

*The
Mystery
of The
Golden Coin*



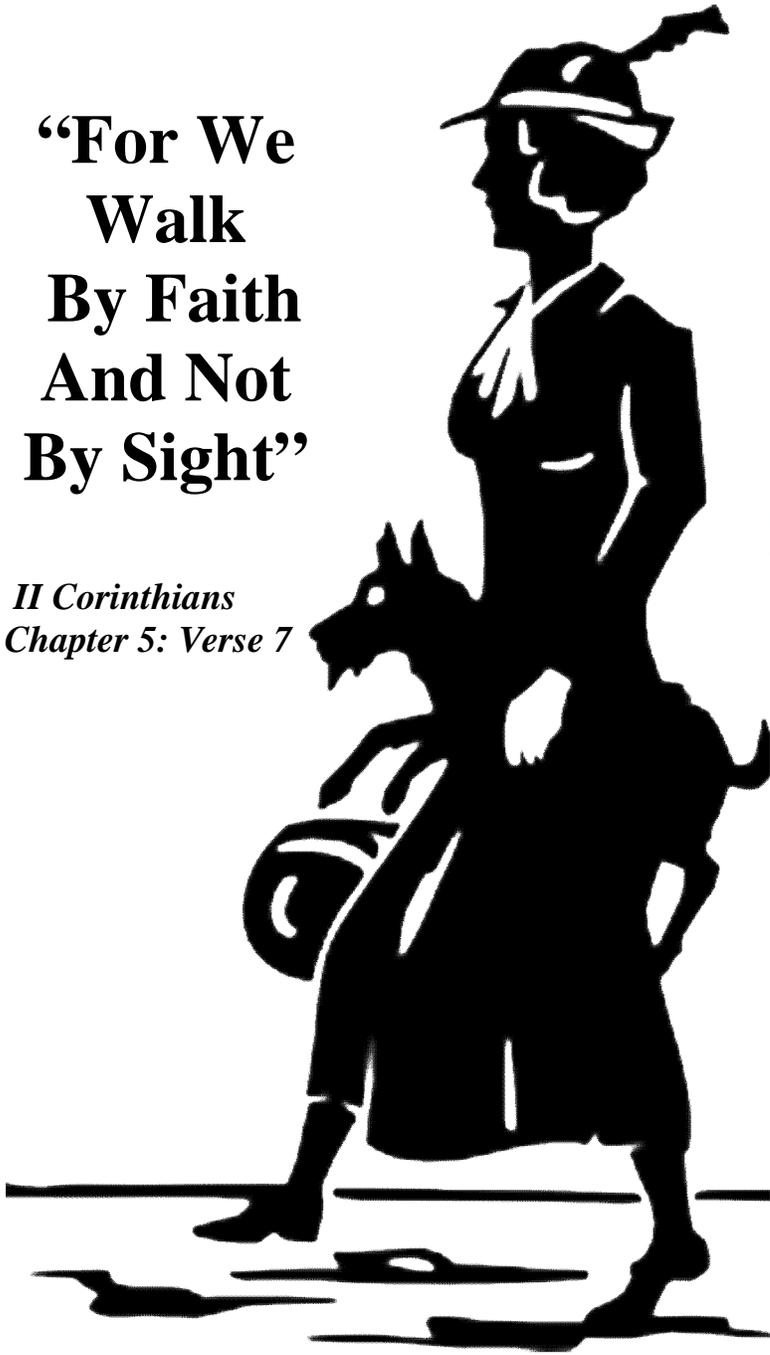
*A Love Story of
High School Sweethearts
Who Struggled To Believe God
Through The Trials of WW II*

Written By Rev.
John Marinelli

The Mystery of The Golden Coin

**“For We
Walk
By Faith
And Not
By Sight”**

*II Corinthians
Chapter 5: Verse 7*



**A Story of Faith,
Restoration And Healing**

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Preface

The Mystery of the Golden Coin was written by Rev. John Marinelli and edited by his wife, Marilyn. 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 interact with the golden coin. The aim of the book is to present a scenario that will entertain the reader, spark curiosity and teach Biblical truth.

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

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

Introduction

A 17th Century Spanish Golden Coin will find its way into French soil where it will lay hidden under an old oak tree until an American “Special Forces” combat soldier finds it during the Battle of Normandy on D-Day.

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 is at war with Japan, Germany and other Nazi led forces.

Women went to work for the first time 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 and Joe Jenkins were no exception. They were typical of American youth. They were patriotic, ready and willing to defend their nation from the tyranny of Nazism.

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

Bill was head over heels in love with Sarah Johnson, a cheerleader at Midland High. They had several classes together and Bill walked her to class and carried her books as boys were expected to do in those days. Bill and Sarah were secretly engaged with plans to marry after finishing high school. They were childhood sweethearts with dreams of marriage, children, and a normal family life.

It was hard for Bill to imagine being a combat ready soldier. He never even got in a fight after school. He and Joe were popular and liked by everyone. Armed conflict and killing was not in Bill's vocabulary. However, he

felt deeply about protecting his country and way of life. His attitude was, “If I don’t fight, who will?” Bill was a Christian and was taught to stand up against evil and destroy it before it destroyed you.

Sarah was also a Christian and felt much the same as Bill. They attended church and were a part of the youth group. She worked side by side with Bill 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 falling on a foreign battlefield was terrifying. She never let Bill know her deepest fears. She felt that he had enough to think about without taking on her problems.

Joe Jenkins was a ladies man. He dated a lot in high school and often went on double dates with Bill and Sarah. Joe’s dad was a doctor and hoped that Joe would go to college after graduation. But Joe wanted to be a soldier with Bill and do his duty for God and country.

The next few months would prove to be life changing for everyone as the boys go off to war, Sarah left alone in tears and parents afraid for their sons.

Chapter One

High School Sweethearts

It was lunchtime for seniors at Midland High. Sarah and Bill skipped lunch and snuck off by themselves for one more of those secret rendezvous. Bill began flirting with Sarah as he always did and telling her 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 on 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 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 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?”

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 they 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 laughed and then got serious saying, “Maybe God has great things in store for us. All we have to do is 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 take charge. God’s will is about to collide with WW II.

Bill and Sarah had a standing Saturday 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. The team was in 1st place among all AAA countywide high schools. This Saturday night was the semi-finals to determine which teams would face off for the state championship.

Bill and Joe were practicing their “Free-Throw” shots and talking about the game. Joe looked at Bill and said, “What if we loose this game? We’ll be shut out of the tournament.”

Bill stops shooting the ball and responds to Joe’s fear, “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.”

Sarah was passing by, going to the girl’s locker room and overheard Joe’s negative statement and what Bill said to him. She jumped into the middle of their conversation and, grabbed Bill’s hands and said, “I love you and love conquers all” Then she looked over at Joe 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.”

Sure enough, Bill and Joe, supported by the rest of their team, won the game by two 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 Bill and Joe, “I told you so. We are winners. We are champions”

Later that week, after all the excitement of winning the state championship, Bill 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 said, “I am almost 18. That’s the same age, mom, that you were when you married dad. If it was grown up enough for you, it is for me too.”

Then 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.”

Sarah’s mother spoke up in defense of Sarah 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.”

Sarah looks at Bill and says, “What do you think?” Bill replied, “That’s ok with me.” So Sarah and her mother begin the invitation list for Sarah’s wedding while Bill goes off by himself to think about joining the Army.

Bill decides to meet up with Joe so they can discuss and plan their new adventure into Army Life. They didn’t want to be drafted.

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 of 1940, 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. Bill knew that they needed to wait until their 18th birthday to enlist so they could go to the front lines and fight. But that was only a few months away for him and less for Joe.

They planned to enlist under the “buddy” plan. Joe called to Bill and said, “Why can’t we go right away? If we did, it would keep my dad from hounding me about college”

Bill replies, “Ok, we can join now but delay our departure until after my wedding. But don’t tell Sarah. I will do that later. Sarah and I are going to be married right out of high school. Then we’re going on a honeymoon. Then we will leave for Boot Camp.

Amidst war and politics, life goes on at Midland High. Bill and Sarah are sweethearts and that means an exclusive relationship, especially when they are engaged to be married. However, trust in each other is about to be challenged by Suzie, Bill’s lab partner who batted her eyes at him every day in chemistry class. It was hard for Bill to not flirt back or act as though nothing was going on. He liked Suzie and there was definite chemistry between them.

One day in chemistry class Suzie looked into Bill’s eyes and said, “We should get together outside of school and have some fun. My parents will be away this weekend and we could, well you know, be alone.” She then took his hand and said, “What do you think?”

Bill, like any red blooded American male, was overjoyed and felt a rush of power. He could be, “The Man”, “The King of The School”, or just “Another Fool.”

His jubilation quickly turned into betrayal and inward shame. He struggled within himself with being loyal to Sarah and enjoying selfish sexual pleasures with Suzie. A storm raged in his mind raining down feelings of desire for Suzie and shame that he would even think this way.

The thought that no one would find out kept coming into his mind, saying, “It’s ok to be with Suzie.” But somehow that thought just didn’t settle in his spirit. He began to reason that even if he got away with it, he would still be a fool because it was against the will of God. It was then that he knew God was talking to him.

Suzie said it again in other words, “What’s a matter Bill? Don’t you want to be with me? Sarah will never find out, I promise.”

Bill withdrew his hand from Suzie’ and said, “Even if Sarah never found out, it would still be wrong and I do not want to live my life with Sarah in betrayal of her trust. She is worthy of my loyalty, even when my desires turn to you.” The battle of the mind was stronger than the battle overseas but Bill stayed true to Sarah’s love.

Suzie was angry that Bill refused to be with her. She went to so much trouble planning every detail in her mind of how they would raid her dad’s liquor cabinet and what music to play. She had it all figured out and was not expecting a rejection from Bill. “Why couldn’t he play along,” she thought. Then she scolded Bill saying, “You’re not a man. You’re just a little boy. I guess I am just too much for you”

Bill replied, “Don’t be mad. You are a really good looking gal but I gave my heart away a long time ago to Sarah.”

Suzie began to cry saying, “We’ll see about that. I am going to tell Sarah of all the lab flirtation and how you kept coming on to me and wanting me. You’ll be the laughing stock of the entire school. Why don’t you just be with me and get it over with? You know you want to”

Bill responded to Suzie's threat saying, "Sure I flirted with you in chemistry class but I never thought it would go this far. I thought it was just a game. I didn't mean to hurt you. I thought you understood that it was just..." Suzie interrupts, "Well I didn't understand and what you were thinking was wrong. I am going to hurt you like you hurt me. When I am through, Sarah will reject you and that will be that."

Bill watches Suzie walk away in tears and wonders what he could do to fix the mess he was in.

Bill did the only thing any honest Christian would do in the same situation. He confessed everything to Sarah but mixed the truth with a few white lies. He said, "Sarah? I have something I need to tell you. You know that I have chemistry lab with Suzie. She has been my lab partner all year. Well, she wanted me to spend the weekend with her and I refused. She got real mad and said she was going to tell you a bunch of lies so you would break up with me."

Sarah replied, "You mean those lies about you flirting with her all year and the suggestive remarks about fooling around with her?"

Bill stammered a bit and said, "She's already talked with you, huh? But let me explain, it was just a game that she started and I played along with because she was my lab partner. "I didn't mean anything by it"

Sarah said, "Likely story!" "Let me be absolutely clear. You are my guy and I am worthy of your respect and loyalty. If you are going to be a flirt and dance around with every girl that looks at you, I am not your gal. You can take a hike right now."

Bill replied, "I promise you that I am not a "Skirt Chaser" and that I will not ever again flirt with another girl."

So Bill was forgiven and he and Sarah are once again sweethearts. All is well except for Bill's secret decision to join the army with Joe right after Bill and Sarah's honeymoon. She doesn't know and he is afraid to tell her.

Meanwhile, Bill runs into Joe the next day on the way to school and he has a problem. He begins to tell Bill saying, "I met this girl that just transferred into Midland High. She and I got along really great but she dropped a bombshell on me just as we were ending our first date. Guess what she told me?"

Bill replied, "She probably said she was really a boy or something. That stuff is popping up in high schools all around the country these days."

Joe said, "No she is not that way. It's worse. She likes guys and girls and one day wants to have a marriage of three, not two. She wants to know if that's ok with me"

Bill replies, "Well, what did you tell her?"

Joe continues, "I said that I'd get back to her. What do you think, Bill?"

After the stern lecture by Sarah about being exclusive to her, Bill says, "Why are you thinking of being with two girls when you can't hardly manage one? Besides, God frowns on such behavior. It is un-natural and against His desire for man."

Joe speaks out and says, " Who says it's wrong, God? How can I know for sure?"

Bill clears his throat and slowly replies, " Sarah showed me in the Bible where it says God made man in His own image and likeness and that He made them male and female, not male and two females or two girls or two boys. Sarah says this is what makes each of us special and of value."

So Joe accepts Sarah's Biblical answer, explained to him through Bill and they shift gears and look towards Bill's wedding and going into the Army.

Chapter Two

Marriage And Talk of War

Graduation finally arrives and Bill and Sarah, with their parent's approval, married and began preparations to set up housekeeping in Sarah's parent's basement apartment. It was small but adequate and was all theirs to start off a new life together. There was still that question of joining the Army. For now, it was just fun to be together and be grown up.

The Midland Community Church youth pastor married Bill and Sarah in the church. They spent the rest of the afternoon at the wedding reception, which was held in the church's fellowship hall.

Bill and Sarah could not afford an expensive fancy wedding but the church family blessed them with gifts, money and lots of food for the reception. They had a guest list of 140 friends, relatives and their church family.

The bridal party was made up of six bridesmaids and six ushers. Sarah's little sister Ann was the flower girl. Joe was the Best Man and Margie, Sarah's best friend, was the Maid of Honor.

Bill and Sarah danced the night away with their closest friends until Suzie, drinking from an open bourbon bottle, crashed the party claiming she was pregnant and Bill was the father.

Suzie started sobbing and said, "He is the father of my unborn baby." Bill's dad ushered the girl to a back room and calmed her down. Bill's mother drilled her to learn all the details so her story could be verified.

Bill was on trial in the court of public opinion but Suzie's display of anger got no sympathy from the wedding guests. Her story just didn't jive. Finally the parents of the bride asked her to leave or be arrested. So Suzie leaves but not before cursing Bill and his entire wedding guests.

Sarah gets Bill off to one side and asked the big question. "Did you sleep with Suzie and is she really pregnant?" You better tell me the truth because if I find out later, I'll never forgive you."

Bill tells Sarah, "It is not true, none of it. She is upset because I rejected her and told her in no uncertain terms that you were and still are my heartthrob."

Sarah tells Bill, "OK but remember, I'll never forgive you if you are lying."

So the wedding day continued and everyone celebrates Bill and Sarah's new life together. The night closes with Bill and Sarah spending their first night together as husband and wife in their new basement apartment. Bill hears Sarah softly say, "Come to bed my love."

High School sweethearts turned into lovers and lovers go on honeymoons. Bill and Sarah's honeymoon was a gift from Bill's dad; an all expense paid one-week stay at Niagara Falls, the most favored honeymoon spot among newlyweds of that day. It was perfect for the new couple to blend together and become one.

The next day Bill and Sarah flew out to Niagara Falls for a full week of fun and relaxation. It was their special time to be together.

Upon their arrival at the falls, Bill reads the big welcome sign that said: 3,160 tons of water flows over Niagara Falls every second. Sarah laughs and says, "I guess we are in the right place."

During their honeymoon, Bill and Sarah talked about how life would be for them being in the middle of WW II and afterwards.

Bill wanted to be a realtor and work in new construction. He said, "Many GI's would return from war wanting houses and starting families. It would be the perfect time to make a lot of money and raise a family."

Sarah was glad that Bill was thinking ahead and wanted to provide for their new family. She thought, "This will drive Bill to fight hard to stay safe and come back from the war alive."

She was glad that he hadn't signed up yet. She wanted as much time with her husband as possible.

The newlyweds ate in the local restaurants, shopped in the nearby stores and watched the water flow over the falls for hours at a time. It was spectacular. Everything was perfect until Bill said he had already joined up with Joe under the, "Buddy" system. He and Joe were scheduled to leave for boot camp one week after their return to Midland.

Sarah was furious and lashed out at Bill saying, "How could you do such a thing without discussing it with me? What if you never come back? What do I do then? You could have waited and been drafted or maybe the war would end sooner and you might not have gone at all. Now you have placed our marriage and future in jeopardy"

Bill laughed it off saying, "They can't kill me. I just got married. I have to come back."

The couple went back and forth with Sarah crying all the time and Bill saying it would be ok. They fell asleep in each other's arms to the sound of the water rushing over the falls. Sarah was forced to accept what was soon to be.

Sarah and Bill awoke to the reality that this new day was the last day of their honeymoon. Tomorrow, they would go home. Sarah looked at Bill and smiled, saying, "It's ok. We will work it out together. What will be will be. God will provide and take care of both of us."

Bill was glad that Sarah was no longer angry. He hugged her and said, "That's right, God will watch over us."

They spent the day together and packed that night for an early departure. Bedtime came quickly with so much to do.

However, Bill tossed and turned and was troubled in his spirit. He began to dream and saw himself and Joe in the thick of battle and watched, as if it were a movie, seeing himself being killed in action. He woke up screaming in a cold sweat. He said, "No, God no, I don't want to die"

Sarah woke up when Bill began to scream and tried to wake him up saying, "It's just a dream. You are having a nightmare. Wake up, Bill. Wake up!"

Bill finally woke up but was trembling. He said, "It seemed so real, as if I were really there."

Sarah comforted him and they cuddled and Bill fell asleep again. He woke up at 6 a.m. still shaking inside. He didn't want to go to war anymore but had no honorable way out. He had to go. So Bill kept it all inside and never told Sarah the full dream. All she knew is that he had a nightmare that he couldn't remember.

However, Bill never forgot the dream. He felt like he had jumped into the future and saw his own death. It haunted him for weeks until he remembered the youth pastor's last message before he went on his honeymoon.

Bill quickly went back into his memory trying to recall all of what his youth pastor said. All he could remember was something about God working everything out for good. He held on to that thought all through boot camp and his deployment.

Sarah and Bill spent their last night together talking, kissing and making love. Sarah wanted Bill to know that she loved him deeply and would be there for him when he returned. They prayed together as the sun rose over their city bringing a new day.

Bill promised that he would see her again and they would pick up where they left off. A few weeks later Bill's dad drove them to the bus station and he and Joe departed for boot camp.

Chapter Three

Boot Camp And Deployment



Ten Hut! Get in line you maggots. God may have your soul but I've got everything else. If you are a sissy, go home. We make boys into men, fighting men that will protect our country.

Who Wants To Be A Man?

Boot camp was not what Bill and Joe had expected. They were athletic but boot camp was triple the exercise, plus lots of book study and attitude adjustments...much more than high school. Bill looked at Joe and commented, "They are trying to cram years of knowledge into ten weeks of training. How are we expected to remember it all?"

Joe responds, "We have to remember because if we don't, we will fail the final test and stay in this hell hole another ten weeks."

So Joe and Bill studied hard and practice all the drills. Joe was honored with an expert marksman patch and Bill is promoted to company commander. They both displayed leadership skills and were selected for advanced training to become combat ready commandoes. They were being groomed to lead men into the largest armed invasion ever staged.

Army Basic Combat Training (BCT) is basic training or boot camp for civilians who want to join the military. Army BCT turns civilians into soldiers and teaches them marching, shooting, survival skills, and prepares them for life in the Army. BCT takes 10 weeks to complete.



Bill got a letter from Sarah almost every day but it was hard to write back because he was so tired after 12 + hours of drills, instruction and being yelled at by his drill sergeant. Bill and Joe finished BCT and went on for another 3-weeks of advanced combat training.

Bill had an opportunity to call home and talk with Sarah. It was after midnight but that was ok with Sarah. Bill wanted to hear her voice one more time before shipping out to Europe. Sarah answered the phone at 12:17 A. M. and immediately started crying when she heard his voice. It had been over three months since they were last together.

Bill spoke first saying, “Hi Honey” It was such a joy for Sarah to hear Bill’s voice again. Sarah began to cry.”

Then Bill said, “I love you and miss you terribly. I do not know when I can come home as we are under strict orders not to say anything about the war or what we are doing. I can say that it looks like we will be relocating to another camp for more training but I don’t know when.”

Sarah replies, “My heart and prayers are with you as are the prayers of our church. We pray every day for your safe return. Oh, guess what? I have some good news. I got a part time job in a small factory just outside of town and I am pregnant.”

Bill stammered and then said. “Did you say you were pregnant?” Sarah said, “That’s right. We’re going to have a baby.” Bill was overjoyed with the news saying, “I am going to be a father. How cool is that?”

“Bill”, Sarah said, “You know what this means, don’t you? It means that you must come home after the war. I hope our baby will be a boy. If it’s a girl, she and I will be waiting for you.” Bill said, “Ok Sarah, I will do my very best.” Then the phone connection began to get static on it and they said their last goodbyes.

Three days later Joe and Bill received their deployment papers. They were to report to the Norfolk Naval Base, Norfolk, VA. It is the world's biggest naval base. That’s where the troop transport ships were docked.

The Army decided to fly Bill and Joe to London England from Norfolk with other special forces instead of going by ship. Upon arrival in England they were assigned to set up last minute training for D-Day.” They had some time off and spent it in the canteen playing cards, throwing darts, and shooting pool.

Joe laughed and said to Bill, “See those British girls? They speak funny. They have a strange accent” Bill agreed and kept shooting pool but Joe was brave and asked one of them to dance.

It had been a while since Bill was with Sarah and female companionship would have been nice but Bill’s heart was still true to Sarah.

Bill and Joe did now know exactly what type of mission they were to go on and it was evident that it was important. They kept seeing new faces and meeting new soldiers from the 1st and 29th army divisions. They arrived by the busload. Everyone felt that there was something big about to happen but they would not even try to guess what.

Bill could not help but remember the terrible nightmare that he had back home when he was with Sarah. He knew the Normandy invasion was close and that he would be thrust into the middle of all out war. He also knew that the Germans were waiting and were holding strategic positions where they could have the advantage in a head to head conflict.

As Bill drifted back into his memories, Joe sees his blank stare and says, “A penny for your thoughts. What’s going on?”

Bill comes out of his blank stare and decides to share his nightmare with Joe. He says, “ The night before I left for boot camp I had a nightmare. It was so real that I thought I was pulled into the future. Joe, I saw myself being killed in action on one of the beaches of Normandy. I woke in a cold sweat trembling inside. Now that terrible dream is about to unfold. I know that I am not going to make it through this conflict and certainly not home to Sarah.”

Joe responds, “You can’t think that way. Sure, lots of us are going to die but the opposite is also true. Lots of us will live and we will win this war and return home to our loved ones.”

The next day, Joe and Bill get orders to board the troop ships that would transport the invasion force. It was time to see if Bill’s dream would come true or not. Would he be one of the nearly 37,000 men that died among the ground forces on D-Day?

Chapter Four

Battle of Omaha Beach



Bill and Joe were off loaded from the transport ship into a landing craft. Other ships were doing the same with their soldiers. Zero hour had come and the Invasion of Normandy had begun. It was 4:55 A. M. on June 6th 1944. Over 100,000 Allied troops made it to shore that day. But it was just beginning for Bill and Joe.

Bill looked at Joe and said, “ Well, here we go. Good luck my friend. God be with us both in our hour of despair.” Joe agreed saying, “Lord help us.”

After 30 minutes or so, there were hundreds of landing crafts circling the area. Many had already landed on the beaches of Normandy. Bill and Joe were headed towards Omaha Beach. The seas were up with high winds and waves. The temperature was 59 degrees.

Joe said to himself... “Get it together man.” Then he said, “I don’t want to die here, I don’t want to die.”

Nothing went as planned. In the predawn darkness, the crafts carrying the invasion force took longer than expected to form up, and many hit the beach without armor protection. The various waves of landing crafts became mixed up in the confusion.

Every landing craft was taking on water like crazy. Some of the landing crafts began sinking. Those that stayed afloat took enemy fire. Landing crafts were being hit by enemy shells and exploding. Most of the men succumbed to seasickness.

Bill said to Joe, “Look! The enemy fire spooked the Navy guy driving the boat. He is slowing down to a crawl. “Get to the beach!” Bill yelled. “Get this thing going!” His reprimand worked. The Navy guy gave it more power. As the boat sped up it hit a floating mine, about 300 yards from the beach”

Bill and Joe were tossed overboard into a rough sea and a barrage of enemy machinegun fire. They sank to the bottom right away because of the weight of their packs. They struggled for a while and then used their utility knives to cut loose and surfaced, only to hear bullets flying everywhere.

Then they hitched a ride from another landing craft by hanging on for dear life and moved closer to Omaha Beach. There was supposed to be a signal boat to guide them and other battlefield preparations that would protect them. None of it was there. There was no control boat out in the water, there were no bomb craters on the beach to use as foxholes, and no one never saw an Allied plane.

Bill and Joe played dead in the water letting the tide bring them into shore. They saw other soldiers lift their heads or stand up and were immediately shot by German snipers.”

Then Bill called to Joe saying, “Come on Joe, let’s run for cover near those rocks.” In the midst of enemy fire, they ran for their lives as bullets whistled in the air all around them.

“Thank God? Joe said to Bill. “We are safe for the moment.” He looked over at Bill again and said, “Where is the rest of our division?” Bill said, “Who knows? We’ll probable see them later today.”

Joe looked back over Omaha beach and saw it full of fallen comrades from 20-feet seaward of the water’s edge inward as far as the tide had carried them to shore. He knew within himself that he was looking at most of his division. Bill and Joe were the lucky ones.

Joe moved over to where Bill was, about 10 feet away and said, “At least your crazy nightmare was just a bad dream and not a vision of the future. You’re still here, buddy.”

After about an hour, Bill and Joe met five other men from another company and they slowly crawled and ran to higher ground, killing enemy snipers and destroying stationary machinegun nests on the way.

Finally they reached the 1st of many hedgerows. They stopped to survey the area when enemy fire came at them from several directions. This makeshift squad of seven men was face to face with an unknown number of German soldiers. Joe and some of the other men returned fire while Bill and two others crawled in a ditch to flank the enemy. Once in position, they killed all of Germans with rapid machinegun fire and grenades.

The five men that joined them on the beach decided to move on towards the first town. Bill and Joe were exhausted and stayed back to rest and regain their strength.

Chapter Five

Finding The Lost Coin

Bill and Joe were left all alone standing by a hedgerow. Joe saw a big tree and said to Bill, “Let’s rest under that tree. It will keep the sun off of us for awhile.” Bill agreed and they sat down to rest. Joe began to reminisce saying, “Boy, could I have a burger with fries and a cherry coke. Remember that little place Bill, where we hung out together with Sarah and all those other pretty gals?” Bill replied, “I sure do, Joe” Now Go to sleep, I’ll take the first watch.”

As Joe settles down and closes his eyes, Bill pulls his bayonet and began digging in the soil around the tree where he was sitting. He thought to himself, “This is a good way to pass the time.”

Suddenly Bill unearths a few broken pieces of pottery and a golden coin. He said, “Hey Joe, look what I just found. It’s a golden coin.” Joe mutters, “Ok Bill, that’s great”

Bill, excited says, “No really, it’s a golden coin but it is not French. It looks like a Spanish coin.” Joe sits up and says, “What’s a Spanish coin doing under a French tree?” Bill says, “Not sure but it must be valuable. The date is in the 17th century.” Bill tucks the coin in his wallet and says, “I’ll look it up when I get back stateside.”

Both Joe and Bill rest for a few hours. Then Bill says, “Get up Joe. We better move along and catch up to our unit, if it still exists.” Joe says to Bill, “Ok Partner” The two childhood friends, now grown combat soldiers move out along the Hedgerow towards the first town.

An hour and a half later, they meet up with 20 or so U.S. Army Infantrymen. As they talk and greet each other, from out of nowhere, the enemy launches a surprise attack and Bill was killed in action by an exploding mortar.

Joe is nowhere to be found and two other army guys were killed and four were severely wounded. Joe showed up a week later in a field hospital. His injuries were not life threatening.

The nightmare from the past had apparently come true. Bill is dead and so are his dreams for the future. Bill is now just a casualty in the official records of U.S. Army WW II files. Bill was one of more than 37,000 ground forces that died in the Battle of Normandy.

Bill's belongings are gathered together, and sent with his body stateside. His wife, Sarah, had just given birth to a baby boy when she receives the news that Bill was killed in action. His body and belongings arrived several weeks later.

Sarah's parents made all the funeral arrangements. The casket was not opened at the funeral because of the mortar explosion. After the funeral, Sarah's mother gave Sarah a small box with Bill's wallet and some other personal things inside. They were found near his body. That's all she had to remember her beloved husband. Tears came into her eyes. She thought, "What am I going to tell my son as he grows up and asked about his dad?"

They were high school sweethearts with dreams of the future. He promised her that he would come back home but she didn't really believe it would be in a casket. She vowed that she would never fall in love again.

After many hours of grieving, she put the box on a closet shelf where it remained until Bill Jr. was 10 years old...at which time Sarah proudly gave the box to Bill Jr. She said, "You are now old enough to have these memorial items. Take good care of them as they are all that is left of your dad."

Chapter Six

Bill Jr. And The Golden Coin

Bill Jr. opened the box and found his dad's wallet. He said to himself, "How can I remember someone that I never knew?" Then he began to look inside the wallet where he saw pictures of his dad with a few Army buddies, a military ID, and even a few dollar bills. Then he found a secret compartment. He shook the wallet hard and a shiny golden coin fell on to the floor. He noticed that it was a Spanish coin by the writing on it and that it was very old.



He played with the coin every day. He even showed it to his friends and other boys at school but they said it was a fake. Bill Jr. took the coin everywhere and kept boasting how it was a valuable Spanish coin that his dad found in France and that one-day it would make him rich.

He often wondered, "How could a Spanish coin get buried in French soil" No one knew how the coin got there but the mystery was big in Bill Jr.'s mind. He would dream up battles with ships and soldiers with swords and ancient weapons. Having the golden coin brought him closer to his dad because he felt that his dad would have thought the same way.

Several days later a group of boys from Bill Jr.'s school tried to take the coin away from him, again saying he was stupid and the coin was a fake. Bill Jr. pushed one of the boys and ran into the forest. The boys chased after him throwing rocks.

Bill Jr. didn't want the boys to have his dad's coin so he tossed it into the forest saying, in anger, "it's just an old coin." The boys stopped chasing when they saw him toss the coin. However, the golden coin bounced off a tree and landed right in front of a squirrel that grabbed it and ran away.

Bill Jr. chased the squirrel but couldn't catch it. Then he heard a gunshot in a distance and decided to get out of the forest. He ran home and told his mother what had happened saying to Sarah, " Mom, I lost the coin" Sarah said, "What coin?" and Bill Jr. said, "the one that was in dad's wallet. It was a Spanish coin that was over 300 years old."

Sarah was beside herself and was angry with her son. "Look at me", said Sarah to Bill Jr. "You should have shown it to me right away. Maybe it was worth something. I wonder how your dad got it in the 1st place?" "Maybe we can find it, said Bill Jr. Sarah replied, "Not now, I am too busy and it's getting dark" And so ended the search for the Golden Coin.

Sarah prayed that night saying, " Dear God, I know we are not suppose to chase after riches but things are getting worse in my finances. Please help me and show me what to do."

Sarah sat on her bed and opened her bible. She didn't know just where to read. Her eyes fell on the 28th verse of Romans chapter eight. She read the verse out loud saying, "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."

It was as if God was talking directly to Sarah in response to her prayer. She thought to herself, "I love God and am a Christian which means I am called. That qualifies me for this special move of God. He will work everything together for good, even the bad things that happened to me before. Thank you Heavenly Father."

Sarah went to sleep that night with a lighter burden than when she started out that day. She had an unusual peace that could only be God's favor upon her.

Chapter Seven

The Hunter And The Golden Coin

While running away, the squirrel crossed the path of a hunter named Sam that was squirrel hunting in the area. Sam took a shot at the squirrel with his 22-caliber rifle and thought he had hit it. He ran to where the squirrel was but it was gone. All he saw was a golden coin laying on a rock. It sparkled in the sunlight. He picked up the coin and went home without bagging a squirrel that day.

Sam tucked the coin in his wallet the same way Bill Jr.'s dad did and went on his way back to where he lived at the other end of the state. The golden coin became a good luck charm for Sam. He liked to show it off every chance he could.

One day his boss asked him to move to a small town just outside of Odessa, TX and to take over that office as its manager. Sam took the challenge and moved to Midland, TX, the small town where the office was located. He would be the new manager of an insurance satellite office. Sam was a Christian and loved people. He quickly found a church and began to volunteer as a youth worker.

Meanwhile Sarah and Bill Jr. moved back to Midland from Odessa to live with her mother as times were hard and she could not make it on her own. Sarah was a single mom. Her vow to not marry was still in force.

She joined the same church that Sam belonged to and Bill Jr. started attending the church youth group meetings.

Sam and Sarah met in church and began dating soon after. This was a hard decision for Sarah because Bill was her heartthrob and she felt that he could never be replaced. But Sam was very much like Bill and he adored her and loved to spend time with Bill Jr. Sarah had never dated since Bill died.

Bill Jr. had anger issues that went back to never having a dad. The other kids teased him about it. He and Sam spent many hours talking and Sam became a father figure to him.

Sam and Sarah dated off and on for three months. She still had problems with dating. Bill Jr. was happy that Sam and his mother were dating. He really liked Sam and hoped that soon he would get a dad...but he was sad that he never knew his real father. He had pictures to look at but it was hard to imagine his dad being with him.

He could only wonder what his real dad was like and if Sam was anything like him. He constantly asked his mother and she told him some stories about when she was with his dad in high school and the 1st year of marriage before he went off to war. She assured him that Sam was very much like his dad.

One night, when Sam and Sarah were on a date, she asked him, "where do you hail from? I don't know anything about you."

Sam shared the story of his WW II ordeal, how he was severely wounded in the invasion of Omaha Beach. He told Sarah, "All I can remember is a loud blast. When I woke up, I was in an army hospital. I suffered severe burns on my face, torso and hands. Plus, I lost my memory due to a brain injury."

"It is a miracle that I am even alive. I was in the hospital for three years and underwent 14 different operations. Because they had no idea who I was, they could not restore my looks. The plastic surgeons said they would make me handsome but, well, you can be the judge of that."

Sam continued, "I picked the name of the doctor that worked on me. His name was Sam and it seemed to fit me too. Who I really am is still a mystery. I guess I'll never know. The doctor said one day it all will come back to me but that hasn't happened as yet."

Sarah said, "Wow, that is some story. You could have a wife and kids somewhere."

Sam replied, "Not likely, I was barely out of high school. There wasn't time to marry and have kids. I was just a lonely soldier away from home, I think."

A few weeks later, Sam took Sarah and Bill Jr. to a local ice cream parlor for a dip or two of their new cherry vanilla flavor. While eating ice cream, Bill Jr. asked Sam about his good luck charm and how he got it. Bill Jr. never got a good look at it.

Sam said, "Sure, it is quite a story. I went squirrel hunting one day back before I met you guys. It was a long drive for me to get to the right spot but finally I made it to Odessa, TX. That is supposed to be the best spot. It was famous for the biggest and best tasting squirrel in the country.

I walked many miles through the forest hoping to bag a squirrel. Then I finally saw a big squirrel cross my path and I quickly fired off a round but when I got to where the squirrel was, the only thing I found was a shiny gold coin laying on a rock. It was sparkling in the sunlight."

Bill Jr.'s ears perked up and his eyes got bigger and bigger as he listened to Sam talk about his lucky charm. He asked to see the coin and immediately realized that it was his lost coin. Bill Jr. said, "Where is this place that you were hunting?"

Low and behold, it was the same forest where Bill Jr. tossed his golden coin. Bill Jr. jumped in saying, "This coin is mine. It is the same one that I found in my dad's wallet. He demanded that Sam give it back to him."

Sam said, "The golden coin is mine. It has become my good luck charm. I have no interest in letting it go". He also said, laughingly, "it couldn't be your coin because I got it from a squirrel."

Bill Jr. and Sam went back and forth arguing over who owned the coin. Sam said to Bill Jr., “You tossed it away so you have no more right to it.” But Bill Jr. argued, “I tossed it only so the other boys would not get it. I went back later looking for it but didn’t find it.”

Bill Jr. appeals to mom for help saying, “Mom, make him give it to me”

Then Sarah put the matter to rest. She said, “If this coin is the same one that God gave to my Bill, then it rightfully belongs to my son.” Then she looked into Sam’s eyes and asked for the coin.

Sam and Sarah stared at each other for a few more seconds as if to see something in each other’s eyes that was not there before...something familiar like a glimmer of love that was lost and now found.

Sam spoke, laughingly, “Sarah, my darling, you are now my good luck charm. God brought me to you from who knows where but it’s a miracle. I no longer need a good luck charm.” Sam places the coin in Sarah’s hand which brings back a familiar feeling that he felt somewhere before but he wasn’t sure where. Sarah took the coin and put it away for safekeeping.

Chapter Eight

Dead? Or Alive?

After Sarah put the golden coin away for safekeeping, she looked again at Sam and said, “What is it about you that is so familiar? I can see it in your eyes and hear it in your voice and even feel it in your touch. Who are you, really?”

Then Sarah reached out and touched Sam, saying, “Oh My God! Are you are my Bill?” Could it be? Her words hit him like a ton of bricks and his head began to ache and his throat dried up and he began to remember.

“I remember”, he cried out in tears. “I remember!”, looking at Sarah, “We’re married.” and, looking at Bill Jr., “You are my son.” “I remember our wedding and the gang at Midland High and joining the Army and finding the golden coin and being blown up by a mortar in the battle of Normandy. What happened to Joe? Did He make it?”

Sam and Sarah hugged and cried together for quite a while. The realization that Sam is really Bill and Bill was not killed in WW II had to sink in. They spent the next few hours talking about what happened to both of them over the past ten years. Bill Jr. listened and hung on to every word. He wanted to know everything. This was his real dad. He couldn’t help but join in on some of the hugs and cry along with Sam and Sarah.

Sarah looked over at Bill Jr. and said, “Honey, Sam is really Bill, your real father. He is the Bill Anderson that was my childhood sweetheart and my husband. They said he died but he didn’t. He was lost but we just found him.”

Bill Jr. looked back at Sarah and said, “I know. He didn’t die in the war? Wow! I have a dad.”

Sam changed his name back to Bill and married Sarah again, just to be sure. They had a big wedding with all the now older classmates and their families.

The local media caught wind of Bill’s story and began to research into the matter. They wanted to know who was in Bill’s grave at Arlington National Cemetery. They also wanted to know how much Bill remembers that could be verified.

The question of who was buried at Arlington Cemetery could never be known. That body was placed in the Unknown Soldier's section of the Cemetery. (DNA testing did not begin until 1983.)

Bill said, "How about a knowledge test where you ask me questions and I answer them." It was decided that Bill's classmates, parents and Sarah be the ones to ask the questions. It got so much attention that the Q & A session was televised on National T.V.

Sarah began the questioning with, "Where is the beauty mark on my body?" Bill replied, "You don't have a beauty mark" "That is correct."

Steve, a former basketball team player asked, "Which position did you play on the basketball team" Bill answered, "I played in every game and my position was forward guard" "That is also correct."

Bill's dad asked, "Where was our favorite fishing hole" Bill answered, "That's easy, we never went fishing because of my basketball schedule and your work" "That's right"

The Q & A session went on for the better part of an hour and Bill never missed a question. He got all of them right.

Sarah decided to ask one last question. She look right into Bills eyes and said, "Why did you sleep with Suzie? Bill quickly answered, "I Never Had Sex With That Woman" Sarah replied, "Good"

Bill was declared "Alive" by the local court system. He was able to get his driver's license restored, military status corrected, and all other identification papers back in order.

Chapter Nine

The Mystery of The Golden Coin

Bill looked into the value of the golden coin. He said to Sarah and Bill Jr. "This coin was buried for over 300 years and then found, only to travel across the sea to Bill Jr. so he could toss it into the forest, so a squirrel could steal it, so I could find it and give it to Sarah.

God didn't cause the hurt and suffering we all went through these past ten years. I was dead and you guys were alone but God was always with us. He was watching over us and causing all things to work together for our good and His purposes. This is a true miracle and the Mystery of The Golden Coin."

Bill and Sarah took the coin to a dealer in foreign coins and discovered that it was extremely rare. In fact, up to this point there were only three coins with that date in existence. Sarah's coin would be #4. After validating its authenticity, Sarah put the shinny golden coin up for sale.

The boys that chased Bill Jr. calling the coin fake were wrong. Bill Jr. made sure they knew it. Bill and Sarah got more than enough money from the sale of the coin to take care of their new family for a long time.

There was enough to pay for Bill Jr.'s College, Sarah and Bill's remarriage and even put a down payment on a nice home in Midland, TX. Oh yea, and they bought a new car.

Sarah, Bill Sr. and Bill Jr. were amazed at the way God does things. Sarah said, "We can't help but marvel at the way God works in the lives of His children. God is certainly a God of miracles.

They said my Bill was killed in the war but here he is alive. They said my son would never know his real dad but here they are together. They said times would be hard for Bill Jr. and me but God has provided financial security for many years to come.... all because of a shiny golden coin that was lost and found again 300 years later. He surely does work in strange ways to bring everything together for good.”

Conclusion

Every story should have a hero. Sarah is the hero of The Mystery of The Golden Coin. She demonstrates faith and applies God-given truth to life situations, even in troubling times.

The teenage romance that blossomed into love only to be cut off by war still burned in Sarah’s heart. Although she felt sorrow and suffered from the effects of war and tragedy, she was able to forge ahead in life towards whatever destiny lay ahead, knowing that God would work everything together for good because she loved Him and was called according to His purposes. (Romans 8:28)

I wrote the story as a result of a dream that I had one night in which the essence of the story was given to me. I believe it was from God because I usually do not dream in such detail nor do I remember my dreams. If I remember, I figure it must be from God. The story is fiction but the WW II facts presented are true.

Hidden Biblical Truths

There are certain Biblical truths that are hidden in the story. They are:

1. The Mystery Of The Golden Coin... is that God will use anything to bless His children, even an old coin from the past. If you remember, Moses had a walking stick in his hand and God used it to open the red sea and devour the magician’s snakes. What’s in your hand? It could be just what God needs to bless you.
2. God will go to great lengths to accomplish His will, even using a squirrel to position His provision in the right place. Remember the disobedient prophet in the Old Testament? God used the donkey he was riding to speak to him in a rebuke for his disobedience.
3. God can heal broken bodies, broken hearts and broken dreams. Remember the blind man that received his sight when Jesus touched him? How about the woman with an issue of blood? Or maybe the lepers that were cleansed? The Bible is full of these types of miracles.
4. Time is irrelevant with God. He will not forget or slumber. Eternity does not punch a clock and God is never too late. Remember Lazarus that was raised from the dead? How about the scripture that says “But do not forget this one thing dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day.” 2 Peter 3:8
5. The future does not have to be like the past. It can be different and usually is. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed way; behold, all things are become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17
6. God is working in the lives of His children even when it doesn’t seem like it. “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” John 14:18
7. He is always true to His word. “So shall my word be that goes forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” Isaiah 55:11

Salvation Is For “Whosoever”

Please pray that God will save your soul from eternal damnation and give you peace in these last days. Read what God says in His Bible. It was written just for you.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life” John 3:16.

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” 2 Timothy 1:9

“And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Acts 2:21

“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Romans 10:10

May our Lord bless you and keep you. May Our Lord cause His face to shine upon you. May Our Lord give you peace of mind and prosper you in all that you do. Amen.

About The Author Rev. John Marinelli



Rev. Marinelli is a Christian Minister, Author, Playwright, Songwriter, and Poet. He is an ordained Christian minister. He is the Founder of a Christian web based resource center for Books, Inspirational Poetry, Audio Sermons, Articles, Reference Materials and more.

Rev. Marinelli has authored over 80 Christian eBooks and currently offers them as a free download from his website. He also has published three paperback books, **“The Art of Writing Christian Poetry, Pulpit Poems** and **“Rhyme Time”** a children’s book of original story poems.

He and his wife, Marilyn co-authored an audio book called, **“The Story of Jesus”** which is a collection of Inspirational Poems, Scripture Readings, and Original Musical Score. They have also co-authored **“Together Forever,”** a marital enrichment home study seminar.

Rev. Marinelli has appeared with his wife on several T.V. programs including “Bay Focus” in Tampa, Florida, Trinity Broadcasting Network in Jacksonville Beach and Miami, Florida, as well as, numerous Christian radio station interviews over the last 35 years.

John is currently retired from the Sales & Marketing arena and lives with his wife in the Ocala, Florida area where he volunteers as the Vice President of Have A Heart For Companion Animals, Inc. a not for profit animal concern and education organization. He is also the producer of The Johnny Mello Show, a doo-wop, country, and rock-n-roll performance based show and dance.

Rev. Marinelli enjoys playing chess, writing Christian eBooks, Christian fiction short stories and singing Karaoke with his friends.

Our Greatest Fan

God is faithful
Even when we are not.
He watches over His Word,
Crossing "T's" and dotting every dot.

He is a very present help
In times of sorrow and pain.
We can trust in His Word
For sunshine and latter rain.

He alone holds our future
In the palms of His hands.
He leads us as a loving Shepherd
Into green pastures and fruitful lands.

God is faithful
To honor His covenant with man.
He, though LORD of all,
Is our greatest fan.

Written By Rev.
John Marinelli



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