**A Godly Mother**

Mary had every reason to believe that her life would be typical, but happy. She was engaged to a carpenter named Joseph and had every expectation of marrying, raising children and hopefully growing old with her husband. Little did she know that, within about 30 years, both her husband and her oldest son would no longer be with her. She soon found out that she had been chosen to be the mother of Immanuel, “God With Us”. An angel revealed to her that, even though she was a virgin, she would have a son who would be the Messiah long prophesied to reign on David’s throne forever! (Luke 1:28-37)

Being the mother of Jesus was, in many ways, a truly unique experience. The circumstances surrounding His birth were miraculous. His understanding of scripture was astounding at an early age (Luke 2:42-47). Probably most significant of all was that Mary raised Jesus with some understanding that her son was unlike any person who had ever lived and that some aspect of His future would be like a sword, piercing even her own soul (Luke 2:35). That being said, the little we know of Jesus’ life prior to His ministry indicates that He made every effort to live the kind of life to which each of us is subjected so that He could be a sympathetic High Priest mediating on our behalf (Heb. 4:15).

Jesus subjected Himself to the authority of His parents (Luke 2:51). He, like us, grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men (Luke 2:52). He learned Joseph’s trade and worked as a carpenter when He was old enough. Mary played along with the daily activities of normalcy, but when the time came for Jesus to begin His ministry, she was fully aware that He intended to accomplish so much more than building things from wood (John 2:5). As unique as Jesus was (and is), Mary was His mother in every sense of the word. In fact, she exhibited characteristics that every godly mother shares.

**Complete devotion to God and His will.** Mary was, in fact, favored by God when He chose her to give birth to the Christ. On the other hand, becoming pregnant before marriage was unavoidably problematic and some would have considered the situation a major source of embarrassment. Mary’s response to the angel’s message is indicative of her depth of character and devotion: “Behold, the bondslave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word.” Every godly mother would like to think that her life will unfold according to plan and that her hopes and dreams will be fulfilled. Reality dictates that the path of life will have twists and turns and unexpected bumps, sometimes severe enough to overwhelm the average person. But the godly mother trusts that her God makes all things work together for good to those who love Him (Romans 8:28) and lives every day saying, “Behold, the bondslave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word.”

**Love and concern for her child’s safety and welfare.** Joseph and Mary took Jesus to Jerusalem to worship when He was 12 and, thinking He was with others in their party, left Him behind in the city. After 3 days of frantic searching, they found Him discussing the Law with the teachers in the temple. No parent can read this passage without feeling the anguish and terror of these young parents as they struggled not to consider the worst as they searched for their boy. Although Luke 2 gives an account of Mary scolding Jesus for causing their harrowing experience, there is no criticism in the passage of her care and concern for His welfare. Any godly mother will feel precisely the same way.

**Loved and supported her son throughout His life.** My mother preceded her mother in death and my grandmother repeated the familiar lament often: “No parent should live longer than their child.” Even by the standards of the first century, Mary was a relatively young widow as she stood at the foot of the cross upon which her oldest son was crucified. No doubt the apostle John, and Mary’s other children, were a comfort to her after Jesus’ death, but the prospect of watching your own child tortured to death for sins wholly committed by others is unfathomable. While most mothers will be spared this kind of trauma, children of a godly mother can navigate the uncertainties of life with the full knowledge that they are always loved.

We say thank you from the bottom of our hearts to the mothers who have loved us and sacrificed to help us through life. For all who are parents, grandparents or future parents, we must strive to emulate the wonderful example left us by faithful women and men like Mary and Joseph. Our love for our children should be a product of our deep and abiding love and devotion to our heavenly Father. The greatest gift we can pass along to our children is a complete trust in God that leads to the peace of mind that surpasses all comprehension (Phil. 4:7). Our hope and prayer should be that our children are equipped to weather any storm that comes their way with God’s help.