

## Miracles in disguise

We all love miracles. Over the past couple months or so, my wife, Arlene, and I have been the beneficiaries of a few unlikely coincidences which resulted in unexpectedly good things happening in our lives. We recognize these happenstances as miracles, because of our belief in God's providence.

I believe God continuously intervenes into our lives in miraculous ways, sometimes these miracles come disguised as negative circumstances. There is much about the Gospel of Christ that is counterintuitive. It is in dying that we receive life. It is in giving that we receive. We are to "*count it all joy*" when we are tested by the trials of life (James 1:2-3). The trials we face in life are actually "*opportunities*" for personal growth and future blessings.

Let me illustrate this by sharing a story from my own life. Years ago, I owned a successful print shop. One day, a customer of mine shared with me the opportunity of a lifetime to invest \$10,000 in a penny stock. The prospectus looked good, and I believed that this was an opportunity get in on the ground floor of a very exciting tech company in the making. I had never invested in the stock market before, and probably would never have invested in the future in any stock, let alone a risky penny stock, had it not been for that one customer.

So, I borrowed the \$10,000 and invested it in that company. At the same time, I learned how to follow the stock market online and how to actively trade other penny stocks, all with borrowed money. This eventually led to active day trading with all types of stocks. Over the next few years, this eventually led to the loss of my business, bankruptcy, and complete and devastating financial ruin.

This experience greatly humbled me, and through it all I learned to greatly appreciate God's forgiveness during a time when I felt very unworthy of it. Much of my theological ideas and writings were a direct result of that negative experience.

Since then, I have financially recovered, and I have learned many valuable life lessons. Only through those negative circumstances would it have been possible for me to learn those lessons.

The entire trajectory of my life changed the moment that person walked into my print shop years ago with the opportunity of a lifetime. Was that just an unfortunate accident, or was it actually a miracle in disguise?