

Andrew K. Frey

Christmas Day

John 1:1-2, 14, 16-18

**But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.** (NIV 84)

Theme: Continue to Treasure and Ponder All these things!

“Did you Know?” That is the title of our service today. In a bit you will hear the children ask you that question over and over again as they relate some of the facts of Christ’s birth. This title obviously plays off of the well-known Christmas anthem, “Mary did you know?” We’ll hear that song in just a bit. This song asks Mary questions as if they were talking to her on the first Christmas morning—did you know that this is who your baby child is or did you know that he would go on to do such and such?

Later this evening our children will be reciting the well-known words of Luke 2. In verse 19 we read, **Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.** What exactly are the things Mary took to mind and thought about? So let’s look at some of those answers this evening—what exactly were all these things that Mary treasured and pondered in her heart—what did Mary know when her child was born?

Mary was young, most likely under 16. Yet she was pledged to be married. She was not doubt looking forward to her wedding when suddenly an angel appeared to her and said that she will become pregnant and give birth to a son. That can’t be possible, however, since she was a virgin. But the angel told her that her son would be no ordinary child. He would be conceived by the Holy Spirit, making him the Son of God. She would be giving birth to God!

One of the many things that I’m sure went through Mary’s mind is, “why me?” Why would God choose me to give birth to his son? He made the promise to send a Savior thousands of years ago—out of all the descendants of Eve he could have chosen to give birth to his son over those thousands of years, why did he chose me? Gabriel gave her the answer in his greeting as he called her the highly-favored one and that she had found favor with God. It was God’s grace and love in choosing Mary. There was nothing special about her, nothing great about her, but in his love and mercy God chose Mary to bear his son.

Holy Cross, Standish, MI.

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You too can ask yourself the same question—why me? Why would God chose me? Out of all the billions of people in the world today why would he chose you to be saved—to be brought to faith in his son through the gospel? It’s not something that you have earned or deserve. God didn’t choose you because you are such a nice person or because you are cool. By nature, you are just the opposite—you were selfish and wanted nothing to do with him.

And yet God chose you to be saved through faith in his son—why? For the same reason why he chose Mary: out of love. Out of mercy and compassion he chose you to be saved. There was nothing you did to earn or deserve his love and mercy and yet he chose you because he loves you.

Soon after this Mary made a trip down south to visit her relative Elizabeth, who was pregnant with John the Baptist. When Elizabeth saw Mary she said, **Why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?** Elizabeth’s words hit home with Mary; the child in her womb was the Lord. He is the one who created the world, the one who called Moses out of the burning bush, the God of free and faithful grace. She would give birth to the Lord—the great I AM.

And then she broke out into her famous song. The entire song is great, but perhaps the most important line is the second one—**My Spirit rejoices in God, my Savior.** She sang a song of praise and thanks to the Lord for his love and mercy. She knew that she was a sinner who constantly failed to obey God’s commands. That she deserved eternal punishment. And yet, her child would also be her Savior. She might not have known that Jesus could suffer and die on a cross to pay for her sins, suffer through the eternal punishment that she deserved, and rise from the dead to win for her eternal life; yet she knew that he would save her and all people from their sins.

We too know that Jesus is the world’s one and only Savior. Gabriel told Joseph just that, **he will save his people from their sins.** This isn’t just any normal birthday we are celebrating today. This is the birth of God and the coming of our Savior!

And so what are we doing tonight? We have come together, not just to watch some cut kids sing and tell us the Christmas story. We are singing the praises of Christ. We have joined together to worship our

Savior. We do the same things as Mary—we sing songs of praise to our God and Savior!

The day finally came. It wasn't what Mary had expected—giving birth in what amounts to a barn and placing the Son of God in a manger; but nevertheless, Jesus was born. That night a group of shepherds came to worship her child. They told her stories of a host of angels appearing in the sky announcing the birth of Jesus—that he is the Savior, Lord, and the Christ—the long awaited Messiah. Eventually the shepherds left to go tell everyone what they had heard and seen. And Mary was there with Jesus and Joseph, and simply sat and thought—remembering and contemplating everything that happened. That the Lord chose her to give birth to the long-awaited Messiah, true God, who would save the people from their sins. And shortly after his birth, shepherds came to worship him after angels from heaven appeared to them! All these things Mary continued to treasure and ponder the rest of her life, remembering minute details as if they happened the day before.

This evening you are going to be reminded by the children of all of these things—and then some. Keep them in mind; treasure them. Consider their meaning for you and your eternal life and ponder them in your heart not just tonight or the next couple days but for the rest of your lives. Sure Mary gave birth to a son, but that son was born for you; for her son is also your Savior.