of rug-rats and ankle-bitters.

Jesus may have been an obedient child, but that doesn’t mean the others were.

I wonder how many times Jesus’ brothers and sisters heard, “Why can’t you be more like your brother Jesus?”

**It’s not easy being a mother is it?**

It’s hard work.

A mother’s job is never done.

When you are a mother you become a professional cook, a referee, a maid, a dietitian, a teacher, a seamstress, a counselor, a disciplinarian, a coach, a taxi driver, and so many other things all rolled into one—and there’s no salary involved.

If you ever wonder what mom does all day long, just watch this clip.

PLAY VIDEO CLIP

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdP4WmjsGO0>

**That reminds me of my house-- when Denise is not home.**

John Maxwell once said, “The instant that we are born, we already owe someone for nine months of room and board… and we never fully pay that debt.”

He’s right, isn’t he?

Moms, we owe you more than we could ever repay and probably more than we will ever know.

Being a mom sometimes comes as a surprise, as it did for Mary.

It means a lifetime of service and hard work.

It also comes with sacrifice.

**Finally, let me lead your thoughts to Mary’s SACRIFICE.**

Unfortunately, Mary’s story isn’t entirely sunshine and roses.

A dark cloud loomed over her Son—and Mary knew it.

When Jesus was just eight days old Mary and Joseph were required by law to take Him to the temple to have Him circumcised.

A strange thing happened that day.

An old man named Simeon approached them.

The Bible says he was moved by the Holy Spirit.

When he saw the baby Jesus, he announced,

“Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace, as you have promised. I have seen your salvation, which you have prepared for all people. He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel!” (Luke 2:29-32 NLT).

I might be a bit taken aback if some stranger walked up to my baby and said something like that, but then again Mary knew Jesus was special.

She knew He was the Son of God.

That’s not the peculiar part, though.

**After that, Simeon turns toward Mary and says:**

“This child is destined to cause many in Israel to fall, but he will be a joy to many others. He has been sent as a sign from God, but many will oppose him. As a result, the deepest thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your very soul” (Luke 2:34-35 NLT).

A sword will pierce you very soul?

That a bit ominous sounding, isn’t it?

**I wonder how long she pondered that prophecy.**

I wonder how many times her mind wondered about its implications.

Did this encounter flash through her thoughts as she stood at the foot of the cross?

Mary always knew that her Son was special, but did she know that He would die for the sins of the world?

**Mark Lowery, in his song Mary, Did You Know?, verbalizes the questions that mothers all over the world have wondered about when they read Mary’s story.**

In the open stanza he writes:

Mary, did you know that your Baby Boy would one day walk on water?

Mary, did you know that your Baby Boy would save our sons and daughters?

Did you know that your Baby Boy has come to make you new?

This Child that you delivered will soon deliver you.

Mary, did you know that your Baby Boy would give sight to a blind man?

Mary, did you know that your Baby Boy would calm the storm with His hand?

Did you know that your Baby Boy has walked where angels trod?

When you kiss your little Baby you kissed the face of God?

**Have you ever considered the thought that Mary had to stand there and watch her Son die because of your sins and mine?**

Can you imagine how horrible that must have been?

I don’t think that there are words to describe what Mary felt that day as she watched the soldiers nail her Son, her Savior, to the cross.

**Of course, every parent who has ever had to lay their child in the arms of Jesus knows something of the heartache that Mary undoubtedly felt.**

Eliot Mooney’s parents know all about that.

Eliot was born with an undeveloped lung, a heart with a hole in it and DNA that placed faulty information into each and every cell of his body—it was called Wilson’s Disease.

However, that could not stop the living God from proclaiming Himself through this boy who never uttered a word.

Even though doctors didn’t expect Eliot to make it to birth, he did and his parents had the presence of mind and courage of heart to make a video diary of his life.

Every single day at 4:59, the time that Eliot was born into this world, his mother and father celebrated his birth day.

On his one month birthday, twenty close friends showed up, sang, brought balloons and birthday cake.

Despite the oxygen tubes, the midnight feedings that took more than an hour and a half, and the constant worry and concern, Eliot continued to find new ways to warm his mother’s heart.

After ninety-nine wonderful days, Eliot went to be with Jesus.

At his funeral, his mom and dad released ninety-nine balloons—one for each day that he was with them.

His father said, “How beautiful they were to watch, how quickly they were gone.”

In the midst of heartbreaking tragedy, the Mooney family found the presence of God strengthening, comforting, and guiding them.

The video diary that his parent made was later posted to on the internet.

As of this week it’s been viewed no less than 4,653,622 times.

I would encourage you to go on YouTube and watch the video blog.

Just type in Eliot Mooney and watch 99 balloons.

**Every single child, no matter how long or how short their stay on Earth is, touches lives.**

And no child more so than Jesus.

For those mothers out there who have laid your little boy or girl to rest, you’re not alone.

But I will tell you though, the last glimpse we have of Mary is a heartwarming one.

It’s not found in any of the gospels; rather, it’s recorded in the book of Acts.

After Jesus’ death, resurrection and ascension, Luke tells us:

“Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James, Simon, and Judas (son of James)… all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus” (Acts 1:12-14 NLT).

Mary got to see her Son and Savior alive again.

She was honored by the disciples and cared for by the apostle John.

Even in the absence of her husband and eldest Son, Mary had a spiritual family that spans the entire globe and every period of time.

So do you.

She lived faithful with one eye on the clouds, looking forward to the day that she would see her Son again.

So can you.

**Moms, you hold a special place in our spiritual family.**

Without you, most of us wouldn’t be here.

May God look upon you with favor the way he did Mary, and may each one of you have a heart like hers.