

I remember this one moment in time as if it occurred only yesterday ...

My mom had just picked me up from high school. As she drove what turned out to be the longest drive home ever from school, I noticed that she was suspiciously quiet. I could tell that she was deep in thought, but I had the distinct feeling that she might share those deep thoughts with me.

She kept looking at me with those distinctively special '*mom eyes*'. You know - the mother's eyes that are so intensely loving, yet so intensely concerned at the same time. I sensed that she must have something terribly important to tell me. It quickly became obvious to me that, at any moment, whatever was on her mind would be verbally passed along to me. She had something to say, something to tell me, but she just wasn't quite sure where to begin. I thought, '*Did somebody die?*'

As we were driving down the road, having already turned onto the quaint midwestern street where we lived, my mom (who had taken me some days or weeks earlier to the family doctor for a pregnancy test - because moms really do seem to have a kind of sixth sense, especially about their own offspring) decided to just come out and say what I'm sure had been weighing quite heavily on her mind all day so far.

Ever so gently, compassionately, and quietly, but matter-of-factly, she put her precious hand in mine and said, '*Lori, you are pregnant.*'

My heart sank to my stomach.

My stomach made its way up to my throat.

My once rosy cheeks now lacked of any color at all.

And, my insuppressible tears flooded my cheeks, drenched my clothes, and sprinkled onto my high school books.

I glanced over at my mom again.

Her '*mom eyes*' were bigger-than-life filled with the compassion that only a mom can have for her child. In my case, a child having a child ... her baby having a baby.

After swallowing the big lump in my throat (it took several attempts), I quietly asked my mom to '*just drive around the block.*'

I wasn't ready to go into the house yet.

I wasn't ready to go on with the rest of the afternoon.

Quite frankly, I wasn't ready for anything.

And, I sure wasn't ready to be a *mommy*.

Not me.

Not at sixteen.

... Fast forward: It was a sunny, breezy afternoon in October, 1974.

We had all the windows and doors wide open in our midwestern home purposefully to enjoy the cool breezes flowing through the screens and onto our exposed skin.

My mom and dad and I were sitting at the kitchen table enjoying this gorgeous afternoon, as well as each other's company, when ...

My labor began.

This was it. It was really happening. And, it was really scary. Scary, because I was only sixteen. *Only sixteen!*

I endured the labor. But, not alone. My mom stayed at my side, holding my hand, encouraging me, comforting me, and all the while looking at me with those distinctive '*mom eyes.*'

At 7:04 p.m., I gave birth to a son. Danny. Eight pounds, two ounces, twenty-one inches long, and simply the cutest thing I'd ever seen in my life. And he was mine. All mine! At

least that's what I remember thinking that glorious, incredible, amazing moment in time.

Soon thereafter, I also came to the realization that not only did God bless me with Danny, but He entrusted me with his care. Me!

You could say I gave birth to two people on the evening of October 4, 1974. Though I didn't realize it immediately, at the moment of Danny's birth I also gave birth to a new 'me.'

Instinctively, I took on the role of 'Mommy.' And in my mind, I carried my whole 'mommy checklist' ...

- Does he have all his fingers and toes?
- Will he remember to breathe?
- Is he hungry?
- Is he thirsty?
- Is he cold?
- Is he hot?
- Does he know I'm his 'mommy?'

And ...

- I hope he loves me.

Motherhood proved to be even better than I could have hoped or dreamed. Yep - even at sixteen!

I was in love with my precious little baby boy. Love that truly began from the moment my sweet mom uttered the word '*pregnant*' to me on that bittersweet ride home from high school months earlier.

Many years have come and gone since then. Danny will be thirty-nine years old this year. And not once - not once! - have I regretted my decision for life for him. If I had not chosen life for Danny, I wouldn't have been blessed with:

- the joy that only a son can bring.
- seeing the pride in Danny's eyes when he caught his first fish.
- the thrill of announcing, '*That's my son*', as Danny received his '1st place' trophy in the pinewood derby.
- frogs for pets.
- Danny's eight-year-old voice proclaiming, '*I'm the happiest boy in the world*' while playing with his new puppy, Copper.
- the enjoyment of watching Danny grab his fishing pole after school, and sit for hours-on-end fishing off the bridge that ran across the creek in the back yard of our country home.
- The pleasure of watching Danny get baptized at the pond across the street from the small, country church we attended.

I had a high school teacher who once told me, after my re-commitment to Christ and shortly after Danny's birth, '*Stay close to God, and He'll bless you beyond your dreams.*' He was right.

This testimony was taken from Lori Ghiata Bowser's book Pregnant at 16.