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FOOLS HAVE NO MIRACLES

By Ruth Vaughn



The story of the \$100,000 "miracle offering"
at Bethany Nazarene College

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He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose. --
Jim Elliot

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DEDICATION

To those wise ones on a college campus who dared to step into the realm of miracles, this book is dedicated with the prayer "that . . . [we] may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all . . . [God's] wondrous works" (Ps. 26:7).

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FOREWORD

Impoverished indeed is the person who has never experienced, firsthand, the miracle-working power of God. No greater stimulus to faith can be found than to see tangible answers to prayer.

Seventeen hundred students on the campus of Bethany Nazarene College in the spring of 1971 saw just such a miracle. In four weeks' time, God helped them to raise \$100,000 in cash for their school, which was facing a difficult financial crisis. After that "miracle offering" there could be few doubters, for scores of personal miracles went into the realization of this goal -- a goal which most people said was preposterous.

The miracles were not all related to money however, as the testimonies herein will attest. The personal spiritual victories which accompanied the money raising, and the skyrocketing campus morale as the students really became involved, were healthy by-products of the drive. To read these accounts of victory is to have one's faith lifted and one's soul enriched.

Bethany Nazarene College happened to be the locale for this particular miracle and Evangelist Charles Millhuff, God's instrument to strike the necessary spark of inspiration, but miracles can happen anywhere if people meet the conditions of commitment under which His power can be released. May this narrative of a miracle inspire that kind of dedication and faith among all who read it.

J. Fred Parker
Book Editor,
Nazarene Publishing House

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PREFACE

When the idea for this book recording a twentieth-century miracle was conceived, we knew that it would be impossible to contact each of the students for personal stories. In an effort to gain as much of this comprehensive knowledge as possible, Steve Neumann, president-elect of the campus Circle K club, went before the students in chapel and asked each person to write briefly concerning his personal "miracle." Ten minutes of silence, broken only by the scratching of pens on paper, passed. At the conclusion of chapel, the collected writings were handed to me.

The most difficult part of all was the selection of the stories to be told. With so many from which to choose, it took hours. When the selections were finally made, I interviewed as many of the students as I could for additional details. Then the detailed writing began. Because of the intensely personal nature of some of the accounts, a few names have been changed by request.

Rev. Charles Millhuff, the evangelist who launched the "miracle offering," asked the students to call him "Chuck." As "Chuck" they accepted him to their hearts. And "Chuck" he is in this book, with all due respect.

May I here express gratitude to the students who spent time talking with me, patiently answering my most probing questions, and also to those who wrote out detailed information when there was no opportunity for interview. I am grateful for the privilege I have had to record the story of these unforgettable miracles.

Ruth Vaughn

* * * * *

PROLOGUE

He stood behind the lectern in his custom-made suit, his expensively cut shoes -- and I pitied his poverty. He spoke of great men, renowned epistemologies, high learning -- and I pitied his ignorance. He told of new perceptions, new dimensions of vision that were his -- and I pitied his blindness. He was the epitome of wealth, education, culture. And I pitied him!

"You know, of course," he said in refined tones, "that no one today affirms that the Bible was written to be believed. It is only a group of legends with good morals which have been handed down from generation to generation.

"How preposterous, for instance, to believe that story about the children of Israel crossing the Red Sea on dry land!"

Preposterous? I mused.

Why should that be hard to believe? I know that it happened. I know, because I teach on a college campus where dozens of youth crossed a "Red Sea" just this spring.

They faced oceans of frustration where there seemed no way through. Problems and confusions hounded them on chariot wheels. And then, just as they seemed about to go down in defeat, the waters of their "Red Sea" parted, and I watched them as they walked through on dry land. No, not preposterous! Wonderful. A miracle. "And Daniel!"

Here the lecturer almost laughed aloud. "Who could ever be so childish as to believe that a man could actually spend a night in a den of hungry lions in peace and quiet?

The idea is simply absurd!" Absurd? Oh, no!

I have watched through the bars of "lions" dens" where, with hands tied, young collegians stood in the midst of "beasts" which threatened to swallow them. But when they put their complete trust in God, they found the lions' mouths tightly shut and they knew deep peace and quietness within. No, not absurd! Thrilling. A miracle.

"Even the stories written about Christ are not to be believed as actual events," the lecturer continued. "Whoever could imagine finding money supplied in a fish's mouth?"

Whoever indeed!

At this, I chuckled softly inside. Why, my young college friends have found money supplied by the hand of God in places just as unusual as that! When faced with the challenge of helping to save their college campus, these students asked

God for help and it was supplied. Once on an old car-wash rag. Once on a pair of glasses. Once in the "world's biggest garage sale."

Fish's mouth? Oh, yes! God supplies the material needs of His children in His own way -- and sometimes it is astonishingly unique. And He always supplies each need on time.

No, not unbelievable!

Miraculous.

I sat and listened to the lecture of this university man and my heart was filled with compassion for the poverty of his life. He did not know about miracles. He believed only in the tangible world, the things his eyes could see, the formulas his mind could devise and comprehend.

How drab and meaningless his life must be if He doesn't know about miracles.

In the spring of 1971, the students on the Bethany Nazarene College campus discovered that there are two realms. One we can see and touch and calculate. The other we can see only through the lens of faith, can touch only with the fingers of trust, and can calculate only through belief in the unfailing promises of God.

The students had been told from childhood how God had wrought the supernatural in the yesteryears as recorded in His Word. They dared to open themselves to God's power in the present day -- and they immediately found themselves confronted with a miracle. God performs the miraculous today -- and He will continue to do so as long as the world shall stand and His children choose to obey.

My university lecturer would not understand this book. But 1,700 college students do. For this is a record of their twentieth-century miracle.

We hope that you who read its pages will thrill with us in our discovery -- and will open yourself to God's power, so that you too may experience a personal miracle.

Fools have no miracles; people with faith do!

*** * * * ***

01 -- THE CHALLENGE TO A MIRACLE

In 1900 there were approximately 250,000 college students in the United States. Today there are more than 8 million. And this present student population is expected to increase by 40 to 50 percent in the next decade. What will these

millions of students learn in their college years? In particular, what will they learn of Christian principles, absolute values, and biblical morality?

Christian educators founded the first colleges in America with educational objectives based on divine revelation. Timothy Dwight, president of Yale from 1795 to 1817, advised the class of 1814: "Christ is the only, the true, the living way of access to God. Give up yourselves therefore to him, with a cordial confidence, and the great work of life is done." Few university presidents would be inclined, let alone dare, to make such a statement today. For education people have, for the most part, left biblical faith out of their institutions.

The March, 1967, issue of McCall's magazine contained an article entitled, "What College Catalogues Won't Tell You." It was written from information gained from a large number of student editors in America who responded to a questionnaire. One of the questions was: "On which campus is a person most likely to lose his religious faith?"

The top three answers were (1) Berkeley, (2) the University of Chicago, (3) church-supported schools. The reason, obviously, for this astonishing third answer is that students are required to take Bible courses and these are, in most such schools, taught by liberal-minded professors.

The Center for the Study of Higher Education in Berkeley conducted a study of its Merit Scholars. One aspect dealt with religious beliefs. In a group of 395 men, 88 percent stated that when they entered the university they were open to religious faith. Only 51 percent still retained this openness by their junior year. In a group of 175 women, 91 percent felt a need for God when they entered college. Only 69 percent maintained this position in their junior year. There is, of course, reason to believe that the percentages were lowered even more during their senior year.

These kinds of studies underline the need for fundamental, Christian college campuses such as the nine operated under the auspices of the Church of the Nazarene in the United States and Canada. Our youth live in a world where riots, rebellions, and hatred run rampant. They are on the front lines in the war for men's souls. But every semester on Nazarene college campuses, an entire week is devoted to revival time. And in these confrontations with God, our students find opportunity to open themselves to His power and to observe His miracles firsthand.

In the spring of 1971, concerned faculty members and student leaders at Bethany Nazarene College were disturbed. Rumblings of discontent, critical attitudes, and unrest ran deeper than the usual "beefs" about discipline and the food service. There was a pervading atmosphere of uneasiness and unhappiness. The spiritual tide was at a low ebb.

The traditional revival opened. There were grumbling voices, scowling faces, and dragging feet, as the students gathered in the chapel that first morning. Some

slouched in their seats with an I-couldn't-care-less attitude. But they did a double take when the guest speaker stepped to the pulpit. He didn't appear to be much older than they. He wore mod fashions. His humor was sly; his grin, contagious; his manner, honest, hard-hitting. The atmosphere began to tingle. This young man spoke with conviction of life's ultimates. He challenged them to give their lives to God in full commitment. He dared them to take the "unreasonable" step of faith.

They listened; they observed; they considered.

And they responded when he led them into direct confrontation with Jesus Christ.

Hundreds lined the altars in every service; dozens prayed through in dorm prayer meetings; many made decisions in moments alone with God. The youth were electrified with the wonder of salvation, the fulfillment of entire sanctification.

Charles (Chuck) Millhuff, the young evangelist, was excited over the tremendous response of an entire campus finding the glow of salvation. But he wanted to see something more.

He felt deeply that college revivals should display Christian values at the practical level of living as well as in personal religious experience. He believed that students need, individually and corporately, to experience miracle in their day.

The revival was flooding in on the campus, but his heart hungered to see the students go beyond the altar to put to work in everyday life the miracle-working power of God. To experience a miracle would be something they could hold on to for the rest of their lives.

The students listened respectfully to his stories of miracles in days gone by. But the young evangelist knew that stories do not have the impact of personal knowledge.

The experience of salvation through Christ is a personal thing, made possible only by the grace of God. Conversion is the greatest experience of life. Without it, there can be no faith; with it, and from it, faith will grow. This growth was now Chuck's concern.

He sought for a specific objective to tie to. What is the greatest tangible need on this campus? he thought to himself.

That was easy. The school was in debt \$600,000. The professors had taken cuts in salaries; operating expenses had been cut back to a shoestring.

But, Chuck wondered, did the students fit in here? No one ever went to a student body to ask for financial help. And this was the age when students burned campuses-to expect students to help a campus would be unusual indeed.

He said not a word to anyone, but the troubled spirit continued. On Friday morning he arose early. This would be his last chapel message. This would be his last opportunity to challenge the student body to follow God into a miracle in their everyday lives.

Chuck picked up his Bible for his regular devotions. He opened it to read in the Book of Ezra. In the seventh chapter, he found these words: "And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily" (v. 21). Beyond the river!

That was it! He was to go to the most incredible place of all for a miracle: "beyond the river" -- to the student body.

He read on: "Unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred measures of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing how much" (v. 22).

Could he -- should he dare to ask college students to give \$100 each to their school? He had been a college student; he knew how difficult it would be to obtain \$100. But still Chuck bowed his head. "Lord, I have to have a real, definite, personal sign."

Then the telephone rang.

It was Dave Miller, president-elect of the Associated Men Students. "Chuck," he said, "I wish you could do something in chapel -- say something -- so that we could all get together and do something for our college. Do you think you could?"

A joyous peace flooded the heart of the evangelist. "Yes, Dave," he said. "I will."

Within an hour Chuck was on campus. He told no one of his plan. He asked President Cantrell for a few moments in the preliminary part of the service. Briefly he uttered his challenge.

"You students are the ones who are most affected by this college. I believe you are here because you want a Christian education above all else. I challenge you to get involved financially in a miracle offering. There are about 1,500 of you here. I'm asking if a thousand of you will commit yourselves to give, to raise, to earn \$100 apiece during the next 80 days and give it to the college."

Then he asked them all to bow their heads for 60 seconds of meditation and prayer.

Thoughts raced madly through their heads. One coed later put hers on paper as follows: "\$100,000! That's a lot of money for anybody! But college kids -- there's no way! Oh, it sounds great! Chuck Millhuff can make anything sound great -- the huskiness of his voice, the excitement that fills every part of him, the dark eyes that search and probe so deeply -- but even from Chuck it sounds impossible -- no one will stand up -- well, maybe me . . ." The evangelist spoke.

"Time is up. All who will try to raise \$100 for a love gift to the college in the next 30 days, stand to your feet."

For a moment no one stirred. And then the student body stood -- almost en masse. Brown-haired Judy was crying. You know you aren't supposed to cry in chapel! she scolded herself. But as she reached for a handkerchief, she saw that the whole student body was crying. They had been given a challenge to follow God beyond the altar into their everyday lives -- opening themselves for a miracle. Their response brought tears, jubilation, faith.

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02 -- THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MIRACLE

They rose en masse; they pledged en masse; they went forth to find a miracle one by one. The commitment, the search, and the fulfillment had to be personal.

Some Faced A Red Sea

Don

My world caved in the night of my high school baccalaureate.

My father is a minister. He preached the baccalaureate sermon for the service, which was held in our church. I was thrilled, proud, determined to follow my father's call to go forth to serve, My heart was a flaming altar for a just, good God.

The service ended. I walked back to the platform after the recessional to talk with my father, whom I admire as a saint of God. A church board member joined us. Ignoring my presence, he said, "You are nothing but a hypocritical bag of wind. To call you a minister is to defy everything holy. I will do all in my power to see you ousted from the pulpit forever."

It was the inexcusable outcry of one man against a man ordained of God. I was certain that God would lift up His arm to destroy this miserable creature and that His wrath would come down upon him with the speed of lightning. But nothing happened. In the paralyzing silence, the God of my childhood seemed to gather himself up sadly from the dirt into which He had been thrown and limp away -- beaten.

My father put his hand on my shoulder. "We will pray about this," he said.

And we prayed, oh, how we prayed, through the weeks that followed. We prayed with pain and sorrow, but God did not answer.

There were wild accusations made, long emotional meetings. I hated these people who were tearing at my father the way a dog tears at a piece of meat. My anger grew until it splashed over to encompass God. Where was He? Why did He not make His presence known? Or was He indifferent to our needs -- a lofty God in isolation who did not care for His children?

And since there was no answer, my heart left its love for God and I walked alone.

But my father continued his loving ministry to the people. I watched him carefully and decided that he was like Job, singing praises to the Lord unendingly, no matter what. I did not have Job's faith, but he, like Job, prayed with tender obedience. I did not pray at all.

Fall came and he wanted me to come to BNC. Because I did not want to hurt him, I came. But I was lonely. I had given up the love that had embraced me and college was no substitute.

Just before Christmastime, things came to a final crisis in the church and my father resigned. I was frozen with bitterness and hatred toward those who could not love this wise, gentle man who talked to them of God. And my bitterness and hatred encompassed God himself, who seemed to have stood by unmoved. He had all power, but He stood idly by and let evil run rampant. Suddenly I saw my father beside the myriad of other Christian martyrs. And I saw God -- laughing!

God could not be evil. If all this could happen and go unpunished, there simply was no God. And with this new, bitter knowledge, terror seized me. And something within me died.

I walked about the campus, living, yet dead inside. And nobody seemed to notice.

Then Chuck came. And his keen eyes seemed to notice.

In the midst of the whole congregation, he searched me out. "Come and pray," he said in his invitations. Pray! I scoffed to myself, to whom?

Friday morning came. I liked this young evangelist. He was a little like my father. Like Job.

"Will you give \$100 to your school? he asked. "God will help you."

"Who would help?" I chuckled to myself at his foolish statement. But somehow, his childlike faith touched me. Why had mine been destroyed? I suddenly felt agonizing pain and longing for the things that were and would not be again.

I stood to my feet because everyone else seemed to. I really didn't mind giving \$100 to the college. I had my income tax refund coming in, and although I could use it for something else, I would give it to the college.

Things seemed different after that service. It wasn't me. It was everyone else on campus. Sluggish steps now had a spring in them; downcast eyes now looked directly; indifferent faces now radiated a joy; critical remarks were displaced by talk of miracles. I couldn't get over it. The student body was a cohesive group working together for -- Someone? It surely wasn't just the institution. No, it went deeper than that. These were my peers -- and they were enthusiastically, joyfully, zestfully working for God.

That truth began to get to me in all realms of my being.

Without my awareness, some of the ice was beginning to melt around my heart.

I don't really know how I consciously allowed myself to go inside the prayer chapel that day. I had never been inside before. But I did go inside and sat on the back pew.

A red-haired girl was kneeling at the altar in front. She was crying. Unashamedly I listened to her prayer. It went something like this:

"Give me strength, O Lord, to accept my place in Your world. I am not Your only child. May I not rebel against sorrow, pain, and burdens that come into my life as You work with Your other children."

I leaned forward and put my head on the seat in front of me. Could this be my answer? God had not failed me -- hidden himself from me. He was not my private God. I had no special rights. He would not cut off some men because they erred against me. He lovingly worked in all of us to free us from selfishness, greed, and over-importance of individuals. He loved those who hated my father -- just as He loved my father and me. His love encompassed us all.

Right there I opened my heart to God once more and asked for His forgiving grace. Suddenly there was peace within. And I wept. Not from bitterness as before, but because the ring of steel around my heart was broken. I was finally free from hatred and doubt. And the music sang in my heart:

The flame shall not hurt thee.
I only design
Thy dross to consume,
And thy gold to refine.

The world was dipped in sunshine when I walked out of the prayer chapel. I had found God again.

Chuck challenged us to find a miracle. I did that day in the chapel. I will never be the same again.

Don faced an ocean of frustration where there was seemingly no way through. Disbelief and hatred hounded him on chariot wheels. And then -- the waters of his "Red Sea" parted and he walked through on dry land. Preposterous? No. A miracle.

Julie

My face is a sullen face. The features beneath my dark, straight bangs are expressionless. My lips turn down slightly at the corners.

In my community, a steely, unreceptive stare, and a tightly shut mouth are necessary defense mechanisms. Nobody where I live has much of this world's goods, so some people just take things they want from the innocent and unsuspecting.

A Nazarene minister found me in a group of other unloved, unkempt kids. He began taking us to his church when I was 11. When I graduated from high school, he called me into his office. He told me that he felt there were warmth and friendliness behind my sullen expression -- and he wanted me to learn to share those deeper feelings with strangers in the privileged, outer world. He said that he was sure there was intelligence inside my head that could give me a position in another world. He gave me a scholarship from the church which insured all my expenses at a place called Bethany Nazarene College.

I looked at him through misted eyes and said: "Thank you." That was all.

The first year proved that my intelligence was at least normal. My grades were above average. But aside from the academic, the minister's belief in me found

no basis on which to grow. I made no friends. I moved about in an isolated, lonely world. It wasn't that I wanted to; I just couldn't help it.

Refusing to admit defeat, my minister again had the church assume my financial responsibilities and he sent me back to BNC for my sophomore year. The results were the same until one Friday morning in chapel when a young evangelist challenged me to find a miracle.

Silently, I pondered his question. Silently, I stood with my peers in response. Silently, I walked out of chapel and went to my room.

I flung my books on a chair and threw myself on the bed. "God," I whispered, "did You see me pledge \$100? How can I pay it?"

The answer seemed prompt and definite. "Through a college friend."

I was aghast. "I have no college friend," I whispered fiercely. "You know that!" But the answer had been given; there was no further word.

All day long I agonized over my answer. Somehow I must find a college friend. But how? I had not made a college friend in almost two years.

I went to the library that night after the service. I habitually headed for a table where no one was sitting. Then I stopped.

I had promised to find \$100. God had said it would be through a college friend. I couldn't make a friend that way. I would have to try breaking out of myself.

Swallowing hard, I walked toward a girl with long black hair. I hesitated. "Please," I began, "may I sit here?"

The black-haired girl looked up. I nearly fainted. I had spoken to the attractive daughter of one of the general church leaders. But before I could sink through the floor, Gayla flashed a bright smile and welcomed me.

I quickly grabbed a book and buried my face in it. My body was trembling all over. To speak to anyone was frightening; to speak to someone so highly admired on the campus was shattering.

But this was the beginning. In the next few days, I forced myself to try the traditional BNC "Hi!" to everyone I met. Words can't describe the anguish involved in such a move. But people responded to me. They walked to class with me, ate with me, even asked me to go with them to get a Coke.

I didn't say a lot to them -- but I tried. And I didn't walk alone so much.

The night before the money was due, I cried all night. I had tried desperately to do my part in what I believed to be God's answer for my \$100. But there was still no money. Obviously, I just wasn't good enough to make that kind of college friend!

The next morning I dressed with the slow, fumbling movements of failure. Heavyhearted, I stepped out into the hall. With a laugh and a swoop, a joyful girl grabbed me, "Julie, I've got a surprise for you. My grandmother just sent me my new pair of glasses -- and on the case she clipped \$200 for the miracle. She told me to give half of it to a friend. Here!"

I looked at the money in her outstretched hand. My tears were spilling down my cheeks.

"I'm that kind of friend?" I asked finally.

Her arms went about me. "Of course you're that kind of friend."

That young girl had faced an ocean of shyness and habitual restraint and there seemed no way through. Fear and an unhappy background hounded her on chariot wheels. And then -- the waters of her "Red Sea" parted and she walked through on dry land. Preposterous? no. A miracle.

Rick

Chuck challenged us to a miracle on Friday morning. My grandmother died on Friday night.

For 20 years I have gone to church, Sunday school, read my Bible, prayed. I was converted when I was a kid; sanctified at youth camp. But there was nothing solid in my experience. Nothing to which I could hold in a storm.

When Dad called me that Friday to tell me that they had taken my grandmother to the hospital, he said: "There's nothing to worry about."

So I went on to my classes and labs. After supper I went to the hospital. When I got there, my mother was sobbing. My dad told me that Grandma's condition had changed. She could not live.

I didn't cry. I showed no emotion. After a while I went out of the hospital and stood looking up at the windows, trying to figure out which one was Grandma's. When I had located it, I stood staring, remembering the times we had fished together, the warm cherry pies from her oven, the quiet sharing relationship we had known.

As I looked up at the window I suddenly realized that I would never again see her flashing smile, enjoy her quick wit, feel the warmth of her love.

This was my first introduction to deep sorrow and the transitory nature of life. I felt overwhelmed by the fact that in the heat of this painful crisis I had no stable sense of strong, secure, unshakable values to which I could hold. I felt I had been betrayed by all the talk about love and peace. How did that fit into death?

Grandma was going to die. I would never see her again -- and the pain of it sent tears flooding down my cheeks. Suddenly I knew I had to speak to her! I had to try to talk to her one more time.

"Grandma," I said aloud in a shaky voice, "Grandma, please don't die."

In that moment I felt something come over me that I cannot explain. It seemed suddenly that Grandma had replied to me. She replied, not in a way that can be heard nor even known for sure, yet I know she said: "It's all right, Rick. My life goes on."

I stopped crying. Grandma's life would go on -- what was the word? Immortality? I had heard about it . . . It just never meant anything before. Christ had promised that, hadn't He? Preachers talked about it at Easter. Now Grandma was going to try it. Immortality.

I walked back into the hospital and up to the waiting room. And with me walked the certainty that death, when it came, would not be the end. Grandma's life would go on. Forever.

She died within the hour.

The next morning my grandpa pulled the china sugar bowl from the cupboard. He put it in front of me on the table.

"Rick," he said, "your grandmother saved her grocery money leftovers in here. Whenever she knew of a worthy cause, this is where she found money for it. Now that she's gone, I'll let you choose the last worthy cause."

With trembling fingers I counted out the dollars, quarters, and dimes. It came to exactly \$93.97. I pulled six dollars and three pennies from my pocket. Here was my miracle \$100. My grandma's last gift! What was it she had said? "My life goes on."

And I knew it would -- through this money to the college -- through the faith she had given us all -- through the certainty of immortality she had given to me. And I also knew her life was going on in another, better world. I would see her again. There was no doubt.

Despite the sadness of my personal loss, those weeks we were collecting our money for the college were surely the most transforming in my life. For suddenly God was more than an abstraction. He was real, personal, strong. And He filled my world.

When sadness overwhelmed me, and I found it impossible to cope with it, I would run to the prayer chapel and turn the whole thing over to God. I could actually feel His presence sustaining and strengthening. It was so real that I knew it would hold me for all of life.

Rick faced an ocean of sorrow and there seemed no way through. Pain and loss hounded him on chariot wheels. And then -- the waters of his "Red Sea" parted and he walked through on dry land.

Preposterous? No.

A miracle.

John

I felt that everybody I knew had let me down.

My parents' lives were purposeless. The educational system seemed to me to disregard wisdom in its efforts to give me knowledge. The big churches were so wrapped up in building high-powered ecclesiastical machinery that the soul was forgotten. The social system was so concerned with protocol that the individual was ignored.

This wasn't just my appraisal. Thousands of other kids my age across the country felt the same way. Even my favorite pop singer, aged 21, when asked in a television interview to give a prescription for happiness, replied: "Mister, I'm not happy. I'm lonely."

I came to BNC because my parents insisted. I attended chapel during the spring revival because I didn't care to pay the fines. I had sat through a thousand services in my life; I knew all the ropes, and I sat through that week unimpressed.

But Friday morning the evangelist pulled a new one.

He asked the students to become involved in a tangible cause that would affect their lives and their closely guarded pocketbooks. Involved because they believed in something. Involved because they wanted to help.

I didn't stand. I wasn't about to respond to what I considered a gimmick. But I watched. Carefully.

Previously the most visible response to revivals by collegians came under the impact of the meetings themselves. After the last "Amen," their determination to serve, to live for Christ, to change the world seemed to degenerate rapidly back into the norm. I wondered if it would be any different this time. It was.

There seemed to be an all-enveloping love for the school. I would make sarcastic, critical comments that had brought laughter and agreement before -- now I received only raised eyebrows, silence, or quick condemnation. The majority of the students had finally found the call of a cause big enough -- noble enough -- to challenge their idealism to action beyond the altar.

Love for the college permeated all of life and colored interpersonal relationships. People were friendlier. I, the perennial rebel, felt more acceptance, more concern, more love than in all of my other college years put together. And slowly, like the warmth of the sun creeping over the windowsill in early morning, I began to want to be a part.

Angrily, I decided to settle the issue. I went to the bank and withdrew my entire savings account. I had only \$102. Surely this would dissolve the knot in my stomach that had developed because I was an outsider looking on at a family working together.

But it didn't. It made things worse. Giving my savings to the college affected me more deeply than I had anticipated. Suddenly there seemed an imperative within me for total honesty.

Finally I drove out to the lake near the college. I got out of the car to walk. It was a windy day and my pants crackled about my legs like windy sails.

Okay, I said to myself, let's face up. Honestly. Real honestly. First -- are you at BNC only because your parents sent you -- like you always say? Well -- Honest now.

Well, no. I feel the same uncertainties and frustrations as the most militant of my generation on other campuses -- but I cannot believe that violence holds any answers.

And so I come to this campus trying to find other answers. And refusing to believe them when they come? No -- it's just that-Honest now.

I threw myself down on the ground. There's no way I can know truth even if confronted with it. Is the universe infinite? If not, what exists beyond it? What existed before it began? If it is eternal and limitless, is there a Creator? If so, why did He create man?

St. Augustine said: "Thou hast made us for thyself, O God."

My lips tasted salt as I whispered: "And our souls are restless until they rest in thee."

Forgetting the intellectual exercises, pushing aside self-argument, I lay prostrate at His feet in humility and penitence. "Father, let me rest in Thee."

He faced an ocean of discontent and there seemed no way through. Hypocrisies and questions hounded him on chariot wheels. And then -- the waters of his "Red Sea" parted and he walked through on dry land. Preposterous? No. A miracle.

Joyce

Christmas came this year under loopings of bright tinsel. Laughter abounded under wax candlelight. Music sparkled under red-berried holly. As an adopted, only child, the whole world revolved around me. What could be gayer?

But somehow there was an alien point of tension. I couldn't find it. I couldn't touch it. But I could sense it standing ominously in the shadows.

The first week I was back at college after the holidays, my parents wrote to tell me why they had made so much of Christmas. It was to be our last Christmas together as a family. They were planning an immediate divorce.

Divorce! The letters wiggled like snakes in front of my eyes. And before I could say, "Stop!" the world as I knew it slipped away, down the bordered sidewalk, up above the streetlights, and on and on into the night without a last good-bye.

I cried for days. I had long, pleading conversations with both Mother and Daddy on the phone, all to no avail. They simply proceeded with their divorce plans.

I began cutting classes. I pulled away from my friends. I just gave up on everything. I had tried so hard to be a good daughter to them -- had been so grateful that they were allowing me the privilege of having parents like everyone else -- that I felt betrayed . . . resentful . . . crushed.

Then one morning in chapel Chuck said harshly: "Quit feeling sorry for yourself. Grow up!"

My teeth clenched in anger. I raged in my seat. What right had he to talk to a group of students like that? He didn't know about me -- how betrayed I had been.

But self-comfort did not warm me much.

The morning that he challenged us to give to the college -- to get involved in something bigger than ourselves -- I promised along with everyone else. But my promise was much deeper than finding \$100. My promise included my final answer to his first challenge. I was going to quit feeling sorry for myself. With God's help, I was going to try to grow up.

My parents had both written to me faithfully since the divorce announcement. I had returned all of their letters unopened. They had hurt me; I wanted to hurt them. That was wrong.

That Friday night I locked the door to my room. I got out my recorder, inserted a cassette, and began a tape to my father. I told him of my bitterness, my feeling of rejection, my self-pity. Then I told him about Chuck's challenges -- both the first and the second -- and of my determination to answer both.

"Daddy," I said, "I am going to rid myself of self-pity. I am going to try to accept the situation and respect your feelings. With God's help, I am going to grow up.

"I pledged to give \$100 in four weeks. I can take \$10.00 from my allowance each week, which will give me \$40.00. If you and Mother will split the remaining \$60.00, with your help I can give \$100 to the college I love." I sent an identical tape to Mother.

My parents both called me the day they received the tapes. Tearfully, they thanked me for the first pledge. Both promised to send me money which would overpay the second pledge.

My parents are still going ahead with their plans for a divorce. My miracle did not include their reconciliation. But it did include my renewed faith in God, which demanded I come out of myself and live in love for others.

She faced an ocean of personal tragedy where there seemed no way through. Rejection and self-pity hounded her on chariot wheels. And then -- the waters of her "Red Sea" parted and she walked through on dry land. Preposterous? No. A miracle.

Kathy

My miracle is strange, I guess I learned the truth about fairy tales.

Once, when I was seven, I prayed for God to help me find money to buy a birthday present for my mother. In return I promised to be "as good as good can be." On the way home from school that day I found 50 cents.

That was enough "proof" for me to believe in miracles forever. The only prerequisite is to be "as good as good can be."

That seemed to me to be acceptable theology, but it ultimately brought me the biggest problem of my life. For when Chuck challenged us to find a miracle, I promised to meet it with the childish belief of a seven-year-old.

A few times in the years between seven and 19, I had wondered about tornado victims, car-accident victims, etc. Did my theology assume that these people had not been "as good as good can be"? If they had, wouldn't they have been saved by a miracle? But always I would push such thoughts away because everything seemed to work out for me.

So I accepted Chuck's challenge with delight. I would simply place my order.

The first thing I did was to ask God to help me to find the money (as He did for my mother's birthday present) and in return I promised to be "as good as good can be" (as I had at age seven). Then I wrote my parents.

When I received their return letter, I was jubilant. As I began to open the envelope, I thought, Now I can tell all my friends that within six days my faith had been fulfilled. But when I took out the letter, there was no check. Instead, my parents told me that, because of some business losses, there simply was no extra money. In addition to that bit of news, they told me that they were having to cut my allowance from \$15.00 a week to \$5.00. They knew this would be hard for me, but at least it would keep me in toothpaste and hair spray if I were careful.

I was stunned. Why -- God couldn't let them do this to me! I had promised to be "as good as good can be." He had always given me a miracle in return. Why not now?

And then the light dawned. God wanted to give me a more extraordinary miracle than simply having my parents answer my request. Of course!

My drooping faith perked up and I told all my friends about how my faith was holding in the face of this disappointment. They were impressed and dutifully admired me, so that I enjoyed waiting for a miracle even more than before.

Clocks steadily tick-tocked and the pages of the calendar flipped. Nothing happened. My prayers grew longer and more frantic. I promised to be good over and over and tried to believe that somehow my \$100 would fall into my lap.

Two weeks went by. Now I lay awake at night, my stomach knotted with tension, my mind searching for an answer: "Why, God? Why don't I deserve a miracle? I have been 'as good as good can be'!"

The third week came. Finally I faced the truth. My theology was shattered.

I cut a literature class, went to my room, lay on my bed, and cried as if my whole world had come to an end. In a way it had. I no longer had the formula to believe in miracles.

When the tears had drained my pent-up frustration, I lay still on the bed and tried a new kind of prayer: "Please, God, help me to accept life as it is. Help me to learn not to expect from You what I can do for myself."

I knew, of course, what I had to do. I called my uncle who had offered me a job on afternoons and Saturdays. I had not wanted to take it because of my college activities. But if I wanted to give \$100, it was up to me. I took the job. I gave \$100 to BNC and I worked for every penny of it.

I entered this miracle search believing that a check from home would provide my answer. That was denied me. Then I returned to my "found money" solution from childhood. That, too, was denied me. Ultimately I discovered that my miracle was totally different from having money handed to me. My miracle involved learning that God will not do for me what I can do for myself. When I held the broken pieces of my fairy-tale theology in my hands, I came to understand that God gave the opportunity -- and the strength -- for me to create a miracle with Him. And perhaps that is a greater miracle than "found money" after all.

She faced an ocean of disillusionment where there was no way through. Bewilderment and dismay hounded her on chariot wheels. And then -- the waters of her "Red Sea" parted and she walked through on dry land. Preposterous? No. A miracle.

Some Faced A Den Of Lions

Tom

My family are super-straight Nazarenes. I can quote all 66 books of the Bible in order. I can quote the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Matthew letter-perfect. I have attended Sunday school every Sunday of my life, prayer meeting every Wednesday, and four high school youth camps.

I came to BNC as all good super-straight Nazarene boys on this zone do. But I wanted more. I wanted to explore the world beyond the Nazarene fences.

So instead of making close friends on campus, I met some guys in a motorcycle club and they became my special pals. They, in turn, introduced me into the world of drugs.

I still went to church on Sundays, prayer meetings on Wednesdays, even prayer and fasting meetings on Fridays occasionally. And when I would feel pangs about my outside friends and the drug scene, I would console myself with the idea that I was placing myself in a position to witness to people who really needed God. Was I a dope!

I came back to school early for the second semester. I stayed with some of my gang. That's when I had my first trip. I really got stoned. But after that I went a long way down. I felt like my mind had really been blown.

But that didn't stop me. I tried some other drugs, heavier stuff, and at times I felt I had found reality. I could simply lie back and revel in peace.

But it always came to an end. And back in the world again, I knew this was not the way.

Chuck came to the campus and I attended every service. He mixed me up with his hard-hitting, no-nonsense approach. I wished I could think more clearly, but I was never sure how true my thoughts were. I wanted to talk to Chuck alone, but I could imagine what his reaction would be. He would have no pity. He would demand that I rise and be a man. I didn't know how.

Do you know what it's like to despise yourself? It's a black, fevered cloud that threatens suffocation. The yellow streaks of light that slit the cloud appear like tawny tigers in the sky that stare through amber eyes, just waiting to pounce upon your gasping, raspy breaths.

One night I got down the Bible. Although I was familiar with the Book, it had somehow bored me. I had memorized much of it obediently -- but mentally I had hung up long ago.

I turned to Phil. 4:7 and read about the peace of God. Peace was what I had sought in my drug trips -- and had found it in a way for moments at a time. But it was never lasting; it was never real.

I had tried Chuck's way too. I had gone through all the forms -- and had found peace for moments in great services. But it was never lasting or real either.

When Chuck gave the challenge to search for a miracle, to involve ourselves in saving our college, I stood with the rest of my classmates. Of course I would. I always did what everybody else did!

I was planning to buy a car. I would simply borrow \$100 more than I had planned. No big deal.

That weekend I got stoned again. Man, it was a bummer -- I didn't know where I was, who I was, if I was. I really freaked out.

But I ended up straight and realized all over again that drugs were not the answer. But what? Where?

One night I quit studying early and went out for a Coke. I sat down at a table with a group of kids. The talk was about the miracle, as all talk on campus was those days.

Somewhere in the course of the conversation, I said: "It really would be neat if we got the money."

A girl sitting on my left whirled to look at me with grave, solemn eyes: "What do you mean, if we get the money? We have asked God for a miracle and we are believing He will answer. You should say, when we get the money."

I corrected my sentence and the conversation moved on. But I couldn't get away from the earnestness in her voice, in her face. She believed. It wasn't taking a dare, gambling on a "maybe so." This was taking God at His word that "whatsoever ye shall ask in my name . . ."

Could my answers come in simply believing? No holds barred? Asserting faith in God's Word? This rosy-cheeked freshman girl obviously believed like that for \$100,000. Would it work the same if I believed like that for peace?

When the group at the table broke up, I walked to the campus mall and stood looking at the sculptured Lamp of Learning. I remembered a verse where God said: "Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest."

I ran my fingers through my hair. I've known those words as long as I can remember. But I never really believed them.

I thought of my moments with drugs. I knew that I was being drawn in deeper and deeper. The specter of withdrawal haunted me.

"It will be horrible," I cautioned myself.

I had mouthed words about God, love, and peace all my life. But they were just that -- mere mouthings.

The whisper slipped softly from my lips: "Until now." There was no blinding light, no trumpet blasts, no skywriting. But deep inside, I felt the birth of peace as I turned my life over to God and asked His forgiveness.

He stood with his hands tied, in the midst of ravening beasts with no means of escape. But when he put his trust in God, he found the lions' mouths tightly shut and he knew sweet peace and rest. Absurd? No. A miracle.

Ann

Rheumatoid arthritis.

Those words should have little meaning for a 21-year-old college senior. But those two words were hurled into my glass house on the nineteenth of October, 1970. They shattered my world into a million bits.

I cried; I raged; I screamed. I battered my fists against those words until my knuckles bled. But the fact remained immovable in the middle of my plans: I was facing a lifetime with this disease as a companion.

And so I decided to show God that, if He could hurt me, I could lash back! And I did.

My first step, of course, was to stop studying and watch my grades plunge. I took real satisfaction in observing the frustration of my professors, who tried to figure out what was happening to my lovely grade-point average.

My next step was to slide socially. I quit dating the boy who had been my "steady" for six months and went to a drive-in one night determined to be a pickup. I was quickly successful and soon found myself in a parked car at the lake. Again I took real satisfaction in observing the frustration of my friends, who could not understand what was happening to my innocent young life!

How was I able to stay in school? Because I have a high enough IQ to pull C's without studying. So I saw no reason to fight with my parents about quitting. This way they didn't know that anything was wrong. And then Chuck came.

One morning he talked about "delayed gratification." He said that, if we were at one point in life and we wanted to get to another, we had to pay the price to get there, regardless of how high that price might be.

He talked about professions. I knew that my real desire had always been to teach piano. I would be able to do this even when crippled. But I had chosen another degree because I didn't want to struggle with learning music theory. It was too late to change the degree program I was on, but I could go for another one afterward.

If I wanted to get from here to there, it would mean a price. But I could support myself even in a wheelchair.

Then he talked about love. He said that, if one wanted true, lasting love (which, of course, was my greatest desire), there was a price to be paid.

It was here that I dissolved in tears. I had already refused to pay the price. I could always come back to school for another degree, but I could never regain what I had lost in a parked car at the lake.

The rage, the hurt, the hopelessness engulfed me again. That night I did not go to church. I went to the lake with a boy.

I wasn't in chapel the day Chuck gave the challenge to find a miracle. But I heard about it.

Did I ever! That is all anyone would talk about. The entire campus was full of it -- and changed by it. I have never, in four years, seen so much joy, excitement, faith. How I envied them all!

I have this professor who has always been a problem to me. She can look right at me -- and through me. She somehow could sense what was going on inside. Since October, I had tried to avoid her whenever I could. But one day I had to talk to her about an "Incomplete" I had to make up for graduation.

When I got to her office, another student was sharing something about the miracle. When my turn came, she looked at me in that direct way of hers and said: "Ann, how is your miracle?"

I mumbled something and changed the subject, to my grade. She went along with me, but I could read concern in her eyes.

I turned to go from her office and stopped at the door. Somehow I just couldn't move. There were long moments that I stood there. Neither of us said a word.

Then I turned, sat down in the chair across from her desk, and began to cry in great, heaving sobs. She came and knelt in front of me and put her arms about me. She never said a Word. She just held me like a mother holds a dearly loved child.

When the tears slowed, I said: "I've already told you about my problem."

"You told me about rheumatoid arthritis," she said gently, "but that isn't your real problem."

"Well -- do tell me!" I said with sudden sarcasm.

"Your choice," she answered.

"Your reaction."

"Choice?"

"You have a choice, you know. You can rebel, fight. You can stoically endure. Or -- you can accept."

We talked for a long time about the road of accepting the fact of this grim disease in my life. It was a possibility I had not explored.

When I left her office, I went to the prayer chapel and sat alone. Rheumatoid arthritis was not my choice. But God's permissive will had allowed it to come into my life. I could accept that as a fact -- and move on from there, believing that He would walk with me even though my steps were painful and slow.

Difficult? It was hideously difficult.

But before I left the chapel that day I had given my life back to God. If arthritis were my lot, I would learn to live with it.

I plan to graduate with my class. Then I will begin preparation for a degree in music. I will pay the price of studying the hated theory to get from here, as a student, to there, the role of piano teacher, which is my ultimate goal.

I have dropped my new "friends." I will never again go to the lake for a parking session. Perhaps if I can prove myself worthy, I will someday get from here, as an undated student, to there, the role of a loving, faithful wife.

Since that day in the prayer chapel, the pain has been infrequent. Only rarely do I have trouble keeping up with the bounding steps of my friends. Whether this means that God is reducing the disease and will ultimately heal me completely, I do not know. But whatever comes, my prayer is, with that of St. Augustine: "O Lord, grant me the strength to change things that need changing, the courage to accept things that cannot be changed, and the wisdom to know the difference."

And in gratitude for a college where students may be confronted with God and counseled by wise ministers, I took my stereo to a hock shop. I got \$83.00 for it. My aunt sent me \$10.00. My grandmother sent me \$5.00. My little brother sent me his weekly allowance of \$2.00. This was my gift to the college -- in gratitude.

She stood, with her hands tied, in the midst of ravening beasts of pain and hopelessness with no apparent means of escape. But when she put her trust in

God, she found the lions' mouths tightly shut and she knew deep peace and quietness.

Absurd? No.

A miracle.

Bob

"One can't believe impossible things," said Alice to the Queen, in Lewis Carroll's beloved story.

"I dare say you haven't had much practice," reproved the Queen. "When I was your age, I always did it for half an hour a day. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."

Moments of illumination come rarely to cynics, more rarely still to imitators, those sad folks who pick up other people's values instead of establishing their own. Perhaps it is a law of life that, as the great Sir William Osler said, "he who follows another sees nothing, learns nothing, nay, seeks nothing." Nor can we expect such moments when we are trying to think what someone else would like us to do.

I learned this truth when Chuck challenged us to find a miracle. I knew that my parents would not believe such a thing possible -- students raising \$100,000. And they certainly would not believe it wise for me, a newly married student, to give \$100 to such a cause. But because I wanted to believe in miracles, because I wanted to break out of the role of the imitator, I stood to my feet that day in chapel.

It was just as I expected. My parents were appalled. And to express their disapproval, they told me that they would withdraw their support until I came to my senses.

I had expected them to be upset with me. I had not expected them to be this upset.

I had a job, but it would barely cover rent, furniture, and car payments. We were dependent on my parents for food and clothing.

My wife, Becky, and I talked it over and decided to believe God for impossible things. I had done what I felt was His will for me in that moment. I was grateful to the school and wanted to help. I could not be limited in doing God's will because of parental disapproval.

I began looking for a better paying job. I had interviews for several. No offers were extended.

Mother called at the end of the first week. "Are you ready to give up your foolish pledge?" she asked. I told her no.

By the end of the second week, I was tiring of meat loaf and potatoes. Mother called and asked me if I were ready to recant. I assured her that I was not.

At the end of the third week, a minister called. His church had finished screening candidates and had selected me for the position of minister of education and music. The salary he offered would be \$100 a month more than my present salary plus my parent's contribution.

Did I pay my pledge? I surely did. The money is a miracle; the job is a miracle; the ability to stand alone is a miracle.

"Fear of other people," wrote Bertrand Russell, "seals up the spontaneous joy of life in a perpetual frost." What will break us free? "A great cause does it," says Rufus Jones, the Quaker leader. "A great faith does it; a great love does it."

This spring I found a cause big enough, a faith strong enough, a love deep enough to reach out of myself to touch that grace beyond the human and allow a lovely miracle to break through.

He stood with his hands tied in the midst of ravening beasts of debt and disapproval with no apparent means of escape. But when he put his trust in God, he found the lions' mouths tightly shut -- and he, too, knew peace and quietness: Absurd? No. A miracle.

Valerie

"What I am is Your gift to me, O Lord.
What I make of myself is my gift to You."

All my life! I have determined that my gift to God would be the best that I could make it. This impetus commanded hours of study, practice, effort to polish the talents God had given me to their highest shine. When Chuck challenged us to find a miracle \$100, I was thrilled. What a beautiful opportunity to offer God my best!

I went through the work I had done in oil-painting class last semester. I selected the four best ones. They were, to me, beautiful. I felt pangs at the thought of letting them go out of my life. But then I smiled. I wanted to give them to God. They were my best.

With trembling fingers I slipped bits of paper onto the frames. I wrote, "\$25.00," on each. I stepped back and looked at them for a long moment. Then I proudly carried them to the dormitory parlor to be picked up for the garage sale.

As the days went by, my heart tingled at the thought of someone seeing my paintings, recognizing how good they were, and carefully taking them home to cherish. Surely they would understand, at the same time, that the money they paid would be my gift to God.

The garage sale came and went. It was several days before I heard from my paintings.

I was sitting outside the door of my fiancé's speech class when a friend came and sat down beside me.

"Waiting for Larry?"

"Uh huh. Say -- do you know about my paintings at the garage sale?"

"Did they all sell?"

"Well," she said slowly, "they were auctioned off at the end. The cat went for \$1.50 and the man for \$1.00. I don't know what happened to the other two."

"One dollar!" I jumped to my feet. For a moment, I stood as motionless as Lot's wife, feeling suffocated. I wanted to run and bury myself somewhere. \$1.00! Every drop of blood in my body seemed to be on fire. My heart pounded like a thousand waves of the sea. "Valerie . . ."

But I couldn't stand there a moment longer. Running like a hunted hare, I fled downstairs. Finally Larry found me and I ran into his arms.

"They were my best," I sobbed. "My very best!" He tried his best to console me. Pain filled his eyes too. "Dear Lord," I prayed against Larry's chest, "dear Lord, my best wasn't good enough! Oh! But I wanted it to be -- for You."

Then somehow in that moment, I knew that my paintings had been good enough for Him. He looked at the effort, the motive, the love. To God, it was not just a college sophomore's artwork. It was her finest gift. He accepted it with joy.

I can't tell you how I knew those things. Nothing extraordinary happened. It was, instead, a very familiar "still small voice" inside that whispered love.

The miracle of the Christian faith does not always lie in its theological validity, tremendously important though that may be, nor in its vast constituencies and institutional thrust. It lies also in the Spirit's power to create an inner peace -- even joy -- to override human agony. Long-ago reformers who faced the Herculean task of restoring a people's broken-down faith and rebuilding their broken-down world said, "The joy of the Lord is your strength" (Neh. 8:10). In the twentieth

century, a dark-haired girl with broken-down dreams found that same source of strength.

The rest of my money came from Larry's church. I was able to join with my fellow students in creating a miracle for my college. But the greatest miracle for me was the one that happened in my heart: joy triumphed over pain; God's love understood and accepted my best.

She stood, with her hands tied, in the midst of the ravening beasts of disappointment and agony with no apparent means of escape. But when she put her trust in God, she found the-lions' mouths tightly shut -- and she knew sweet peace and quietness. Absurd? No. A miracle.

Sue

My husband was called to preach the night after our son was born. Instead of coming to see me in the hospital, he had chosen to go to church. That stung me. But when he came the next morning to tell me he had answered the call to preach, I was even more disturbed. When he brought me home from the hospital and announced that he was going to quit his job so he could go to BNC to prepare for the ministry, I became intensely bitter.

I said not a word. My mother had carefully trained me that the man was the head of the house. The wife obeyed. That was that.

I practiced this theory faithfully. But inside I was seething. When the baby was three months old, we moved out of our lovely house in our home-town. We moved into a tiny apartment in Bethany. Don quit his job as manager of a department in his company. He went to work in a grocery store from 3 to 11. I suggested that I should get a job, but he insisted that I too must go to school.

So the baby stayed at a baby-sitter's while I went to school in the mornings. The baby and I stayed alone while Don worked afternoons and evenings.

Life was made up of the taste of Spanish rice and macaroni and cheese, the feel of hand-me-down clothing, the pungent, acrid smell of the baby's diapers being plunged into the big, gleaming tub at the laundromat, big thick books that I must conquer even though there was no will to study.

I cared nothing about Milton's writings, the study of Western civilization, how to make a persuasive speech according to "Monroe's motivated sequence." I wanted only to be a wife and mother in a house with nice furniture where I could prepare recipes with some meat other than hamburger. That was all I wanted out of life!

The morning that Chuck gave his appeal had been an especially difficult one for me. I had had an exam which had been harder than expected. I was sure I had done poorly. How I longed to throw all the books away! How I dreaded the thought of living in a parsonage! How I wished I had never heard of BNC!

Then Chuck astounded us all with his challenge. But when he gave us 60 seconds to pray, I mouthed my usual petition: "Please let us go back home."

Chuck asked everyone to stand who would try to give \$100 in the next four weeks. To my amazement, most of the student body responded -- including my husband! I couldn't believe it. We were barely eking out an existence. I had no money for pretty furniture, nice clothes, fun recipes. But he was going to give away \$100!

I don't know when I was ever so angry. It took all of my self-control to sit there during the rest of chapel.

When they finally got to the altar call, I walked out the door. To my surprise, Don followed me. I knew he had a class the next hour. He never missed a class. He never misses anything that has to do with the college, I thought bitterly.

He walked with me to the car in silence. When he slid behind the wheel, I spoke for the first time.

"Don't you have a class?"

"Yes, but I'll take you home first."

"Thank you for your kindness," I said sarcastically. He didn't say anything.

I got in the car and he drove me home. Almost before he stopped, I jumped out of the car. But instead of going back to the college he turned off the ignition and followed me into the house.

I slammed my books on the table and whirled on him. "Why don't you go back to class? You know the only important thing in your life can't be ignored!" He just looked at me.

My anger was mounting. "Why don't you leave?" I shouted.

"Because I don't want you to be mad."

I laughed. "You don't want me to be mad! You don't want me to be mad! Oh, how funny! Don't you know that I have been mad for a year?" He looked surprised. "No, have you?"

"Have I? I had your baby. Where did you go? To church. You didn't care about me! I furnished your house carefully. I kept it clean. What did you do? You sold it and told me I had to live in a parsonage.

"I had my family, my friends, my hobbies. What did you say? 'Give them all up. You are going to study Milton and Western civilization.'

"We had a good income. Was that good enough for you? Oh, no! You went to work in a grocery store to pay school bills."

As I stormed I opened the closet door and pulled out my suitcase.

"When all of our friends back home are buying their first Buicks and bricking in a patio, we are driving an old VW and trying to pay tuition!" He sat down heavily. "I didn't know you felt that way." I began to sling clothes into the suitcase. "Of course you didn't know. I haven't said one word through all of this year. I lived in a shabby apartment, cooked hamburger, and studied 'Monroe's motivated sequence' and never said a word. Not until now."

I snapped the suitcase shut. "If you want to give \$100 to BNC, you will give it on your own, because I will not be here. If you want a wife who can recite the merits of. Paradise Lost to live in your parsonage, you will just have to find another."

With that, I grabbed my suitcase and ran to the car. I put the key in the ignition and roared away.

Before I got to the freeway, I saw I needed gas. I pulled into a service station. While he was filling the tank, I went into the green-tiled ladies' room to wash. The face in the mirror was a stranger's face, the eyes puffed, the lips pale, the hair brassy instead of blond under the fluorescent light. What had happened to the fresh-faced girl, so eagerly loving, of just one year ago?

After paying for the gas, I slowly pulled away.

"O God," I cried, "please be with me now."

I thought of what it would be like to be home again. Mother would love me; Daddy, would putter around the room, muttering about Don. The beige and brown living room -- every chair, every picture selected for its beauty-would be a haven. Compared with the cramped, unlovely apartment where Don and I lived, I knew that I should be wildly happy at home. But would I?

"O God," I prayed desperately, "speak to me now." But as I drove along, there was only the sound of the tires whirling on the pavement, the sound of the clock filling up the silence like the beating of a damaged heart.

About five o'clock I stopped for supper. The restaurant was small, quiet, cozy. The woman in the next booth had a baby. I watched her enviously. How happy she seemed; how totally caught up in love! Mothers are always caught up in love, I thought.

Aren't wives supposed to be too?

I swallowed quickly. I almost looked around, although I knew no one was standing there. But the words were so clear, so compelling. "Lord," I whispered, "was that You?"

But I knew the answer. Deep inside I knew the answer.

When I left the restaurant, I turned the car back toward Bethany. It was late when I got home.

Quietly I pushed open the door and entered, careful to avoid the toys on the floor. The lamplight fell upon the soft beauty of the baby's face, and upon the face of the man beside him.

They had fallen asleep on the couch, father and son, the man still fully dressed. The small boy was nestled in the curve of the man's arm, and the two faces, deep in sleep, were so alike that my heart stirred within me like a frozen brook beneath the snow.

I knelt beside them. I picked up the baby's chubby hand and kissed it. Someday, I thought, some woman will have your happiness in the palm of her hand, my son.

I hope she will be more generous than I have been to your father.

Then I kissed Don's hand. "Whither thou goest, I will go," I whispered. "Thy people shall be my people; thy God, my God; thy miracle, my miracle. Happily."

I kissed him again and quietly carried my suitcase into the bedroom to unpack.

She stood with her hands tied in the midst of ravening beasts of self-pity and misunderstanding with seemingly no means of escape. But when she put her trust in God, she found the lions' mouths tightly shut -- and she knew deep peace and quietness. Absurd? No. A miracle.

Some Found Money In A Fish's Mouth

Mark

One hundred dollars! Wow! where would I find \$100?

"But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee" (John 11:22). He had promised. I would believe.

What an exciting experience! This whole year had been fun: president of the freshman class, traveling with the Gospel Team. But participating in a miracle was the best of all!

Wanting to share my joy, I wrote to a friend in my home church. She caught my enthusiasm and decided to share it with the group of junior high Sunday school kids whom she taught.

They caught the challenge and suggested that they participate in the miracle. Long-distance? Why, many of the kids had never even seen BNC. But they wanted to help.

So it was decided.

The city commissioner shook his head at their suggestion. City parks were no place for a car wash.

"But listen," they pleaded, "let us tell you what it is for."

And as he listened, he caught enthusiasm too.

"Well," he said, "it isn't regular, but you can do it this time."

Jubilantly, they headed for the door.

"Hey!" he called. "'I'll pay the water bill."

So 15 kids worked all day Saturday washing cars so they could be a part of a miracle on a campus far away. At the end of the day, they counted their money. They had \$90.00. Determined to meet my pledge, they dipped into their personal savings and came up with the extra \$10.00.

Sleepy-eyed, I stopped for my mail before going to my 7:30 class. There was a small box. Curiously, I opened it.

Inside lay a dirty, car-wash rag. On it was written a scripture verse of faith surrounded by 15 signatures of teens who had found that it worked. Attached to the rag was a check for \$100.

Heart bursting with gratitude and joy and with tears coursing down my cheeks, I ran for class. What a great God! I -- and 15 junior high kids -- were part of a miracle.

When faced with the challenge of helping to save his college campus, Mark asked God for aid and it was supplied. On a dirty, car-wash rag. Unbelievable? No. A miracle.

Greg

This is the semester when I determined to take God at His word. In everything.

I had never before participated in activities on campus. With God's help, I determined to try. I had never believed there was a solution for my problems. With God's help, I determined to find one.

When Chuck came, my faith rose even higher. There was something compelling about him that made me believe that life was full of vitality; through God I could achieve all things.

And then on Friday morning he astonished me -- and everyone else -- by asking each of us to give \$100. I didn't have any money. I was just barely meeting expenses. How could I?

He said something about a miracle.

Could I believe in miracles? Now really -- could I believe in miracles in the twentieth century?

Well -- salvation was a miracle, wasn't it? I had claimed that as my own. Being at BNC with people who cared about me was a miracle, wasn't it? I had found that a reality. Could I not also believe God to help me find \$100? And so I stood.

I had never seen a tangible miracle like the one Chuck proposed. I wanted to see it. I wanted to be a part of it. I felt it would give me a foundation on which I could build the rest of my life. I was serving a God who worked even tangible miracles in the twentieth century. How? I had no idea.

Later in the week, 10 of us guys got together and went down to the blood bank. I was nervous. I had never given blood before. But I had promised to raise \$100. This \$15.00 for my blood would be a beginning.

In spite of the butterfly flutter in my stomach, I went in, lay down, and held out my arm. As I lay there watching my blood flowing, I thanked God for letting me be a part of His plan. As a result of Chuck's challenge, I was giving blood that might

mean life to someone -- I was raising money for a college that would give guidance to youth -- I was building a faith in miracles that would support me for the rest of my life.

My "blood money" was only a part of my \$100. But I earned it all. God gave me a tangible miracle.

When faced with the challenge of helping to save his college campus, Greg asked God for aid and it was supplied. In part, at a blood bank with blood flowing from his own veins.

Unbelievable? No.

A miracle.

Ramona

Shreveport, La. There you find beautiful country. There you find beautiful people.

You think I'm prejudiced? Perhaps I am. But with reason. Let me explain.

Five of us students from Werner Park Church in Shreveport stood in response to Chuck's challenge to find a miracle. Five students pledging \$500 among us. Where would we get it?

We all knew.

We did not have the money, because we are dependent. But the people on whom we are dependent love us and our college. They have the highest educational budget on our district. It is always paid in full. We knew they would help us be a part of a miracle.

I wrote a letter to my father, who is pastor of the church, explaining our challenge. Richard, one of the boys from the church, wrote also.

My father talked to some of the board members. He was as concerned as they about presenting this call for money at this time. The church has only 118 members and they had just given \$1,500 for missions on Easter Sunday. They could not possibly do much for BNC so soon.

But their students had pledged \$500. They wanted to stand by us all the way.

Someone suggested that they take an offering and then add from the treasury all that was needed to make the \$500. It was seconded and approved.

So it was that none of the church leaders had much faith when my letter was read on Sunday morning. But somehow the Lord spoke through my letter. I'm not all that eloquent, so it surely had nothing to do with rhetoric! But those wonderful people, as they listened, heard God speak about a need.

They forgot that they had just given an unusually heavy Easter offering. They forgot that they were under no obligation to give to another offering so soon. They forgot that their college budget was already paid in full. They forgot all that -- and simply opened up to God and said:

"What would You have me do?" And they obeyed.

When the money was counted, there was \$1,500 given for a miracle for BNC. We whooped, cried, laughed, and praised God. What dedicated servants of the Lord those people were!

But we five knew that we couldn't just take the church's offering and stop there. We had to do something ourselves.

I went through my closet and took all of the clothes I felt I could do without and sold them. Larry took the money he had been saving for golf clubs. Richard took one of his car payments and earned the money for the payment later. Gary and Steve also chipped in until we were able to give \$300 personally. So -- our miracle included \$1,800 for our college.

Could we ever doubt now? Hardly.

We have proven that there are no gilt-edged securities issued by any corporation in the United States more sound and certain than the promises of God. What a discovery!

When faced with the challenge of helping to save their college campus, Ramona and four boys asked God for aid and it was supplied. In a check from loved ones. In united personal effort.

Unbelievable? No.

A miracle.

Virginia

"Hey! What do you think about the challenge? Do you think a miracle is possible?"

I looked at Geron across the table. Well, did I?

I had stood to my feet when Chuck gave the challenge. Why? Well -- a little because everyone else stood. A little because I wanted so desperately to see a miracle. A little because I believed it just might be possible.

"Hey, What do you think?"

"I hope . . ." I began. But suddenly my faith took hold with a grip of steel. I was going to believe all the way. "We will make it," I said.

I had committed myself. I believed we would make it to \$100,000. If I believed truly, I had to be sure that I did my part. But how?

Would my church help me?

I knew that Kay had spoken to her church and they had given her \$535. But she was beautiful and winsome. She could charm money out of Scrooge himself. Besides -- her church was on the educational zone. My church was supporting another college. Would they be interested in mine? I had to try.

I wrote my pastor. He read the letter in board meeting. When he finished, one of the ladies was crying.

To the surprised look of the pastor and board, she explained: "The Lord told me to send Virginia \$10.00 just the other day. There seemed to be no reason for such a command. But I knew I was supposed to send her some money." She wiped her eyes. "Now I know what the money is for."

The board members looked at each other. Surely this was the workings of God. They voted unanimously to help. When the appeal was presented to my church, nearly twice the amount of my pledge came in.

I can't tell you how excited I am. I have heard all my life about miracles. But I never saw one. I never felt one myself. Not until now. But when I received that check from my church -- when I knew that I was a part of the powerful workings of the Holy Spirit -- I knew I could never be the same again. My God is a big God. He wrought a miracle in my life. I touched it. I saw it. And now I will always know about miracles.

When faced with the challenge of helping to save her college campus, Virginia asked God for aid and it was supplied -- in a check from a church off the educational zone.

Unbelievable? No.

A miracle.

Ruth

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." This is what whirled through my head as I stood to my feet in answer to Chuck's challenge. I wanted to help my college find a miracle. I was determined to do my part. But how?

First, I closed out my savings account, which had \$77.00 in it. I made arrangements to borrow the remaining \$23.00 but the deal fell through.

How? The question still haunted me.

And then my father, who has never been one to give money to needy organizations, sent me \$70.00. The money a miracle? Yes. But more -- my father cared enough to help!

Marvita

I am not a Nazarene, but I love BNC. When Chuck issued the challenge, Pam, another girl from my church, and I stood in response.

We knew Loretta had gone to her church and talked about the miracles taking place on the BNC campus and she received \$300. But since our church was not Nazarene, we were dubious as to their interest. But we were determined to try.

And so we did.

And at the end of the service we collected \$19.60. Pretty discouraging beginning, believe me! But within two weeks, our church responded with a total of \$290 for BNC.

The money a miracle? Yes. But more -- a check from conservative Methodists!

A Professor

My mother was only recently converted. She knows nothing of the church or religious terminology. But she is reading the Bible.

I had not written anything to Mother about our college financial needs or the students working for a miracle. But in the mail one day I received a letter.

Mother informed me that she had been reading how God blessed those who gave a tenth. Having never heard the word "tithe," she promised God to give her tenth. But to whom?

"Son," she wrote, "an angel came in answer to my question and told me to send my tenth to the college. Please cash this check and put the money in for me. I don't want anyone to know I sent it. I want only God to get glory."

Enclosed was the tithe on her monthly social security check, totaling \$38.00. The professor cashed it and placed it in the students' miracle fund anonymously.

The check for \$38.00 a miracle? Yes. But more -- an elderly woman heard the voice of God commanding her to give to a cause about which she knew nothing . . . and she obeyed.

When faced with the challenge of helping to save their college campus, Ruth, Marvita, and a professor asked God for aid and it was supplied -- in checks from other people. Unbelievable? No. A miracle.

Dale

The day Chuck challenged us, I was about to borrow \$1,100 for a Honda. I figured if I could borrow \$1,100 for me, I could get \$100 for the college. So I stood to my feet.

The next day I signed the papers -- and discovered that my car payment didn't have to be made -- \$60.43 right off the bat!

I needed to buy insurance. But that would cut into my BNC money. So I prayed that I wouldn't have a wreck Until May 1. I didn't.

I put my camera up for sale in the garage sale. It sold in three hours for \$150. In three weeks I had obtained an unexpected \$200.

The money a miracle? Yes. But more -- my attitude. I used to be from "Bethany." Now I'm from Bethany Nazarene College. During the senior trip, I was so proud of the sign, "Welcome Bethany Nazarene College," at Arrowhead Lodge. Again at the Junior-Senior Banquet, the letters brought a thrill of pride as I realized that I was a part of the Bethany Nazarene College being welcomed there in 18-inch letters outside the Lincoln Plaza.

The money a miracle? Yes. But more -- my attitude.

Jack

I turned down the job because I didn't need the money.

I stood for a miracle the next day -- and I took the job because I did need the money.

It was only a temporary job. It had to be. I went to school all morning; studied all afternoon; worked from 12 midnight until 6 a.m. for 10 days. I made my \$100.

The money a miracle? Yes. But more -- my attitude. I had been off on a critical kick for a long time. The church, the administration, the faculty, the student leaders did nothing to please me. But it is one thing to knock "their school." When I found myself working from midnight till 6 a.m., it became "my school." And nobody -- but nobody -- better knock my school.

My grades have come up. My life goals are beginning to jell: My friendships with administration, faculty, and students are beginning to firm. My relationship with God is strong -- for a lifetime.

I gave \$100 of "sleep money" to BNC. The money a miracle? Yes. But more -- my attitude.

When faced with the challenge of helping to save their college campus, Dale and Jack asked God for aid and it was supplied. By their own efforts. Unbelievable? No. A miracle.

Bob And Company

Is it possible to see love?

Certainly. Look at college students working together all night to set up a garage sale to earn money for their school.

Is it possible to hear love?

Sure. When collegians say: "But I don't really need to sleep. I enjoy working all night!" Can you feel love?

Yes. As a drifting sweetness in the air that cannot be touched or smelled, but only sensed intoxicatingly throughout an entire youth center where march endless rows of mattresses, beds, chairs, tables, books, records, toys, dryers, washers, a 75-volume set of law books, sliding glass doors, lamps, luggage, stoves, bikes, lawn mowers, cribs, paintings, rugs, basketballs, and a gigantic assortment of used clothing all neatly price-tagged.

Yes, you can see, hear, and feel love in a college garage sale. It is a tangible entity.

It all began that day in chapel when Chuck challenged us to find a miracle. I went looking, never dreaming where He would lead me.

Lakeview Park Church's youth department had just held a small garage sale. My brother-in-law, who teaches there, suggested it might be a possibility for a miracle. That was when the Lord gave me my first "go ahead" signal.

Dr. Snowbarger approved. Coach Baker said he would serve as sponsor. Now it was up to me.

I wrote on a piece of notebook paper: ALL-SCHOOL GARAGE SALE FOR MIRACLE FUND IF INTERESTED, CONTACT BOB BELLAMY, and put it up in Bracken Hall. Just as I finished the last tack, Dave walked up and said he would take over advertising. Tony said he would design the posters. Bob took charge of poster distribution.

In New Testament class I turned around to talk to Dave: "We are going to need a secretary bad!" The girl sitting next to me said: "I'll do it."

I have a bad habit of stereotyping good-looking girls into the "beautiful but helpless" category. But I decided to take a chance.

Charlette really did prove me wrong! She not only could handle responsibility -- she could handle it hour after weary hour after weary hour after . . . Then Kathy was recruited. It was a harder decision for her to make because she was signed up to go to MEL (Missionary Emphasis League) retreat the days of the garage sale. Since she plans to be a missionary, it seemed imperative that she attend.

But the more she prayed, the more she felt a sense of "oughtness" to work in the garage sale. Finally she removed her name from the MEL sheet. She wanted most of all to obey God.

Kathy not only worked endless hours. She did something special. She fasted the entire two days of the sale. She felt that this was a part of her responsibility: to open the channels of God's power through this means.

Kathy has found something real about fasting this year, and she wanted to work in this way for a miracle. It made some of us feel pretty bad to run and grab a hamburger without her. But she would never go. She believed God's will for her part in a miracle came through missing MEL retreat, through working relentlessly, through fasting and prayer.

Owen took out posters. He went into one drug-store and asked to see the manager. When he was ushered into the office, he introduced himself as a BNC student and told about the garage sale.

"Is there anything in your store-room that you would like to get rid of? We would be glad to take it for you, Sir."

The man pushed back his chair. "I'm not sure. Why don't you go have a free Coke? I'll check."

When Owen returned from having the Coke, the secretary handed him \$100. He hadn't asked for money. All he had really intended to do was put up a poster.

Martha organized a team of workers who contacted nearly every member in Bethany First Church asking for donations for the garage sale. Steve, Charles, and Duane carried heavy responsibilities as my co-workers. Then there were Phylis, Maralyn, Peggy, Sammee, Belinda, Bobbi, Pat, Cindy, Carolyn, Bettie Lou, Pam, Stephanie, Cathy, Kathy (several of this variety), Lindy, Marti, Larry, Billy, Rick, Dennis, Dan, Wayne, Galen, Mike -- the list is endless of students who came to give of themselves in trying to find a miracle in a garage sale.

But we were all only minor figures working with the major Figure. None of us were ever unaware of His presence. Anyone who has ever tried such a thing knows that it is impossible for a disorganized bunch of kids to organize a massive bunch of conglomerated goods in three weeks without divine help.

Look at it with me, if you will: (1) Distribute 400 posters to businesses throughout Oklahoma City; (2) Contact all radio stations, TV stations, Nazarene churches; (3) Contact enough people to secure items for a garage sale; (4) Pick up the items after they are promised. (5) Organize a dump store; (6) Price thousands of individual items; (7) Secure personnel to handle buyers; (8) Keep records of what is sold for how much; (9) Plan an after-sale auction; (10) Clean up.

But the greatest element was faith.

Because of the nature of a garage sale this size, we all knew that, if one area failed, the entire thing might collapse. For example, if enough students didn't show up to price goods, we were in trouble. If a pickup did not show up for items, we were the losers. If our advertising did not appeal, we would have a gymnasium full of unmovable goods. If our half-thought-out plans were not exactly right, we would fail.

The fabulous spirit throughout the entire campaign was unique. It was like taking a class on "How to Do Your Part in a Miracle." I had always heard that Jesus specializes in miracles. I saw that proven so many times during those hectic days that I ceased to be surprised or particularly excited. Miracles were the norm. What an experience!

Thursday, the last truckload was in by 11 p.m. The sale was scheduled to open at 1 p.m. the next day. The gymnasium was a shambles.

We went to work. We didn't know anything about pricing. Here was a 4' by 6' crocheted picture of the Lord's Supper. Well -- put \$50.00 on it. We might as well shoot for the moon!

And shoot for the moon is exactly what we did. The 5 cents box -- the 50 cents box -- this for \$1.00 -- that for \$5.00.

And by one o'clock Friday we were ready for 36 hours of garage sale. Dave went 48 hours without sleep. Charlette was near that. Steve had two hours sleep in a 30-hour period. I turned in Friday night at 11 and counted that I had had four hours sleep in the last 62.

Paul Harvey, local TV and radio stations, UPI, and AP called it "the biggest garage sale ever held in Oklahoma." We haven't checked much at other garage sales, so we don't know if that claim to fame is accurate. But we do know that we were able to present a check to our beloved college for over \$5,000.

We all drew closer to each other. We worked hard, but we laughed a lot too. We saw each other giving of ourselves. Admiration and respect wedged bonds of lasting friendship.

We all drew closer to our church, our college. We were involved. We were sacrificing for something we loved and became a part of it.

We all drew closer to God. We had all read, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you . . . that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (John 15:16). We hadn't really known what it meant.

Now we do.

For we have been "workers together" with God. He helped us to bring forth fruit. He gave us that for which we asked.

Now we understand. Now we know about miracles.

* * * * *

03 -- THE TRIUMPH OF A MIRACLE

Joy Is Our Heritage

The Hebrews found cause to sing for joy: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness" (Isa. 61:10). "Make a

loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise" (Ps. 98:4). "Let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice" (Ps. 68:3).

The early Christians rejoiced continually. In spite of his loss of property, physical beatings, social rejection, scathing scorn, painful imprisonment, Paul voiced the feelings of those first-generation Christians when he said: "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy" (Acts 20:24).

Jesus said: "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy may be full." Later he said: "No one shall rob you of your joy" (John 16:22, NEB).

When one turns from the eager faces of the waiting men in the Old Testament, the glowing faces of the wounded men in the New Testament, it can come as something of a shock to see the unexpectant, joyless faces of many modern worshipers. A cynical writer said recently: "Having just finished a hard look at the Acts of the Apostles in the New Testament, may I ask you Christians a few questions? At what fork of the road did you jettison all that wonder? What became of all that ecstasy, all that music?"

That scathing question may be generally answered in four sad words: "We do not know."

But on April 20, 1971, on the campus of Bethany Nazarene College, the question would not even have been asked. For students walked into chapel with their eyes blazing with wonder, their hearts bursting with ecstasy, their voices throbbing with music.

Whatever had been lost between the first-century Christians and the twentieth-century Christians had been regained in three short weeks. These students had little feathered wings of jubilation fitted to their shoes. They had found a miracle -- personally -- corporately. They had "worked together" with God. They were vibrant with joy.

Don and Sue came, holding hands. Julie came, chattering with a friend. Greg, Dale, Virginia, Valerie came to stand with all of the other students whose stories of miracle-finding were just as real, but did not find space in this book for recounting.

They all came with hearts exulting. They had found the joy of those who know about miracles.

And Chuck came. The dynamic young believer who had first hurled the challenge into the midst of a student body.

The atmosphere was Charged with joy and excitement as Vince Snowbarger, president of the Student-Council, rose to his feet and asked the president of the college, Dr. Roy Cantrell, to come to the lectern.

Vince said: "We believe in a big God who is able to help us do anything. We set out to see if we could raise some money to support the school that we love. After three weeks and three days of letter writing, bloodletting, and working overtime, collecting and selling things at a garage sale, and in numerous other ways trying to raise money, we have come to this day.

"It's been amazing to see the side effects of a money-raising campaign like this. There have been closer ties to the home churches and stronger faith in a big God who can do big things. For a lot of us it has been the joy of truly sacrificial giving which we have experienced for the first time. It's wonderful to give for the Lord and His work and do it with some sacrifice."

Vince explained that end-of-school activities necessitated the giving of the check at this time although it was earlier than Chuck had asked. He then presented Dr. Cantrell with a check from the students. It was made out for \$77,554.47. After the check had been made out, \$2,900 more had come in, which brought the amount at that time past \$80,000. Within a few weeks, the goal of \$100,000 had been reached.

The students and faculty stood to their feet and cheered. Smiles. Tears. Love. It pervaded the room, welding the parts into one close unit. It pervaded the campus. It was present in the classroom along with Shakespeare and Kepler's laws of motion . . . it was in the cafeteria . . . even the food was better . . . this feeling . . . you couldn't escape it. Now in this moment of triumph, one could taste the joy of the Lord.

Perhaps one of the crowning blessings of this joy is a sense of the greatness of God's grace and mercy. We do not deserve it, but receive it solely on the merit of Christ. Human pride is buried under the wonder of undeserved grace, and all thoughts are turned away from self to the Redeemer.

One hundred thousand dollars given by a student body to its college. A miracle.

Seventeen hundred students, faculty, administration revelling in the knowledge and joy of the Lord. A miracle. God and man together. A miracle.

* * * * *

EPILOGUE

Walking out of chapel the day of the challenge, a professor commented: "This young man Chuck is amazing. He has the stuff miracles are made of."

Jesus challenged the early Christians to become miracles of personal power. Chuck was merely passing on Christ's dare 20 centuries later.

In the early Christians, the potential for greatness was activated by their Leader's fantastic expectations. They were to become miracle workers. How else can we understand such a job analysis as this: "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils"? Apparently Jesus was convinced that there could be no greater tragedy than for a man to let his potential deteriorate into dormancy.

Isn't this same potential for greatness available in the twentieth-century Christians? A potential which can be actualized now?

Chuck dared to believe it. He appealed for miracle workers who could say: "I have faith. I will work with God." Hundreds of youths stood in response.

A person's capacity to make such a declaration not only reveals the nature of his inner life but actually lifts into perspective the ministry of miracle itself. When the moment of commitment to the will of God overwhelms us, three things happen: our moral sense is sharpened, our ethical taste is refined, and our sensitivity to the needs of others is broadened. These attributes transformed a campus.

Twentieth-century young Christians found themselves packed with miracle stuff sufficient to meet the demands of a challenge -- not just for the college now, but for the future -- a foundation on which they will build other miracles for a lifetime.

Fools have no miracles; people with faith do!

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THE END