



*"But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart." Luke 2:19*

My sweet son has been with Jesus for almost 6 months. I hold tightly to the memories I have with both of my children. But more than I ever did before, I try to soak up every single moment that I can remember with Gunnar. I think about the tough times, the great days, the fun things, even the routine and seemingly mundane days. I think about the birthdays and holidays, the vacations, the fun outings, and every day in between. And I treasure *every single second*.

As mothers do, I have spent a lot of time thinking. Thinking of who my children would grow up to be, or who they would marry, and if they would have their own children someday. I am not only grieving for who Gunnar was, but for the things he would become. All of the hopes and dreams I had for my son were shattered, except for one: his faith in Jesus Christ.

Through the Christmas, Lenten, and Easter seasons, I have given much thought about Mary, the mother of Jesus. How must have Mary felt? Her child was the *Son of God!* Mary was specifically chosen to be the mother of Jesus, and was told by an angel that she was "favored by God." And as mothers do, she treasured up all these things, the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus, and all of the amazing things that happened, and pondered them in her heart.

*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*

As Jesus grew up, did Mary ever second-guess herself? Did she doubt God for making her the mother of His Son? Mary was a human, trying to raise the Child of God, and I would imagine, she probably felt enormous pressure. Did she fully understand what was going to happen to Jesus? What a heavy statement that Simeon made to Mary, foreshadowing the deep pain that she would feel upon Jesus' suffering and death.

*When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously*

*searching for you." "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he was saying to them. Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. Luke 2:48-51*

Mary had to have been in a complete panic when she realized that her son was missing. She had no way to travel quickly or call the temple on her cell phone to see where Jesus was. As mothers, the worry and concern for our children can be overwhelming. When Jesus was found in the temple, she was probably relieved and angry! The response Jesus gave caused more confusion, as they did not understand. And once again, Mary treasured these things in her heart.

*Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. John 19:25*

This passage in John shows us that Mary was present at the crucifixion. How horrifying for a mother to have to watch her son suffer in that way. How could she have possibly comprehended what was happening to him? How devastating, a mother, watching her son be tortured and then murdered. Though it had been prophesied, and she knew he was the Son of God, she must have felt just like Simeon had said, with a sword piercing her soul. She was probably desperately trying to grasp that her all-powerful son would not save himself. But what she really could not understand that day, was that her son did not save himself, so that he could save mine. He died, so that my son could live.

I have asked many questions of God about why my son had to die. I will not know the answer to that, until I am in heaven with him. But, what I do know, is that God gave *His* Son as a sacrifice for me, my son, and all of those that believe. I may not understand why he had to die, but I live in the promise that now he lives, eternally, with our Heavenly Father.

*"And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day." John 6:39*