

The Glory of Christmas

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

*Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart.
Luke 2:51 (NIV)*

Most of the detail of Jesus' earthly life centre on the last few weeks before the cross. The birth stories are brief and we only have one record of a scene from Jesus' childhood (Luke 2:41-52).

What is very clear to us from reading the accounts of Jesus' birth and childhood is how very godly Mary was as she constantly "treasured" and pondered on her amazing Son and the things God did on His behalf.

We ought to take a lesson from this devoted woman's life and review in our minds again and again the remarkable story of Jesus and how the Father organized every detail of His life from before His birth right through to the ascension after the cross.

The amazing people called the Puritans decided that celebrating Christmas was

wrong, as believers in Jesus should be joyful all year long. The wonderful hymn writer, theologian and preacher Isaac Watts (1674-1748) wrote many hymns of praise to the Lord that he anticipated would be sung in churches all year long.

One of these hymns was "Joy to the world the Lord has come". For some reason later generations of Christians have reserved this hymn to be sung only in December the month of the year when most Christians celebrate Christmas.

Certainly the glory of Christmas should be recalled all year long. This seemed to be the habit of Mary. From the time Jesus was born this fine woman frequently spent time rehearsing in her mind the extraordinary things concerning her son Jesus.

I do not think we are wrong to have a special

season of the year for meditating on the story of Jesus' birth. However we should also have fond thoughts of this great historical event all through the year as well.

We would be much better equipped to handle the sorrows of everyday life by keeping in mind the joy and celebration that the angels had when they announced to the shepherds Messiah's birth (Luke 2:8-14).

May you, like the shepherds, be joyful all year long knowing that the Lord has come. Luke 2:20 (NIV) "The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told."

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