

MIRACLES

Hoff Reflection | MAR 30, 2016



Some Reflections from a Conversation with John Hoff with Kirsten Rohde

We had a good conversation at Pathwork, Sunday March 20 about miracles.

We are in a process of each one of us selecting something to read, and sharing it for discussion on a Sunday night. Some of our reading comes from issues of the journal, Parabola. John Hoff chose the issue on miracles and here are some of his answers to our questions:

One of the articles in the journal is about Native Americans and their views on miracles. How did you experience this in your time with natives in the Yukon?

When I spent time with the Indian tribe as a boy, they liked to talk about the day that had just happened and what when on, describing things that they had seen during the day. They seemed to enjoy the small events during a day, and be grateful for them. It could be described as miracles of daily life. I remember taking walking trips with them that could be several days long. They were not sure there would be enough food but then hunting would provide or some of them would bring out small food offerings from their pockets and there would be enough. It could be seen as a miracle that this would always happen. In my theological training, we were taught to use language that tried to talk me out of God and make God a topic for church not a

part of common experiences. This is different than the appreciation of daily life, of the usual things of life that we could see as little miracles.

So are you saying that we limit ourselves if we think the only miracles are spectacular experiences, like are described in religious stories?

Yes, the little miracles that come about in our lives are what we can feel grateful for. Surprises that help us wake up or see our day differently. Miracles are more relevant to daily life if we'll let them describe everyday life. For instance, I think miracles are best thought of as natural and not just supernatural. For instance think of how much a smile from somebody who cares about you can change your mood and attitude. Think about somebody's asking for forgiveness or saying they're sorry and how that can impact you and soften your own heart. Let these be natural miracles which I think happen every day in most of our relationships.