

WHEN GOD
Winks AT YOU

How God Speaks Directly to You
through the Power of Coincidence



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GODWINKS ARE PERSONAL

You've had another one of those days. Everything seems uncertain.

You think: *Wouldn't it be great to wake up one morning and have everything certain?* Certain in love? Certain about your job? Certain about your future?

Who could you talk to about this? Bigger question, who'd listen?

Tentatively your eyes drift skyward.

Hello? Are You there, God?

Then your mind quickly assesses the immensity of your request. You want God to listen to *you*, right now. How ridiculous. There are six billion people on this planet. What if they're all calling God at the same time?

You slump. Deeper into the dumps.

Then—something happens.

A silly little thing.

Someone you just thought about for the first time in years, telephones out of the blue—a silly little coincidence, so silly you shrug it off. Or a prayer you didn't really expect to be answered—was! Immediately, your left brain repeats something you once heard: *There's a mathematical explanation for everything.*

“But . . .” you say, “mayyyyybe . . . it's *not* just coincidence or chance!”

Maybe God *is* communicating with you.

Yes, directly to *you!*

You shake your head.

Naw. Couldn't be.

But . . . what if God *is* communicating with you—in a nonverbal way—making a little miracle happen, right in front of you? After all, God doesn't speak to people in a human voice. He's God . . . He'd do something no one else could do, just to show you it's *Him!*

If so, that would mean that He *is* listening! Right?

He *has* heard you!

What if through this odd little coincidence, or answered prayer, He's sending you—*you* . . . out of all those billions of

people—a direct, *personal* message of reassurance? To stop worrying? To keep the faith? That everything will be all right?

This, my dear reader, is the essence of this book.

THIS BOOK IS ABOUT YOU

Every time you receive what some call a coincidence or an answered prayer, it's a direct and personal message of reassurance from God to you—what I call a *Godwink*.

It's similar to when you were a kid sitting at the dining room table. You looked up and saw someone you loved looking back. Mom or Dad or Granddad. They gave you a little wink.

You had a nice feeling from that small silent communication.

What did it mean? Probably—“Hey kid . . . I'm thinking about you right this moment. I'm proud of you. Everything is going to be all right.”

That's what a godwink is.

Every so-called coincidence or answered prayer is God's way of giving you *His* small, silent communication. A little wink saying, “Hey kid! I'm thinking of *you* . . . right now!”

The LORD your God
has chosen you
out of all the
peoples on the
face of the earth
to be . . . his
treasured
possession.

—DEUTERONOMY 7:6 NIV

It's a clear message of reassurance—that no matter how uncertain your life seems at the moment, He *will* help move you toward certainty.

And it's a sign that you're never alone. In fact, you're always on His GPS—a global positioning system I like to call God's Positioning System.

In this book I aim to show that every godwink that happens in your life is a very personal experience. I've collected one compelling story after another to convince you that you will never again have to wonder where you rank among those six billion others in this world. Like those in the stories that follow, the instant you receive a godwink, you'll know it. You are right there at the top.

WHEN IT'S CRYSTAL CLEAR

In Anaheim, California, Mavis Jackson drove past the Crystal Cathedral. For twenty years, she said the same thing: “Someday I'm going to go there.”

One Sunday morning, she did. Putting on her best outfit, she simply decided, “Today is the day.”

Getting there early, Mavis took a seat in the middle and watched the huge three-thousand-seat megachurch fill with

people. She was awed as the majestic voices of the choir seemed to encircle her. She marveled at the manner in which a huge section of the glass ceiling slid open at the start of the service as if to invite even the birds to worship.

At the end of the service, Mavis stood up and waited for the aisle to clear. Trying not to sound too excited, she said to the young lady who'd been next to her, "I am so glad I came today. Wasn't it wonderful?"

The young woman nodded.

"Are you from here?" asked Mavis.

"No, I'm from the Midwest," said the young woman, adding, "I'm actually here on a mission. To find my birth mother."

There was a pause.

"I know how you must feel," said Mavis. "A long time ago, I had to give up a little girl for adoption. I didn't want to . . . but . . ."

Another pause.

The young woman looked deeply into Mavis's eyes.

"Do you . . . remember her birthday?"

"Yes," said Mavis cautiously. "October 30th."

"That's *my* birthday," gasped the young woman.

That's right! A remarkable "coincidence"—a godwink—had reunited a long lost mother and daughter. What are the odds of that?

They sat down.

The young woman introduced herself as Cheryl Wallace.

Cheryl explained that for years she had been haunted by the lingering uncertainty of not knowing who her birth mother was and, more important, why her mother had given her up.

In her small Midwest town, everyone was discouraging.

“You’re looking for a needle in a haystack,” counseled the town clerk.

“There’s no trace of her,” said others.

Eventually, a suggestion from someone who thought she’d once heard that Cheryl’s birth mother had moved to Orange County,

California, led her to this time and place.

Even on her most optimistic days, Cheryl *never* could have forecast such a remarkable outcome—that such uncertainty would end with such certainty, in a manner that only God could have made happen.

And when they confirmed that their wonderful miracle was true—that they were long lost mother and daughter—they knew that Mother’s Day would never be the same again.

In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps.

—PROVERBS 16:9 NIV



What can you learn from Mavis and Cheryl's stories? That a mighty force is out there, bigger than all of us, watching over us, directing our lives. And when we step out in faith, as demonstrated by Cheryl in looking for her mother, we *can* receive the desires of our heart. We can turn uncertainty into certainty.

I wonder if, in your past, you were challenged to step out in faith . . . perhaps at an early age. And, as a result, you were given a firm affirmation that your faith would be rewarded. If so, perhaps your experience parallels the one that follows.

TIM'S AMAZING STORY

“When you grow up in a place like Chagrin Falls, Ohio,” says world famous comedian Tim Conway, “it’s a religious experience in itself. Everyone in town cares for you . . . watches out for you.”

Tim Conway’s hometown personified Norman Rockwell normalcy. Between Sunday services at the community’s two

churches, the town folk, like a huge family, involved themselves in each other's lives. Doctors left home each morning to mend hurts, mechanics to fix people's cars, and teachers to grow the minds of children while little girls hopscotched on chalk-etched sidewalks and boys balanced bamboo fishing poles as they made their way to the river bank.

At the age of twelve, Tim had a paper route, tasted chewing gum from the bottom of a chair, and wished he could own a Red Ryder BB gun.

God was a large, mysterious presence in the boy's life. Even though he had no proof that God existed, everybody said He did, and there was no reason to doubt them.

Also looming large in the mind of the Chagrin Falls boy was the annual Blossom Festival, highlighted by the biggest parade of the year and the arrival of the carnival.

Down by the river, a magical mini-village sprang up overnight. A giant Ferris wheel stretched higher than the church tower, the repetitive song of the merry-go-round filled the air, and the fragrance of popcorn and axle grease reached his nostrils.

Fifty cents jangled in Tim's pocket as he made his way to the midway after Saturday chores. He liked the feel of turning the dimes in his pocket.

After drinking a Coke and buying a ticket for the Ferris

wheel, he carefully conducted a survey of the game booths, ascertaining which might secure him the best prize.

Then he saw it! A white plastic crucifix that glowed in the dark, hanging on a green ribbon. For some unknown reason, its lure was powerful.

A man with long hair and dirty fingernails announced that for a mere ten cents, Tim could surely win a nice prize . . . maybe even the one he was eyeing. Grasping the fishing pole, Tim waved the line and hook above the small pool of water where sixty plastic ducks bobbed, some designating a prize but only one entitling its captor to the crucifix that glowed in the dark.

First dime, first try. Nothing.

Second dime, second try . . . he hooked a plastic duck. But only a cheap charm was his reward.

Third dime, last try. One more worthless item.

With each failure, the degree of difficulty became more apparent, and the crucifix more desirable. But he was out of money.

Tim began walking back home, thinking about how good that cross would have looked, glowing in the dark, in his room at night.

Slumping head down, pondering his plight, Tim wished he could have had it.

Darn it.

That instant he spotted the treasure . . . a shiny dime . . . lying on the sidewalk. Reaching down in what retrospectively seemed like slow motion, Tim lifted that dime and broke into a trot back to the midway.

Delight yourself
also in the Lord,
And He shall give
you the desires of
your heart.

—PSALM 37:4 NKJV

Again he surveyed the situation. One chance in sixty to rescue that glow-in-the-dark crucifix from those murky waters. With his hand in his pocket, he rolled the dime in his fingers just to be

sure it was still there. But this was too big a moment. This required big attention.

He left the midway.

Against the trunk of a large maple tree, Tim placed his head on his arm and decided to test the mysterious power of God.

“Lord . . .” he hesitated, unsure of the proper words to speak to the Almighty, “I would . . . really like . . . that white cross. The one . . . on the green ribbon . . . that glows in the dark.”

Tim turned from the tree and walked firmly to the carnival booth. Now familiar with him, the man with the long hair and dirty fingernails looked down at Tim, slightly raised an eyebrow, and stretched out his grimy palm.

The dime emerged from Tim's pocket and was quickly parted from him.

The man handed him the pole.

Tim furrowed his brow, pursed his lips just enough for the tip of his tongue to stick out, steadied the pole above the water, and with the concentration of a major league pitcher, he dipped the hook . . . and snatched the number-one duck from the odds of the impossible—awarding him the glow-in-the-dark white crucifix on a green ribbon!

“I kept that cross under my pillow until I went to college,” says Tim. “I still have it.”

Through many subsequent years, each containing chapters of uncertainty—from college exams to casting calls—Tim Conway was always bolstered by the assurance he'd gained that day, next to a maple tree at the carnival in Chagrin Falls. A small trinket was his enduring confirmation that he'd had a personal answer to his prayer—a godwink he'd never forget.

TEST

How about you? Does it seem, like it did to Tim Conway, that God is a mysterious, intangible entity? People say He exists, but you're not quite sure?

Why don't you test Him?

Try putting your total trust in His existence, as Tim did, and just see if you, too, receive a direct, personal communication by way of a wink.

WHEN GOD SMILES

Danielle loved smiley faces. She'd stick them up around her room. Send them in greeting cards. Draw them on correspondence—a round face with two eyes and a smile.

“They matched her personality,” said her father, Daniel Heard.

A musically gifted nearly nineteen-year-old, she was about to journey to Los Angeles from her home in Michigan to meet with record producers who thought her songs—she'd composed more than twenty—might have commercial appeal.

Then the tragedy happened. A car out of control. A head-on collision. She died.

We simply cannot fathom the pain borne by her grieving parents and Danielle's two older sisters. Life does not prepare us for that kind of heartbreak.

Nine months later, her father was still feeling agonizing