

## @ One Dollar and 11 Cents Miracle

Dr. James W. Moore – author of 40 books, preacher and elder in the United Methodist Church – tells the story of Tess, a precocious 8-year-old girl.

One day, she heard her mom and dad talking in a serious and somber tone about her little brother, Andrew. Tess didn't understand everything they were saying, but she got the gist. Andrew was very, very sick ... and the parents were completely out of money. They would have to move out of their house and into a small apartment because they didn't have enough money for the doctor bills and the house payment.

On top of that, only a very expensive surgery could save Andrew now, and they could not find anyone to lend them the money. Just then, Tess heard her father say to her tearful mother in whispered desperation, "Only a miracle can save Andrew now."

Tess ran to her room, pulled out a glass jelly jar from its hiding place in her closet. She poured out all the change on the floor and counted it carefully. She then put the change back in the jar, put the jar under her arm, slipped out the back door, and ran down to the Rexall Drugstore six blocks away.

The pharmacist was talking to a man intently, and at first, he didn't notice Tess standing there. She waited patiently for a while, and then dramatically cleared her throat. Still no luck; the pharmacist did not see or hear her. Finally, Tess got his attention by taking a quarter out of her jelly jar and tapping it on the glass counter. That did it.



The pharmacist noticed her and said, "Just a minute. I'm talking to my brother from Chicago whom I haven't seen for ages."

"Well, I want to talk to you about my brother," Tess said. "He's really, really sick – and I want to buy a miracle. His name is Andrew, and he has something growing inside his head, and my daddy says only a miracle can save him now. So, how much does a miracle cost? I have the money to pay for it. It's all that I have saved. If it isn't enough, I will get the rest. Just tell me how much a miracle costs."

The pharmacist's brother was a well-dressed man. He stooped down and asked Tess, "What kind of miracle does your brother need?"

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“I don’t know,” she replied, with her eyes welling up. “I just know he’s really sick, and Mommy says he needs an operation. But my parents can’t pay for it, so I want to use my money.”

“How much do you have?” asked the man from Chicago.

“One dollar and 11 cents,” Tess said proudly. “It’s all the money I have in the world, but I can get some more if I need to.”

“Well, you are in luck,” the man said with a smile. “One dollar and 11 cents is the exact price of a miracle for little brothers.”

He took the money in one hand and with the other he took hold of her mitten and said, “Take me to where you live. I want to see your brother and meet your parents. Let’s see if I have the kind of miracle you need.”

That well-dressed man from Chicago was Dr. Carlton Armstrong, who just happened to be a noted neurosurgeon. The operation was successfully completed without charge. It wasn’t long until Andrew was home again and doing well.

Tess’ mom and dad were so grateful. They were talking one night about the chain of events that had saved Andrew’s life. “That surgery,” her mom said, “was a real miracle.” And then she added, “I just wonder how much it would have cost.”



Tess smiled. She knew exactly how much a miracle cost – one dollar and 11 cents, plus the skill and graciousness of a great doctor. And, of course, the gracious, sacrificial love of an 8-year-old big sister who was willing to give all she had to save her little brother.

That’s a great story. It is powerful because it reminds us in a dramatic way that the Spirit of Christ within can empower and enable us to be extravagant in our generosity, to be extravagant in our gratitude, and to be extravagant in our graciousness.

– Beecher Hunter