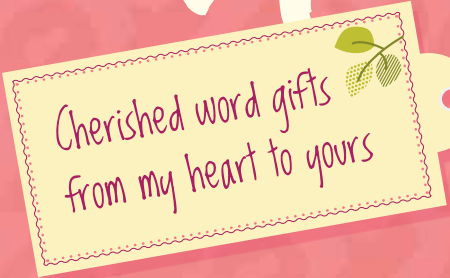




I love you,

Mom!



*Cherished word gifts
from my heart to yours*

Blythe Daniel & Helen McIntosh



Tyndale House Publishers
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ISBN 978-1-4964-5257-3

Printed in China

28 27 26 25 24 23 22
7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let
her works bring her praise at the city gate.

PROVERBS 31:31, NIV



The Gift of You

Hello, Mom!

You have just opened a gift for dear you because *you* are a gift! You are so loved! Inside these pages you are celebrated for being an amazing mom to your family and for the many ways your hard work and care make a difference each day.

God chose you to be a mom. That's a gift you have unwrapped! He has always known the dynamics of your family and how you would play an important role in shaping your child from his or her early years through adulthood.

As a mother-and-daughter team, we know that sharing a sentiment can be a great way to show that you are on your child's heart. This book contains more thoughts than a greeting card. It takes many pages to express the love and thanks for what you have meant to your family. Not a single card could cover that successfully. We hope the sentiments will help you recall the ways you are seen and appreciated for the many contributions you bring to your child's life.

The devotions are designed to express love and thanks through word gifts that are meant to lift your heart when



you need them the most. Perhaps your child has given you homemade gifts over the years that grace your home. Now your child is giving you words meant to grace your heart!

We hope you feel joy rising in you when you think of how much you are loved and that your heart is filled with thanks for how God brought you and your child together. You are honored as someone who gives out so much love and deserves so much in return.

*Listen to your father, who gave you life,
and don't despise your mother when she is old.
Get the truth and never sell it;
also get wisdom, discipline, and good judgment.
The father of godly children has cause for joy.
What a pleasure to have children who are wise.
So give your father and mother joy!
May she who gave you birth be happy.*

PROVERBS 23:22-25

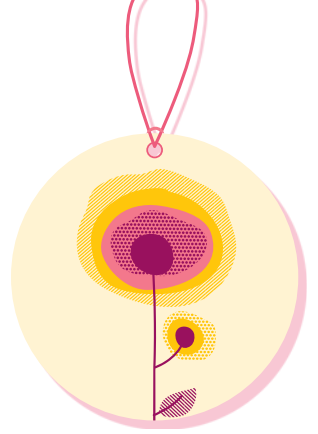
We believe your child wants you to be happy and to smile with joy as you read this book. It offers words from their heart that you can hold on to for a lifetime. May the gifts inside encourage you! It is with great pleasure that we invite your child to say, "I Love You, Mom!"

Blythe Daniel
Helen McIntosh

Holding Treasure Close

[Jesus] went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart.

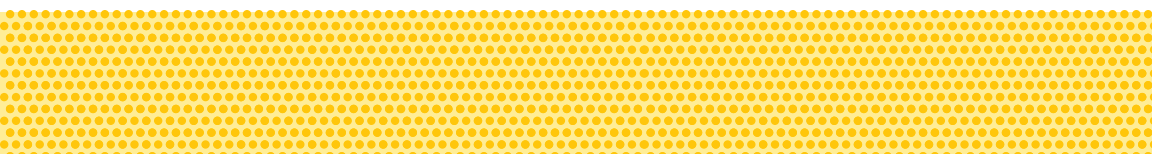
LUKE 2:51, NIV



Don't you love it when everything lines up just as you had hoped in a given day, without deviating from the plan? There is a semblance of safety that drops down like an oxygen mask in an airplane when you can see what's in front of you and plan for what's ahead. But when things don't go according to plan, you have to retrace your steps—and your hopes.

Have you thought about how Mary, the mother of Jesus, felt when she could not find her twelve-year-old son? Talk about the need for an oxygen mask! She and Joseph were on their way from Jerusalem back to Nazareth with a group of travelers when they realized he was missing. Retracing their steps, they frantically searched for him until they found him three days later in the Temple courts. The son that Mary wanted within arm's reach was in a place they likely didn't expect, interacting with those who were shaping the religious beliefs and practices of the day. And he was only twelve.

No doubt a celebration took place after Mary and Joseph found Jesus, which must have felt like a complete relief to Mary, who had carried him in her heart since conception. But she questioned Jesus, asking him how he could have treated them like that. Jesus said, "Why did you need to search? . . . Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?" (Luke 2:49).



Later we see that Mary, the mother of this young man who had a strength about him and a desire to love his Father, held these things in her heart. She recognized the treasure her son was and wanted to hold on to this treasure tightly. But she also recognized the one whom she was raising was a delight to God.

Sometimes as mothers we get caught up in the chase and don't think about the lives we are helping to mold. We often feel we can't hold our child close enough or long enough. Maybe, like Mary, you have thought about how you can hold on to the treasure of time and not release your child to the world just yet. You want to know that the one you are raising is close by.

Do you recognize the gift of loving your son or daughter, who needs the love only you can provide? We need to express our love even on the days that don't go as planned. Like Mary, we don't get to hold on to our treasure forever, but the treasure is still in our hearts. And so is the one you love.

