

by Ivey Harrington Beckman

WHAT

MARY

KNEW

MOST MOMS THINK THEIR CHILDREN WALK ON WATER.

MARY'S SON ACTUALLY DID.



I'VE NEVER GIVEN BIRTH, but I do have a child in heaven. My only pregnancy was miscarried at eight weeks. Though my arms never held that tiny soul, my heart did. Still does. I never smelled my child's sweet scent, never felt his fingers curl around mine, never heard him say "Mama" for the first time. But I know, someday, I will hold the son I've never touched but whose presence, if only for those short, sweet weeks, is deeply etched within me. I take comfort in knowing he was in God's hands then — and remains there to this day.

I've often wondered what Mary felt the first time she held Jesus in her arms, the first time she smelled His sweet scent, the first time she felt His tiny fingers curl around hers. As she watched Him sleep, I wonder if she knew, even then, of the strength He had.

To bury a child is, indeed, a parent's deepest sorrow. To bury a child who has suffered a violent death takes grief and plunges it to even greater depths. Eve knew that dark, hollow place where it hurts to breathe. But sweet Mary, how much did you know — and when?

I think I know a few things. I know that even though Mary was a teenager at the time, her song (Luke 1:46-55) tells me she embraced with grace God's calling to mother His Son. When she nuzzled Jesus' soft cheek and looked into His eyes the first time, it must have taken her breath away that she was face to face and heart to heart with Almighty God. I feel certain Mary's heart swelled with pride (and no small amount of awe)

when she heard Jesus give eloquent voice to the Scriptures at the scant age of 12. And she may have had trouble stifling a grin when Jesus turned water into wine at the wedding in Cana — even if she did push Him a bit, as mothers are prone to do.

But, Mary, did you know that Jesus would change the lives of so many — one set of blind eyes, one set of broken limbs, one soul at a time?

And then there are bragging rights. Most moms think their children walk on water. Mary's Son actually did. He also told a roaring storm to pipe down. And it did. He took a few fish and five loaves of bread that came nowhere close to feeding five people, and He fed 5,000 men plus women and children — with leftovers. Mary probably heard about that feast.

But, Mary, did you know that your Son would also feed the souls of millions for centuries?

I wonder if when Mary was sobbing at the foot of her Son's cross, she truly believed He would overcome death in three days as He'd said?

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Every ounce of Mary's being must have strained toward Jesus, begging for someone, anyone, to place His battered body in her arms so she could comfort Him. Because that's what moms do.

But Jesus was out of Mary's hands. He was out of her reach — in a place He had to endure alone, weighed heavy by sins only He could bear.

Yet even while He took those last ragged breaths, Jesus thought of His mother, who had held His hand when He took His first earthly steps. Jesus asked His most beloved disciple to treat this special woman as if she were his own mother. Mary's heart, though flattened by fear and

grief, must have again swelled with awe and pride over His tender mercy.

But, Mary, did you know at that moment just how much He truly did love you? How much He truly loved the world, even those who nailed Him to that cross?

I don't know if Jesus visited His mother that Easter day, but I believe in my heart that He was that kind of Son; relationships were everything to Him. If He did visit her, Mary would have known when she again looked into His eyes that she was, indeed, face to face, cheek to cheek, and heart to heart with Almighty God. That knowledge wasn't just mother's intuition; it was divine revelation.

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But, Mary, did you know that the story of salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus — and your sweet story of grace and obedience — would be told generation after generation?

On the day Mary embraced eternity, I'm sure those who loved her grieved deeply. She must have been that kind of woman — faithful, kind, and generous. Those she left behind would have felt her loss to their very core. But the One who loved her most welcomed her into His heaven. And back into His arms.

Mary knew when an angel told her not to be afraid that she need not be. She knew when that same angel told her she would conceive a

Son by the Holy Spirit that it was a calling she would embrace with all her heart, soul, mind, and strength. And she likely knew, because mothers just do, that Jesus would never really be hers, at least not hers alone — because He wasn't just her Son; He was God's Son, Savior of the world.

I have a child who dwells in heaven. Mary has a Child who dwells there too. But Mary's Son — God's Son — also lives in the heart of everyone who believes He died on that dark, lonely, horrific hill and rose that bright, glorious Easter morning so we could spend eternity with Him.

When I embrace eternity, it will be the sweetest of family reunions — this mother's never-ending joy in being face to face, heart to heart, and soul to soul with my child — and my Savior.

I know Mary knows how that feels.

YOUR LIFE — YOUR MINISTRY

Look back on the first half of your life: the good times, the rock-hard days, the failures, and the victories. God can use those experiences to help you minister to others. What life experience can you tap today as a conduit to a faith connection with a younger person?

*“We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God: those who are called according to His purpose”
(Romans 8:28).*

Ivey Harrington Beckman serves as the content editor of More Living magazine. In her 40s, she was blessed with a beautiful stepdaughter, Courtney, whom Ivey now prays will someday bless her with many grandchildren. Mark Lowry's song “Mary Did You Know?” inspired this article.