

Mysteries
&
Miracles

Written By Rev.
John Marinelli

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Mysteries & Miracles

Preface

Mysteries And Miracles is a Christian fiction three-dimensional novel. The Book offers three reading adventures, all centered on the love and protection of God. Each dimensional adventure is a mystery in itself yet all three are woven together in the discovery of Biblical truth.

The Mystery of the Golden Coin is the first adventure. It tells the story of a golden coin that was lost for over 300 years, found by an American soldier in France during WW II and lost again by a ten-year-old boy in a little town north of Odessa, TX.

The storyline will follow Bill and Sarah, childhood sweethearts and how they demonstrate faith in troubled times.

The story will address some modern day social issues and will also touch on God's Will, Man's Destiny, Faith, Loyalty, Free Will and The Authority of The Bible.

“The Mystery of The Golden Coin” is a fictional story. But the WW II and Vietnam facts are true and are based upon public records.

The second adventure is with a Mysterious Stranger. The reader will ride overland on a public bus with other folks on their way to an encounter with a stranger of Supernatural origin.

The Mysterious Stranger is about; well I think I will let you figure it all out. It is, however, a fictional story but then again it could be true. The main characters are those you decide are most significant.

The third adventure is about the Mystery of the Empty Soul and it's longing to find peace and tranquility. It is the story of Billie Jo and her quest for inner peace.



Our story begins in the summer of 1993 at the home of Joe Jenkins. It's Joe's 68th birthday celebration. Joe was a WWII survivor of the battle of Normandy. He came home wounded along with many other army veterans. He was somewhat shell shocked. He spent many months in recovery, went on to college and became a successful Dentist.

Joe fell in love with Mary Blessidt, a girl from California, while attending a dental convention. They married and now enjoy life

in north central Florida on a 10-acre hobby farm. Their only son, Mark, is visiting with his two children, Sandy, age 15 and Johnny, age 16. Mark is a widower trying to raise his two children after their mother died of lung cancer.

As the family all sat down on the “Wrap-A-Round” porch, Johnny asked his grandpa to tell some war stories. He wanted to know what it was really like because he was all into the old war movies.

Joe was reluctant to talk about those days because of the trauma and horrible scenes of dying men that still haunted him when he slept. However, he agreed when the rest of the family also encouraged him to talk about D-Day.

What will transpire are the words and thoughts of Joe Jenkins. This is how he remembers it, in his own words.

A Portrait of The Past

OK folks, I’ll do the best I can to remember the events leading up to and during the invasion of Normandy. However, it’s been 50 years. I have never told anyone about what happen to me back then, not even my wife or only son. It all began with Bill Anderson and Sarah Johnson, my very best friends.

It was 1943 and the United States was up to its elbows in WW II. By November, gasoline, bicycles, footwear, silk, nylon, fuel oil, stoves, meat, lard, shortening, margarine, processed foods, dried fruits, canned milk, firewood and coal, jams, jellies and butter would all be rationed. The United States was at war with Japan, Germany and other Nazi led forces.

Women went to work to fill the vacancies of men that went to war. Many factories stopped making consumer goods and retooled for the production of tanks, airplanes, guns and ammunition.

Young men were joining the military as volunteers. Bill Anderson, my best friend and I were no exception. We were typical of 1943 American youth. We were patriotic and ready and willing to defend our nation from the tyranny of Nazism. We would never ever think of burning the national flag like some young people do today. We had respect for the flag and the country it represented.

Bill and I were “Allstars” at Midland High School. We both lettered in basketball and played in every game. It was our senior year. We did everything together from homework to taking girls to the school dances on Saturday nights. We planned to join the army after graduation and do our part to defend our country.

Bill was head over heels in love with a gal named Sarah Johnson. She was a cheerleader at Midland High. They had several classes together and Bill walked her to class and carried her books as boyfriends were expected to do in those days. They were secretly engaged with plans to marry after finishing high school. They had been childhood sweethearts since the 6th grade. As I recall, Sarah was obsessed with marriage, children, and being a good wife.

It was hard for us to imagine being combat ready soldiers. We never even got in a fight after school. I guess you would say that we were popular and liked by everyone. Armed conflict and killing was not in our vocabulary. However, we both felt deeply

about protecting our country and way of life. The thinking back in 1943 was, “If we don’t fight, who will?”

We all worked side by side for the war effort by participating in scrap metal drives, local military family support visits, and even letter writing to lonely soldiers.

Sarah was afraid for Bill. She often was overwhelmed by thoughts that he would go off to war and not come home. The thought of Bill dying on a foreign battlefield was terrifying. She never let Bill know her deepest fears but I knew because she would share them with me. She felt that he had enough to think about without taking on her problems.

Bill always wanted to get married and settle down but I was a ladies’ man. I dated a lot in high school and often went on double dates with Bill and Sarah. Those days were the best times of my life.

My dad was a dentist and hoped that I would go to college after graduation. He wanted me to follow in his footsteps. But I wanted to be a soldier with Bill and do my part for God and country.

High School Sweethearts

Sandy jumped in to interrupt grandpa Joe’s thoughts. She said, “Tell us more about Sarah & Bill.” Ok, said grandpa Joe. Where do I begin? Oh yea, I remember. Sarah and Bill were both Christians. They attended church and were a part of the youth group. Sarah was a lot stronger in her faith than Bill.

I remember a time when Bill told me about skipping lunch so he and Sarah could smooch. Johnny and Sandy began to giggle but grandpa Joe just continued on.

It was on a Friday. No, It was Thursday. What difference does a day make? It was during the senior lunch period at Midland High. Sarah and Bill skipped out and snuck off by themselves for one more of those secret rendezvous. Bill began flirting with Sarah as he always did and telling her how he loved her. They kissed and kissed and Bill started to move beyond the flirting stage but Sarah was reluctant.

Sarah pushed Bill away saying, “Not until we are married.” “You know how I feel about that.” “We are Christians, remember?”

Bill was frustrated and said “But I am going off to war and may never come back. Don’t you think we should, well, you know.... It’s only a few weeks before we will be married”

Sarah couldn’t help thinking about the youth pastor’s message that previous Sunday. It was on pre-marital sex and what the Bible said. She just blurted out, “The Bible says we would be fornicators and those folks do not get into heaven.”

Bill started to get angry saying, “Who are they to tell us what we can or cannot do”

Sarah came back with a definition for “They”. She looked into Bill’s eyes and said, “Have you ever heard of, **“The Father”** **“The Son”** and **“The Holy Ghost”**? That’s who they are. Now let’s go back to class.”

Bill told me afterwards that he felt that Sarah was using the Bible and God as a crutch so she wouldn’t have to be sexually involved

with him. He began to have serious reservations about Sarah but those feeling just dropped away when Sarah told him the next day that she loved him and if he really loved her, they could exercise some restraint and be a blessing to God. She said, “We respect the laws of our country. Shouldn’t we also respect the laws of God?”

So Bill and Sarah pledged themselves to each other and to being honorable Christians. They wanted God in their married life and wanted to know His will.

Sometimes, when the three of us were together, we would make sport of God’s will, just to have fun and laugh. Bill jokingly would say, “Maybe God wants us to fly to the moon in a space ship or maybe He will use us to change the toilet paper in the school bathrooms.”

Sarah would laugh and then she would get serious saying, “Maybe God has great things in store for us. All we have to do is to continue in what we know is truly His will and we will walk right into our destiny.”

Destiny would soon knock on their door and mine. God’s will was about to collide head on with WW II.

Bill and Sarah had a standing Friday night date but not until the basketball game was over. Sarah had duties as a cheerleader and Bill played forward guard for the Midland High Golden Tornadoes. I played center.

The team was in 1st place among all AAA statewide high schools. We were about a week away from the semi-finals that would determine which teams would face off for the state championship.

I remember a time when Bill and I were practicing our “Free-Throw” shots and talking about the semi-finals. I said, “Bill? What if we lose this game? We’ll be shut out of the tournament.”

Bill stopped shooting the ball and said, “That’s why we are not going to fail. We have come this far and we will win. It’s up to you and me buddy, so hang in there and be tough.” That’s the type of guy he was, always optimistic.

Sarah was passing by, going to the girl’s locker room and overheard some of our conversation and what Bill said to me. She jumped into the middle of our conversation and, grabbed Bill’s hands and said, “I love you and love conquers all” Then she looked over at me and said, “Repeat after me... Winner’s don’t quit and quitters don’t see themselves as winners.”

Then she said, “ We are winners and I can see us holding that trophy as the crowd goes wild. See it with me and then go out there and make it happen.” I guess that’s why she was a cheerleader...always cheering us on.

Sure enough, Bill and I, supported by the rest of the team, won the game by twelve points and went on to become the 1943 State Basketball Champs. Later at the victory dance, Sarah had to rub it in and said to both of us, “I told you so. We are winners. We are champions”

Later that week, after all the excitement of winning the state championship, Bill told me that he and Sarah sat down with both parents and seriously talked about their marriage and plans for the future.

Sarah was like most other girls growing up in the 40s. She wanted to stay home, have babies and be a good supportive wife to Bill, just like her mother was to her dad. She even told her mother that she was almost 18, the same age that her mom was when she married. Then she told me that she looked over at her dad and said, “If 18 was grown up enough for you and mom, it is for me too.” Well needless to say, her dad was a bit upset.

According to Bill, Sarah’s dad spoke up saying, “That’s right but we were more mature and I went on to college while your mother stayed with her parents until my graduation. We started married life with me having a good job, not running off to war. You’ll be stranded and alone in a strange army town.” I guess Sarah’s dad was just being protective of his oldest daughter.

Then, according to Sarah, her mother spoke up in her defense saying, “She’s right, we did the same thing and it worked out for us. I guess it’s ok, as long as we can support you and you stay here until Bill gets settled.”

So Sarah looked at Bill and said, “What do you think?” He replied, “That’s ok with me.” The next week Sarah and her mother begin the invitation list for Sarah’s wedding. Meanwhile Bill and I made our own plans to join the army.

The Secret Enlistment

You’re probably bored by now with my rambling. Maybe I need to stop. “Don’t stop grandpa”, said Johnny. “This is like watching a movie. What happened next?”

Well then, said grandpa Joe. Where was I? Oh yeah. Bill and I met up that same afternoon to discuss our new adventure into

“Army Life.” We didn’t want to be drafted. We talked a lot about being soldiers. It was like being a grown up because we would be out on our own and in the uniform of our country. It all sounded real good. We never thought once about getting killed or even wounded. That stuff always happened to the other guy, which we didn’t know personally.

Bill remembered what the army recruiter said about enlisting and being drafted. On September 16, 1940, the United States instituted the Selective Training and Service Act, which required all men between the ages of 21 - 45 to register for the draft. This was the first peacetime draft in United States' history.

During WW II, the army accepted recruits at 16 but those soldiers could not be deployed to the front lines until age 18. We knew that we needed to wait until our 18th birthday to enlist so we could go to the front lines and fight. But that was only a few months away for Bill and less for me.

We planned to enlist under the “buddy” system. I pushed Bill to join up while we were still in school. I said, why couldn’t we go right away? If we did, it would keep my dad from hounding me about college. I didn’t want to go to college right out of high school. It would be as if I were hiding from my responsibility to defend our flag and great country. I was proud of being an American and wanted to invest my time as a soldier to insure that we would still be free.

Freedom was important to all of us. We knew that those that came before us paid for our freedom with the blood of their sons and family members. It wasn’t like today. No one burned the flag or even thought of badmouthing our country. We were proud of