

The Miracle of mercy

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It was a miracle. A miracle greater than walking on water, greater than raising the dead, greater than speaking in tongues.

A few years ago, my friend got married. She is a doctor. Her husband asked her to buy a motorcycle. She was hesitant but, eventually, she gave in.

One day, he went for a ride. He was inexperienced. He rode too fast and lost control of the vehicle. He caused an accident. At the hospital, the doctor told them that he would be paralyzed from the waist down for the rest of his life. That was the end of his easy and pleasant life. His wife was devastated.

When he came home, her parents urged her to divorce him. They said, "Don't waste your life. You'll find someone new. You're young and beautiful. You'll ruin your life with him."

She didn't know what to do. Finally, she made the decision to stay with her husband.

One day, she called me and said, "Mattie, a miracle happened!"

Surprised, I asked her, "Did he start walking?"

"No," she replied, "A much greater miracle happened."

"I'm on vacation with my husband. It's really strange. I walk along the beach while he lies in bed at the hotel. Every morning, I wake him up, take him to the bathroom, bathe him, and put him back to bed. But today, when I laid him down, he said, 'A miracle has happened.'"

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"Yes, a miracle happened because you didn't leave me. I know your parents told you to do it. But you didn't. And that is the greatest miracle—because you are with me. Without you, I would have spent the rest of my life in a nursing home. But you love me, and I know you will never leave me. That is the greatest miracle of my life."

My dear friends, the world is full of miracles. We do not always see them. One of these miracles is mercy. This miracle happens in your homes. When you take your children to school in the morning, it is a miracle. When you wake up at night to care for the sick, it is a miracle. When you take care of a person with a disability, it is a miracle. When you remain in love and say, "I love you," it is a miracle.

There is also a beautiful story of faith and perseverance. A man named Horatio Spafford was a successful lawyer, businessman, and devout Christian who lived in Chicago in the late 19th century. However, his life was marked by tragedy and loss, including the Great Chicago Fire of

1871, which destroyed much of his real estate holdings, and the death of his only son shortly thereafter.

Despite these setbacks, Spafford remained committed to his faith and continued to work tirelessly to help others. In 1873, he planned a trip to Europe with his family, hoping that a change of scenery would lift their spirits. Spafford's wife, Anna, and their four daughters boarded a ship named *Ville du Havre* and set sail. However, tragedy struck when their ship collided with another vessel in the Atlantic and sank, killing 226 passengers, including all four of Spafford's daughters.

Can you even imagine such grief?

Upon receiving the tragic news, Spafford set out for Europe to be with his grieving wife. During the journey, he wrote a poem that later became one of the most beloved hymns of all time: "It Is Well with My Soul."

This hymn speaks of finding peace amidst suffering and loss, resonating with millions over the past century. Its powerful lyrics remind us of the hope and comfort found in faith:

When peace like a river, attendeth my way,

When sorrows like sea billows roll;

Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,

It is well, it is well, with my soul.

What a comfort to know we can have peace with our Father in Heaven through the shed blood of His Son, Jesus Christ!

When you think about mercy, the first thing that may come to mind is this: Jesus on the Cross with outstretched arms, dying for our sins. This was the ultimate act of mercy. But mercy isn't a trait limited to God—it's something we are called to show to others as well. In Matthew 5:7, Jesus says, "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy." This scripture highlights the deep connection between our relationships with others and how merciful God is toward us.

Here are five ways we can show mercy in our daily lives:

1) Be Patient with Others' Quirks

Ephesians 4:2 reminds us, "Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love." In a world that often demands perfection, we are called to offer grace and understanding. No one is without flaws, and relationships require patience and acceptance. Love does not demand perfection but embraces growth.

2) Help Those Who Are Hurting

In Luke 10, Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan, showing that true mercy is helping those who cannot help themselves. Romans 12:8 encourages us: "When you do acts of mercy, show mercy with cheerfulness." Mercy given with joy brings healing and hope, not just to the receiver but also to the giver.

3) Do Good to Those Who Hurt You

When someone wrongs us, we may want revenge or to cut them out of our lives. But Ephesians 4:31-32 urges us to be kind and merciful, forgiving others as Christ forgave us. True mercy means giving people what they need, not what they deserve.

4) Be Kind to Those Who Offend You

Our world is filled with conflict, and cultural divisions threaten relationships. However, responding with kindness can open doors to transformation. Our response may be the catalyst for an encounter with Christ in someone else's life.

5) Build Bridges of Love to the Overlooked

Jesus spent time with outcasts and sinners. He built bridges of love, not walls of division. Following His example means reaching out intentionally to those who are often ignored, extending His love to them.

Saint Faustina wrote a beautiful prayer:

O Lord, I want to be completely transformed into Your mercy and to be Your living reflection.

Help me, O Lord, that my eyes may be merciful, so that I may never judge from appearances, but look for the beauty in my neighbors' souls.

Help me, O Lord, that my ears may be merciful, so that I may listen to my neighbors' needs and not be indifferent to their pain.

Help me, O Lord, that my tongue may be merciful, so that I may speak words of comfort and forgiveness.

Help me, O Lord, that my hands may be merciful, that I may only do good for others, taking on the difficult tasks.

Help me, O Lord, that my heart may be merciful, so that I may feel the sufferings of my neighbor and bring them relief.

May we all strive to live lives of mercy, extending love, patience, and forgiveness in a world that so desperately needs it.