

“Mary, What Did You Know?”

Luke 2:8-20

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It was not written to be a song but the focus of a Christmas play. In 1984, Mark Lowry’s church asked him to write a new play for the holidays and he did. He designed the play around questions he would have asked Mary had he been able to talk to her. Six years later Buddy Green put these questions to music and a song was born, “Mary, Did You Know?”

Mary did you know that your baby boy would some 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 will give sight to a blind man?
Mary did you know that your baby boy will calm a storm with his hand?
Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod?
When you kissed your little baby, you kissed the face of God?

The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the dead will live again;
The lame will leap, the dumb will speak, the praises of the Lamb.
Mary did you know that your baby boy is Lord of all creation?
Mary did you know that your baby boy will one day rule the nations?

Did you know that your baby boy was heaven’s perfect Lamb?
This sleeping child you’re holding is the great, the great “I Am!”

Have you noticed that everyone in the Christmas story seems to be talking except Mary? She says very little and in today’s text, she does not speak. Everyone around her is talking but she is silent.

An angel of the Lord tells the shepherds not to be afraid because he has good news for them. More angels appear on the scene praising God for the gift of His Son. The shepherds talk among themselves about what they should do and after traveling to Bethlehem, they tell everyone along their way what they experienced.

What about Mary, though? What does scripture say about her reaction to all that happened on that holy night? “But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart” Luke 2:19. For Mary, it really was a “Silent Night.”

Carlos Castaneda, in *A Separate Reality* said that old Don Juan, the Yaqui soothsayer spoke of “using the darkness.” “The darkness,” he said, “is the best time to see.”

What do you think Mary saw that night in a Bethlehem stable? What was she thinking about as she held her baby tightly? Perhaps the usual things that new mothers think about. Is he healthy? Is he comfortable? Is he getting enough to eat? Is he warm? Whom does he look like? How will I travel so soon after giving birth?

I think her thoughts went much deeper, though. Luke's word, ponder, implies this because it comes from a root word that means "to weigh." We get our word "pound" from it. To ponder means to weigh things, to turn them over and over in your mind until you figure out how things connect and make sense.

What do you think Mary was trying to figure out? Luke doesn't tell us but I have an idea. I think she was trying to understand what God was saying to her and what He wanted her to do. If her baby was special, as she knew in her heart he was, what did he come to do and what did she need to do in order to help him accomplish all that God sent him to do.

These are two things we need to ponder, too. What did Jesus come to do and what do I need to do to help him accomplish what God sent him to do? Coming to grips with these two questions can fill your life with meaning, purpose and direction. It can rescue you from a life of confusion, depression, loneliness and despair.

Did you see the movie, "The Five People You Meet in Heaven," based upon Mitch Albom's book by that title? I read the book several months ago and found it intriguing. It is a novel about Eddie, a war veteran that feels trapped in a meaningless life of fixing rides at a seaside amusement park. His days are a dull routine of work, loneliness and regret.

On his eighty-third birthday, Eddie dies in a tragic accident trying to save the life of a little girl from a falling cart. He awakens in the afterlife to discover that heaven is a place where your earthly life is explained by five people who were in it. Each person adds a piece to the puzzle and helps you see how events and decisions were connected. Throughout the movie, you could sense that Eddie was pondering; seriously weighing what every person was telling him so he could make sense of his life on earth.

Mary was not waiting until she got to heaven to figure out the purpose and significance of her life. She was doing it that night in a stable and based upon the life of Jesus, I think she figured it out. It is obvious that she provided what Jesus needed in order for him to fulfill his divine mission.

Are you a ponderer? Do you spend much time thinking about what Jesus came to do and what you need to do to help him accomplish it? I hope you do because pondering enables you to see life from God's perspective and what a breathtaking view that is! For you see, from God's perspective, there is no such thing as insignificant people or events. Even the smallest deed performed by the most common person can have an immeasurable impact upon society when seen as a part of the drama and mystery of life.

In recent years, I have sensed a renewed interest among Christians in meditation, a form of pondering. I'm glad because I think there is great value in it for us and those around us.

Let me encourage you to spend a "Silent Night" this week pondering, all alone in front of a lighted Christmas tree. Think about what Jesus came to do and what you need to do to help him accomplish it. Ask the Lord to lead and guide your thoughts and decisions. I assure you it will make Christmas more meaningful and life more fulfilling. Just ask Mary.