

Band-Aids, Dirty Feet, and Small Miracles

A GIRL NAMED
ANGEL TEACHES
A LESSON IN
GOD'S TIMING.

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MY EYES SNAPPED OPEN and I could feel my own heart pounding. “What happened to the top of your foot?”

She mumbled something in that way that endears you to a three year old but doesn't give you a clue as to what she's talking about.

“Does it hurt?”

I gently reached down and touched her mangled foot. She just looked back at me and smiled.

My medical knowledge tops out at Band-Aids and antibiotic cream, but even that seemed better than nothing. So I sat on the living room floor and bandaged the foot of the little girl named Angel.

I looked up at two of the teenagers lying on the couch. “Do you mind if I wrap this?”

The older girl shrugged, “Go ahead. I don't care. She won't keep it on.”

In all that foot washing Jesus did, I wonder if he ever came across anything like this. And if he was standing right here in this room, would he zap that wounded little foot back into working condition?

It's hard to say because the God who can keep infection and pain at bay acts and reacts in ways that are puzzling. Though he can heal everything from a scrape to paralysis, that's not always what he does. Seems somewhat odd if you consider him good. A lot of his children are swathed in bandages, have broken bodies, unimaginable realities,

and weary minds.

So it's back to that foot washing two thousand years ago. Jesus could have cleaned up everyone in a jiffy, with a snap of his finger and a flick of that towel. But he didn't. He got down on his knees and gently cradled each tired foot in his hands. One by one he washed his disciples. Twenty-four mud-caked feet, on the night before he died.

Why?

Because a miracle is one thing, but manual labor in the name of love is quite another.

And God still does things the slow way, a way that, to us, seems painfully inefficient and human. Sometimes in the process people die, faith gets lost, and relationships fail. It takes an inhuman amount of faith to believe that this God is both good and powerful. Our reality continually collides with our faith. But perhaps what seems a contradiction is really only a mystery.

That final night as the disciples untied their sandals, it wasn't just about hygiene. Though it was an act of human kindness, it was more than that. It became the overture of everything God's children had hoped and waited for. The very Creator of bone, skin, and soul decided to whisper, because his roar of a voice is too magnificent for the ears of his creation. He shades his glory just enough so anyone willing to listen will hear him speak softly, “Rise up. Leave your old life. Follow me.”



One thing I'm certain of—in the face of injustice and ache, God moves in ways that defy the laws of time.

in Denver. On the couch were a young girl and a seventeen-year-old boy, making out. Two other young couples were at various other stages of inappropriate behavior.

They didn't even stop as I, a perfect stranger, stared. Nor did they care when I came back to the apartment an hour later with the first-aid kit from our church's kitchen drawer. I felt anger, unbelievable sadness, and a stab of despair all in the same moment.

But when a little girl is in pain, you just get on your hands and knees and do what you can do. And perhaps, Jesus being all the way human too, had a moment when he wondered why, but then he saw, not those twenty-four dirty feet, but those twelve stained hearts, and he got down on his knees.

In a world that's filled with urgent needs, we must act, even in slow, small ways. Because the God who snapped his fingers and made instant buffet for 5,000 people, is the same God who starts an oak tree from an acorn and molds and nurtures it for decades until it towers above his creation. Both miracles. Always know that God is doing something—his silence is rarely what it seems.

Angel's foot is better. I checked a few days later. She's a slow healer but healed nonetheless. □

We can follow because of the reality of the cross. God, who knew no sin, bent down and washed our hearts. And he did it the long and hard way. No lightning, armies of angels, or heavenly fire. Nothing instantaneous or eye-popping. Just his son doing a very human thing—dying. His son doing a very divine thing, giving his perfect life to a world broken by sin.

This isn't the way I would respond to suffering, if I were God. The process takes too long, and lacks a satisfying answer. There is no instant relief, no immediate change.

For now, I'm busy fixing lunches and bandaging toes, the slow way. But one thing I'm certain of—in the face of injustice and ache, God moves in ways that defy the laws of time. He is simply greater than the boundaries he created to hold humanity together. It's not always clear how he's going to mold a moment, or a simple act like foot washing or toe bandaging into a miracle. But know that he will.

That afternoon when I met little Angel, there was no adult home. I was visiting as part of my work with "Street Church," a ministry with at-risk kids

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