

1 What Mary Didn't Know?

2 Scripture

- In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David.
- The virgin's name was Mary.
- The angel went to her and said,
 - "Greetings, you who are highly favored!
 - The Lord is with you."

3 Scripture

- Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered (pondered) what kind of greeting this might be.
- But the angel said to her,
 - "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God.
 - You will be with a child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.
 - He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.
 - The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

4 Scripture

- "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered.
- "May it be to me as you have said."
- Then the angel left her.

5 Introduction

- Mark Alan Lowry (born June 24, 1958) is an American
 - singer,
 - comedian,
 - minister, and
 - songwriter.
- He is best known for co-writing the song "Mary, Did You Know?" and being a member of the Gaither Vocal Band from 1988 to 2001 and 2009 to 2013.

6 Introduction

- In his performances,
 - he often uses anecdotes of his young life in his comedy and
 - his experience with hyperactivity and attention deficit disorder.
- He had difficulty getting through school and couldn't sit still for long.
- He is a self-described "Poster Boy for Hyperactivity."

7 Introduction

- Nevertheless, Lowry's song "Mary, Did You Know?" reached Number 6 on CCM Magazine's Adult Contemporary Chart.
- At the time, Lowry was with the Gaither Vocal Band and recorded his song on their 1998 Christmas album, "Still the Greatest Story Ever Told."
- Today,
 - the song has become a modern Christmas classic, recorded by hundreds of artists over the years and

- different versions have periodically reached the top 10 in the Billboard R&B and Holiday charts.

8 Mary, Did You Know - Lyrics

- Mary, did you know
That your baby boy will one day walk on water?
- Mary, did you know
That your baby boy will save our sons and daughters?
- Did you know
That your baby boy has come to make you new?
- This child that you've delivered
Will soon deliver you

9 Mary, Did You Know - Lyrics

- 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?
- And when you kiss your little baby
You've kissed the face of God

10 Mary, Did You Know - Lyrics

- Mary, did you know?
The blind will see

- The deaf will hear
And the dead will live again
- The lame will leap
The dumb will speak
- The praises of the Lamb

11 Mary, Did You Know - Lyrics

- 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 is heaven's perfect Lamb?
- This sleeping child you're holding
Is the Great I Am
- Oh, Mary, did you know?

12 Introduction

- So then, let's answer Lowry's question. Did Mary know?
- Well, probably not all much!
- While Mary was a young girl, probably in her mid-teens, and betrothed to be married, she had no idea all that would come her way.
- Twice in our text, Mary is described as a virgin, and once, she throws up an argument against Gabriel, the angelic messenger, saying his proposal doesn't make sense.

- “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” (v. 34).

13 Introduction

- However, the person who possessed the most unbelief wasn't Mary, but her boyfriend, Joseph.
- In fact, according to the Law of Moses, fornication before marriage was a capital offense and punishable with death.
- Nevertheless, according to Scripture, Joseph didn't want to expose Mary's sin.
- As Matthew says, Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, so he decided to divorce her quietly. (Matthew 1:19 NIV)

14 Introduction

- But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said,
 - “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 1:20 NIV)
 - She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:21 NIV)
- All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:
 - “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel,” — which means, “God with us.” (Matthew 1:22-23 NIV)

15 Mary Didn't Know What Was Going On

- Sometimes, we don't either.
- Have you ever been in a huge mall or museum looking at a “You Are Here” sign but still don't know where you are?

- Even if you know where you are, thanks to the sign, you still might not be clear about where you're going or how to get there.
- This perhaps describes Mary as she listens to Gabriel.
 - She knew what the angel had told her,
 - but she probably had no idea what this meant and
 - where it would take her.

16 Mary Didn't Know What Was Going On

- We, too, often need clarification about why we are in our present predicaments.
- We ask ourselves,
 - "How long am I going to be working at this job?"
 - Or, "Why am I still in this relationship?"
 - Or "When will I figure out what to do with my life?"
- Often, like Mary, we're clueless.
- The good news is that it's all right
 - because God's favor was with her, and
 - if we are "in Christ," we can also depend on his favor.

17 Mary's New Struggles

- However, with all new parents, the birth of a baby definitely changes things.
 - Feedings in the middle of the night.

- Changing diapers and having a lot more laundry.
- "Me time" and "Us time" are gone.
- Taking advice from everyone.
- On top of this, just think what all Mary had to ponder.

18 Mary Ponders

- But the angel said to them (Shepherds), (Luke 2:10-12)
 - "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today, in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.
 - This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."
- So they (Shepherds) hurried off and found Mary, Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. (Luke 2:16-18)
- But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. (Luke 2:19)

19 Mary & Joseph Ponder

- Simeon took him (Jesus) in his arms and praised God, saying:
 - "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace.
 - For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."
- The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him.

20 Mary Ponders

- 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.”

21 Mary & Joseph Ponder

- There was also a prophetess, Anna coming up to them at that very moment,
 - she gave thanks to God and
 - spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

22 Everyone Ponders

- When he (Jesus) was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom.
- After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it.
- When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him.
- After three days, they found him in the temple courts,
 - sitting among the teachers,
 - listening to them and asking them questions.
- Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers.

23 Everyone Ponders

- 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.
- And Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and men.

24 The Meaning of “Ponder”

- The word “ponder” basically means to think carefully.
- It is also unique to our humanity because “to think” is something animals can’t or don’t do very well.
- Also, “to ponder” is something we all do when deciding or reaching a conclusion.
- However, in this context, the more understanding we have of God’s overall plan of redemption, it can significantly help us ponder and think things through.

25 Capstone Ministry

- This is probably why God visited Mary through the witness of Elizabeth, the Shepherds, Simeon, Anna, and Jesus’ temple experience when he was twelve.
- Mary would need all those reinforcements to her faith because her Son’s ministry would be controversial, and most people would reject him.
- Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes’”? (Matthew 21:42)

26 Capstone Ministry

- Then Jesus entered a house, and again, a crowd gathered so that he and his disciples could not even eat.
- When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, “He is out of his mind.”

- And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said,
 - “He is possessed by Beelzebub!
 - By the prince of demons, he is driving out demons.”

27 Capstone Ministry

- Then Jesus’ mother and brothers arrived.
- Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him.
- A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, “Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you.”
- “Who are my mother and my brothers?” he asked.
- Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said,
 - “Here are my mother and my brothers!
 - Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother.”
- Do you think a sword pierced Mary’s heart to hear Jesus say, “Who are my mother and my brothers?”

28 Crisis of Faith

- Here in the Gospel of Mark, we find that with all of the prophecies, appearances of angels, and so forth, Jesus’ whole family—including Mary had a crisis of faith.
- She, as well as the whole of Israel, didn’t know that God’s Messiah would have a “capstone ministry” and would offend most people.
- Even she thought that Jesus was crazy and needed her to redirect his ministry.
- Unfortunately, this is the point; we often get disillusioned when God doesn’t do things our way.
- Why? Because we don’t have the “mind of Christ” and can’t discern what God is really doing.

- In the next few weeks, I want to revisit a sermon I did several years ago on "How to have discernment in the Last Days."

29 The "Mind of Christ"

- The reason I feel "led by the Lord" to do this is because our world is becoming more and more chaotic, corrupt, and hateful.
- The only way we, as Christians, can ponder the signs of the times correctly is to have "spiritual discernment."
- In fact, the number one role of Apostle Paul was to instruct Christians on how to gain spiritual discernment, which he called the "mind of Christ."
- Because if we have the "mind of Christ," we can discern all things and not be subject or blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. (Ephesians 4:14)

30 Conclusion

- The bottom line is that Mary knew a lot; however, she didn't understand everything, especially as it related to salvation history.
- God was coming to save His people, but the Christ would be rejected by those who were his own.
- For a Jew, this was hard to accept because they were looking for a savior that would destroy their enemies, not call them out.
- So, instead of producing the fruits of repentance, they hardened their hearts, lost all discernment, and ended up blaspheming the work of God's Holy Spirit that was at work in Jesus.
- So then, let us ponder all this and keep a clean conscience before God, for he will give us the light of life that will direct our paths even when everything is confusing, chaotic, and out of control.