

Mother's Day For Bible Classes & Small Groups

May 13, 2018

I want to look at the life of Mary. We talk a lot about Mary at Christmas time, but we really don't give her much consideration the rest of the year. In the life of Mary, you have these complicated moments of motherhood. She understood what it was like to be a teenaged Mom. She had to deal with raising a child in an impoverished circumstance. Since we have no record of Joseph past Jesus' twelfth birthday, we have to assume he passed away. Mary understood living life as both a single mom and as a widow. She also knew the joys and the sorrows of watching her first born son grow up and become everything that she thought he would be and more. She also experienced the pain of losing a child. Motherhood is complicated. Motherhood is complicated, and motherhood was complicated for Mary. It comes time for Jesus to be dedicated and you find these words...

Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too." Luke 2:34-35

There is the good and bad that comes in motherhood. Can you imagine the mixed emotions felt by this young girl? When you love a child, you will experience sword piercing moments. When they are rejected, your heart gets pieced. When they are hurt, you feel their pain. Mary and Joseph took Jesus to Jerusalem for the Passover and they lost him. We all know that panicked moment of looking for a child when they have gotten away from us. They found Jesus in the temple. Look at this moment...

After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart. Luke 2:46-51

Mary didn't understand all of this. Swords are going to pierce her heart. Her son is reasoning at the temple. As mother's do-she pondered these things in her heart. But, as she pondered-she prepared. She prepared him for that moment when it would be his time to leave the confines of home and venture into the world.

You see this playful exchange between Jesus and his mother in the story you find in John 2. Jesus is a guest at a wedding in Cana in Galilee. His mother is acting as a hostess for the event. They run out of wine and you have this interchange between Mary and Jesus...

When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." John 2:3-5

You know the rest of the story. Jesus turns the water into wine. It's a miracle. Mary pondered all these moments in her heart. Throughout Jesus' life, Mary was just like any other mother. On one hand, she wanted Jesus to assert himself and live according to the calling of his life. On the other hand, she wanted to protect him from the rising tide of not only criticism but also from the now growing attempts to actually kill him. While she treasured things in her heart, her heart was continuing to be pierced. There is grace needed all the way through. There is grace needed when you are a young mom and you are trying to figure out the best way to parent and invest in your children well.

You see one more interaction between Jesus and Mary. It's in John's gospel...

When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. John 19:26-27

I've read this passage hundreds of times but as I studied for this lesson, it occurs to me that Jesus is taking a parental role from the cross. Those moments are not easy. This moment wasn't easy for Jesus. But it was important. Jesus made sure that he took care of His mom and that she was going to be cared for even after he was gone. Mom's mean something!

Angela Guffy wrote this tribute to Moms that I thought was particularly meaningful...

This is for all the mothers who froze their bottoms off on metal bleachers instead of watching soccer games from their car. So, if their kid asked, did you see my goal? She could always answer truthfully, of course. This is for all the mothers who sat up all night with sick toddlers wiping up chunks of wearers and cherry soda through the tears and saying, "It's ok honey-mommy's here." This is for all the mothers who give birth to babies that they will never see. This is for all the mothers who took those babies and made homes for them. This is for all the mothers of victims of shootings - this is for the mothers of the murders who caused them. This is for the mothers of the survivors and for the mothers who sat in front of the TV in horror while hugging her child who came home that day. This is for the mothers who run carpools and make cookies. This is for the mothers who sew Halloween costumes. This is for the mothers who buy them. This is for reading Goodnight Moon twice a night for a year and then reading it again just one more time. This is for all the mothers who mess up and yell at their kids at the grocery store. This is for all the mothers that taught their sons and daughters to tie their shoe laces before they started school. This is for all the mothers who opted for Velcro instead. This is for all the moms who stay home and long for that one single adult conversation throughout the day. This is for the moms who show up at work with spit up in their hair and diapers in their purse.

Questions For Discussion From These Passages

1. Did anything particular stick out to you in these verses?

2. What did you notice about Jesus in these verses compared to what we read about Jesus in the rest of the Gospels? What is the same? What is different?

3. What was Mary’s reaction to finding Jesus? Would you have been upset if you were his mother? Would your mother have been upset with you?

4. What does it mean for Mary to “treasure up all these things in her heart”? What kind of things was she storing?

5. The last verse says that “Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.” Why is it important that increased in favor with man as well as God? What does that tell us about how we should live?
