

## Miracles Happen!

[John 20:1-18](#), [Acts 10:34-43](#), [1 Corinthians 15:19-26](#)

There was a story on the internet of a young boy who was part of a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Sunday School class. The boy had Down's syndrome and had all the limitations of mind and body that accompany this syndrome. Often his classmates would tease him and make fun of him because he was different. On Easter Sunday morning, the teacher sent the children outside to look for signs of new life – signs of spring. Each child had a small lidded box in which to put the items collected. As the class came in, each shared what they had placed in the boxes. There were leaves, flower buds, and some new grass. The boy with Down's syndrome opened his box, and it was empty. The other children immediately ridiculed him saying he did not complete the assignment. "I did so," said the boy, "the tomb is empty."

The tomb is empty. O what a morning! Can you imagine the commotion as the word began to spread of the greatest miracle Jesus had performed? Can you imagine the buzz of excitement as the realization began to take hold? All was not lost. Christ has done what by all human standards remains impossible. Christ has risen from the dead – indeed, miracles happen!

Do we still believe in miracles? Can we put aside our human need to explain things and see the truth through the impossible odds? Mary Magdalene seemed to have forgotten Jesus' teachings as she went to the tomb looking for the body of Christ. John's gospel doesn't make it clear as to why she was visiting the tomb, but other accounts tell of her and the other women bringing burial spices to complete the process of a proper funeral.

Clearly she had forgotten as all the other followers of Christ had. They couldn't remember the miracles Jesus performed. They forgot all about Jesus feeding the multitudes from two fish and five loaves of bread, or about the blind who regained their sight and the lame who walked, or the demon-possessed who were living normal lives. They forgot about the one who walked on water and broke down barriers of race and gender and class. They forgot about the son of God.

But God has a way of working even without our help and approval. God did not need to wait for us to catch up – God in the body of Jesus Christ was fulfilling all the prophecies of the Messiah – the chosen one. God didn't file for a permit or wait the required time period while checks and balances were put into place. God works on God time, not our time. God has a way of

exceeding our feeble expectations to do what we can only see as impossible.

So Mary arrived at the tomb only to find the stone rolled away. Grave robbing was a typical occurrence in Jesus' day. There were still some strong beliefs related to burying treasures with bodies, so often thieves would raid tombs looking for valuables. So Mary found the tomb empty and ran back to tell the disciples. Now you would think that the light would begin to dawn, especially among Jesus' followers, but there was still this cloud of disbelief hanging in their midst.

So Peter and the one we assume is John take off running toward the tomb. John was the faster runner and blew Peter out of the water as he arrived at the tomb first, but it is interesting that John did not go in the tomb - he only stooped down and looked in. But Peter, the rock, didn't stop at the barrier of the

tomb – he ran right in and found the grave clothes but no body. And still the light did not dawn on them – they still couldn't remember any of Jesus' teachings. Perhaps in some ways this is understandable. The disciples witnessed the brutal killing of their friend and leader. Most likely they were not functioning at their best just a few days after this event. I can picture them walking around in a daze, not sure of what to do or where to go from here.

But a major miracle was in the works. Jesus is not just some great leader – he is the son of God. Jesus is not just a peaceful prophet sent to bring a message of hope – he is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Jesus is not just a man – Jesus is the Word made flesh. Jesus is the embodiment of God among us. Jesus is not just a dead corpse but the living, breathing Prince of Peace. Jesus is the ultimate miracle worker.

Mary was an interesting one as she remained at the empty tomb. She was devastated but she stayed when the disciples simply returned home. For some reason she looked again into the tomb and probably thought she was seeing things, for there where Jesus had laid were two beings (we can assume they were angels) who knew what had happened. They had the inside scoop. So they ask her, “Why are you weeping?” In other words, “Why don’t you get it yet?” She then turned and saw Jesus but did not recognize him. Imagine that – after spending all that time with Jesus as one of his followers, she doesn’t recognize him. Maybe it’s like a phenomenon when you see people in a place where you don’t expect them and for a moment you don’t see them for who they are.

So Jesus also asked her the same paraphrased statement, “Why don’t you get it?” It wasn’t until Jesus said her name that

the shingles fell off her eyes and she saw the miracle right in front of her – Jesus had risen from the dead and was talking with her. Talk about an eye-opener! Miracles happen! Jesus the Christ had done just as he said – Jesus was alive and well, in the flesh and dwelling once again on this earth.

Sometimes words cannot do justice to the awesome power of Almighty God. Sometimes our limitations are just that, but God clears away the clutter and lets the light shine through. Sometimes we are left with this incredible joy – joy unspeakable and full of glory and the half has never yet been told! In other words, it just gets better from here! Easter is not the end but the beginning! Events were put in place that day that changed the world. Lives have been rejuvenated, pain has been lifted, prophecies have been fulfilled, families and friends have been united with renewed strength and hope. Cling to the promise

that miracles happened on Easter and continue to happen in our lives.

Are you ready for miracles to happen? Are you ready to accept a life of love and peace that only Jesus Christ can provide? Are you prepared to celebrate the empty tomb and the promise of renewed life on earth and eternal life in heaven?

When members of the body of Christ come together, miracles happen. When faith is renewed and hope is rekindled through the storms of life, miracles happen. When trials are overcome and God's joy and peace wash over us like a flowing river, miracles happen. Let us extend the hand of welcome as we prepare to receive God's gifts of love, faith, hope, and joy. Christ is risen – he is risen indeed! Hallelujah! Amen.