



# SERMON NOTES

From In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley

## TREASURES OF THE HEART

**KEY PASSAGE:** Luke 2:15-20 | **SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE:** Exodus 20:12 | Proverbs 3:5-6  
Matthew 1:18-25; 2:1-11; 2:13-15 | Luke 1:35, 40-44; 2:1-7, 25-35, 36-38; 48-51 | John 14:2

### ► SUMMARY

#### What do you treasure?

What do you hold dear, protect, and think about frequently? Worldly people think primarily of fame, financial success, accomplishments, and valuable possessions. But these things are worthless compared to spiritual and emotional riches.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, knew what to value in life. Two times the Bible mentions that she “treasured all these things in her heart” (Luke 2:19, 51). Although she didn’t completely understand all that happened concerning her son Jesus, she quietly reflected on the events of His early life, examining and enjoying them.

You and I should have treasures of the heart as well. These include things such as special moments, intimate relationships, spiritual victories, and other gifts from God. By valuing what really matters in life, we become people of character and determination.

### ► SERMON POINTS

#### Marriage in Biblical Times

In her early teens, a Jewish girl was betrothed to her future husband. The girl’s father arranged the marriage, and the engagements were legally binding—only divorce or death could break them. The betrothal lasted one year, during which the groom would build a home for his bride. Although the contract was permanent, the couple would not have sexual relations until after the wedding. Unfaithfulness during this period was considered adultery,

punishable by stoning. Even if the community didn’t kill an unmarried woman who became pregnant, she would bring shame on herself and her family.

#### What events did Mary treasure?

- **The angel’s visit.** During the year of her betrothal to Joseph, an angel visited Mary. He told her she would bear a child who would be the Son of God, conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). Even knowing the disgrace she would likely experience, she gladly submitted to God’s will.
- **Elizabeth’s encouragement.** When Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth, the child, who would become John the Baptist, leapt in his mother’s womb (Luke 1:40-42). Elizabeth said, “How has it happened to me, that the mother of my Lord would come to me?” (Luke 1:43). That confirmation must have strengthened Mary as she faced the townspeople’s judgment.
- **Joseph’s commitment.** Once an angel visited him in a dream, he was willing to marry her instead of quietly leaving her (Matt. 1:18-25).
- **Jesus’ birth.** When Mary was about to give birth, Caesar decreed that everyone should travel to the home of his birth and register (Luke 2:1-5). I am sure Mary and Joseph treasured those first moments after Jesus was born, despite the uncomfortable setting (Luke 2:7).
- **The reactions of Simeon and Anna.** Mary and Joseph took baby Jesus to the temple to dedicate Him to God. Simeon, a righteous man who had been waiting for the Savior, announced that Jesus was the promised Messiah (Luke 2:25-35). Anna, a widow who spent all her time in the temple, spoke of Him to everyone who was looking for the redemption of Israel (Luke 2:36-38).

- **The visit of the wise men.** A few years later, the magi visited Mary, Joseph, and the young child, Jesus. Mary must have treasured that the wise men worshipped Him and presented Him with valuable gifts (Matt. 2:1-11).
- **Her baby's miraculous escape from slaughter.** When the magi failed to return to Herod, the king ordered the deaths of all male children two years and under in the Bethlehem area. Jesus was spared because an angel warned Joseph to take his family to Egypt immediately (Matt. 2:13-15).
- **Jesus' strange response to Mary's rebuke.** After a visit to Jerusalem, 12-year-old Jesus stayed behind when his family's caravan left for home. Mary and Joseph finally found him in the temple, discussing theology with the teachers of the law. Mary rebuked Jesus for disappearing, but He responded, "Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house?" (Luke 2:49). Neither Mary nor Joseph understood Jesus' question, but Mary wondered at its significance (Luke 2:51).

### What concepts did Mary treasure?

- **She gave birth to the Son of God.** From her womb came a child who looked like any other, but was divine. Mary pondered the mystery that Jesus was not merely her son, but the Son of God.
- **Jesus would be her Savior.** The more she listened to Him, the more Mary understood His mission in life. It's possible that He told her enough about His future to help her accept His sacrificial death.
- **She had to exchange her parental authority for His divine authority.** While He lived in her household, He subjected himself to her authority. Otherwise, He could not have been without sin, for children must obey their parents (Ex. 20:12). However, at some point, Mary had to acknowledge His divine authority.
- **She gave Jesus physical life; He gave her eternal life.** Although Mary had brought Him into the world, He had the power to save her from her sins and prepare a place in heaven for her (John 14:2).

### What should you treasure?

- **People:** If you are married, I hope you value your husband or wife. Other special people may include grandparents, parents, children, grandchildren, and close friends.
- **Possessions:** Many women attach significance to their engagement rings—not primarily because of their monetary value, but because of sentimental reasons. We also value things we work hard to earn.
- **Promises:** The Word of God is full of God's promises. You may also treasure special commitments you've made, such as your marriage vows.
- **Places:** Natural or man-made settings can take on particular significance and become a part of who we are.
- **Periods of blessing:** You may look back with pleasure on getting married, having a child, or building a business. Special moments playing with your kids or fellowshiping with God fall into this category.
- **Periods of adversity:** Bad times can become treasures when we realize God's faithfulness in suffering. Hardship also increases our sensitivity to the feelings of others and teaches us powerful spiritual lessons.

### ► RESPONSE

- What do you treasure in life? I suggest you make a list of the things you value in life. Start with the fact that you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Then list other blessings God has given to you. What you value—and therefore think about—largely determines the type of person you become. So let your treasures be ones that have eternal significance.

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