

## A BABY CHANGES EVERYTHING

(With much gratitude to Faith Hill and Warner Brothers Nashville for inspiring this article through Faith's song by the same title)

"Your life will never be the same again." I lost count of person after person saying that at baby showers I attended. I understood it in my own way, appreciated it from a distance, but wasn't really "ready" to have everything change my independent life. Being married to my best friend, Jordan, was enough for me at the time. Then, six years ago, I found out what those shower ladies meant.

I read once that the distance between a positive pregnancy test and walking your kid to the park is about 3 seconds, especially when you are longing to have a baby. I found that to be true. I also found out I was going to have TWO kids to walk to the park. Then one. Then none. My babies, who left my womb straight for the halls of heaven, changed everything for me. They made a mother out of me, even though I never got to hold them in my arms. They told me to run far, far away from Tostitos lime chips by sending waves of nausea through my changing body upon smelling those once-delightful crisps. They made it very clear

when it was time to go to bed ... something I decided on my own since my parents stopped giving me the deadline. They made people squeal with me, pray with me, weep with me. They led me to long for heaven in ways I had never thought possible before. Those two little lives, having lived only 10 weeks, changed everything for me ... by living in me, by dying in me.

A long road, two more miscarriages, many tears and much healing later, God decided to change everything again ... through the adoptions of my daughter, Megan, and my son, Micah. They are the glue that God has used to put the pieces of my broken heart back together again, creating a heart with more compassion, more strength and more love for children than the day it began to beat. They have made me realize that crayon scrawls on my walls can be a trophy of God's goodness, instead of something to be wiped away with my Mr. Clean Magic Eraser. They have made me stop and laugh at myself when I hear THAT voice coming out of my mouth, "My patience is no longer the size of a watermelon, apple or grape ... it is now the size of a RAISIN!" Micah has taken unclean moments like a diaper blowout and made them an opportunity to have some precious eye contact since neither he, nor I, are going anywhere for the next five minutes (and since I would rather look at his big blue

eyes than at the other end of him, anyway). Megan has helped me to see my in-laws' Christmas lights through eyes which have no idea how much hard work goes into such an accomplishment ... all she sees is magic: "Aaaahhhh, how BEAUTIFUL! It's PRIZE-WINNING!" (I believe she was quoting one of Cinderella's step-sisters in the original animated Disney movie).

Both of them have taught me what it truly means to put others before myself, because my bladder's capacity to "hold it" has withstood their demands for lunch on multiple occasions. They remind me often that there is no shame in dancing in front of us completely naked (Megan) and in a diaper (Micah), with uninhibited joy, to the strains of La Cucaracha! They are the only people on earth who have made me feel excitement at reading *The Adventures of Peter Pan* three times in a row. They have changed my vocabulary ... an "emergency" includes Ally-bear needing a pink hair tie instead of a purple one, an "apple" is anything remotely fruit-like in its qualities, and a "ball" can be anything that is thrown, with maximum force and frightening precision, against my left ear. They have surprised me with the amount of instant energy I have when being shaken from a dreamy sleep, with a single "MOMMMMMMMYYYYYYYY" scream, after a long, hard day. They have taught me to stop worrying

about myself so much - I love them and that's all that matters to them. They have made 10:00 PM one of my favorite times of the day ... when I gaze at them, re-cover their sprawled bodies, kiss them and commit them to my Father's watchful care one last time before I close my eyes on the day. Those shower ladies were correct. A baby changes everything. Mine did ... by living with me.

With the thoughts of my heart being drawn towards a stable in Bethlehem again, this Christmas season, I know that a teenage mom named Mary would say, "I agree - a baby DOES change everything." She didn't have to buy any sticks of any kind at the local market. An angel, sent by God, delivered her test results well in advance and all at once: "You will become pregnant, it will be a boy, you will name him Jesus, He will save us all." (Oh, by the way, as if that weren't enough, He will be the Son of the Most High God.) Wow - not even a 3D ultrasound can top that! There was no state-run home for betrothed, but unwed mothers for her to go to. She and Joseph did not attend birthing and parenting classes and they certainly weren't taught the Bradley method by a doula. Medicaid did not pay for her labor and delivery. Her son's first clothes were not made out of reversible, flame-retardant fleece, but there were plenty of sheep - and

shepherds - who came to visit Him. There was no registry in her name at Target, nor Babies R Us, but her first (and possibly only) shower was thrown by kings from a distant land, bringing gold, frankincense and myrrh ... Mary and her humble family were, in the eyes of those around them, nobody to look at, nothing to celebrate.

And yet ...

A Jewish king tried to have Him killed. Angels fluoresced the night sky, proclaiming His birth. A star became a heavenly prototype of a GPS navigational system, guiding visitors to His first earthly home. A wooden manger, in His presence, became a cradle fit for the one and only King of Kings, Prince of Peace, Lord of Lords. Prophecies, centuries old, were fulfilled by His entrance into the human race. Today, calendars and nations acknowledge (in varying ways) His birthday every year - CHRIST-mas.

Mary's baby changed everything, not just for her, but for me. He made it possible for eternal death, the most severe consequence of sin, to release its grip on my soul. He glued together the shattered fragments of my self-centered heart, miraculously creating a heart that is pure, holy, undefiled in God's eyes. He

has made a wooden cross and an empty tomb my favorite trophies of God's goodness in all the world. He has told me, when my patience is the size of a raisin, that He will stretch it for me with love, and He has had to do the same with me many, many times. He has seen the filth blowing out of my selfish heart and, while cleaning it up gently, looked into my eyes and told me of His unwavering, unconditional love for me. He has made me the light of the world, takes great delight in me and calls me beautiful, when all my discouraged eyes can see is the hard work it takes to do the right thing.

He has increased the capacity of my heart to think of others first, even when it hurts, or doesn't come naturally for me. He reminds me often that there is no shame in honest vulnerability, for that is the only way to experience dancing with joy over being accepted for who I truly am. He is the only Person who has made the adventure of reading His Word exciting, even if "I've read that passage twenty times." He has changed my vocabulary by defining true greatness as "servanthood" and ultimate love as "sacrifice, even to the point of death." He has surprised me by granting me the strength to give myself away when I think I have nothing left. He has taught me to stop worrying about myself so much - He loves me and that's all that should matter to me. And

every night, when I close my eyes on the day, He gazes at me, re-covers my wounds with His healing, holds me and commits Himself again to never leave me, nor forsake me, under His Father's watchful care. Those shower ladies were correct. A Baby changes everything. Mary's sure did ... by living for me, by dying for me ... and for you.

Marie Foote, Denver, CO 2009

Author and her husband with their two gifts through open adoption, Megan Elizabeth (Feb 2004) and Christian Micah (April 2007).



A baby changes everything ... Megan (1 day old) and me



A baby changes everything ... Micah (1 day old) and Jordan



A baby changes everything ... Megan's world will never be the same now that she has Micah as a brother



[https://youtu.be/e1g1hp\\_Eb3o](https://youtu.be/e1g1hp_Eb3o)

Artist: Faith Hill

Song Lyrics Title: A Baby Changes Everything

Available on Album: Joy to the World