

The Photo on the Mirror

Longing to leave her poor Brazilian neighborhood, Christina wanted to see the world. Discontent with a home having only a pallet on the floor, a wash basin and a wood-burning stove, she dreamed of a better life in the city.

Max Lucado, author and minister, tells her story in his book *No Wonder They Call Him the Savior*.

One morning, wanting to escape the humble life she found herself in, Christina slipped away, breaking her mother's heart. Knowing what life on the streets would be like for her young, attractive daughter, Maria hurriedly packed her bags to go find her.

On her way to the bus stop, Maria entered a drugstore to get one last thing. Pictures.



She sat in the photograph booth, closed the curtain and spent all she could on pictures of herself. With her purse full of small, black-and-white photos, she boarded the next bus to Rio de Janeiro.

Maria knew Christina had no way of earning money. She also knew that her daughter was too stubborn to give up. When pride meets human hunger, a human will do things that before were unthinkable.

Knowing this, Maria began her search. Bars, hotels, nightclubs – anyplace with the reputation for street-walkers or prostitutes. She went to them all.

And at each place, she left her picture – taped on a bathroom mirror, tacked to a hotel bulletin board, fastened to a corner phone booth. And on the back of each photo, she wrote a note.

It wasn't too long before both the money and the pictures ran out, and Maria had to go home. The weary mother wept as the bus began its long journey back to her small village.

It was a few weeks later that young Christina descended the hotel stairs. Her young face was tired. Her brown eyes no longer danced with youth, but spoke of pain and fear. Her laughter was broken. Her dream had become a nightmare.

A thousand times over she had longed to trade these countless beds for her secure pallet. Yet, the little village was – in too many ways – too far away.

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As she reached the bottom of the stairs, her eye noticed a familiar face. She looked again, and there on the lobby mirror was a small picture of her mother.

Christina's eyes burned and her throat tightened as she walked across the room and removed the small photo.

Written on the back was this compelling invitation, *Whatever you have done, whatever you have become, it doesn't matter. Please come home.*

And she did.

The true story told by Max Lucado mirrors the love and grace of our Lord.

As human beings, we are an imperfect people. Whatever our lifestyle – with actions either intentional or unintentional, doing things our own way instead of what God desires for us – we find ourselves far away from God.

But the good news is this: Jesus voluntarily left the throne room of heaven to take on human flesh, live among us, and through His teaching and example, become the picture of what a fulfilled and successful life can be. His death on the cross – in our place – and our trust in Him assures us a place in heaven.



So Christ's invitation to each of us is: "Whatever you have done, whatever you have become, it doesn't matter. Please come home."

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter