

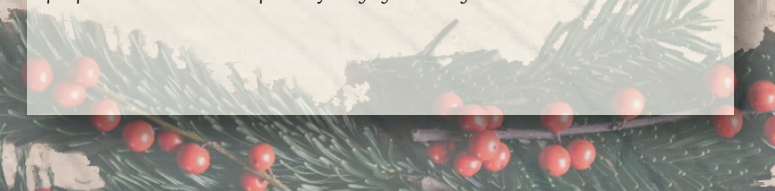
December 11th

## MARY DID YOU KNOW?

Once again Christmas time is upon us along with the seasonal songs. Whether they be old or new, fondly associated with memories or not, each have the potential to cause one to stop and think. One such song that comes to mind is "Mary, Did You Know?" Each year I find myself wondering - "Did Mary really know who her child was or what He would do?" "Why did God choose her?" "What were the implications?" and "Why is this important?" With my curiosity at a high, this year I sought to address these recurring questions by digging into the Scriptures.

From reading Luke 1 we can acknowledge that Mary was a young, Jewish peasant girl who was acquainted with God's ways and her people's history. Considering this background, in addition to the recognition of Mary's contemplative nature, we can propose that Mary was able to generally grasp the significance associated with the life of 'her' Son. But this still does not reveal why God specifically chose to use her. Think about it...why would God choose a young, Jewish peasant girl who is engaged to be married to bare His child? Upon further Scriptural study, we may deduce that the answer is primarily based in who Mary is - her heart and character. When handed the difficult position of an unwed pregnancy in which she would likely be accused of adultery and experience Joseph canceling their engagement, Mary viewed herself as God's servant and willingly submitted to His will.

This said, why is Mary's response so important? Does it possess any significant implications? Returning to the Scriptures, we recognize that God utilizes Mary to enact the fulfillment of messianic prophecy through the incarnation of Jesus. The purpose was/is our redemption by the fulfillment of Christ's work on the cross.





Thus, an intrinsic connection exists between the Son's birth and His death. It is only Jesus – the eternal Son of God - that can be the mediator between God and mankind.

The point is God uses the 'unexpected' for His purposes. Mary was a young girl who found herself pregnant and engaged to be married despite being a virgin in a society where unwed pregnancy was unacceptable, yet she was dedicated to serving the Lord with her whole being no matter the cost. She was willing to accept God's unique purpose and calling on her life. And so, I ask myself: "Am I prepared to do the same? Am I ready to demonstrate the same willingness, obedience and radical trust in God that Mary did, even if it means enduring hardships? And if so, what does this look like?"

Contributed by Jacqi Schellenberg

