

## **The Milagro di Monterosso**

Going to Italy to pick up Amanda after her mission was a dream come true. It was a wonderful trip and a first hand education in history, culture and art. Standing in the 2,000-year-old Coliseum in Rome was an incredible experience. Admiring the Pieta by Michelangelo in St. Peter's Basilica was emotional. Imagining the society that lived in Pompeii was fascinating. But, one of the greatest experiences of Italy was what I have come to call the Milagro di Monterosso (the miracle of Monterosso).

We had been in Italy for about a week. We just spent a relaxing day in the fishing and resort town of Monterosso on the Northwest coast of Italy. As we were waiting for the train to go to Bologna, Amanda and I made a last minute run to the store in the train station to grab something to eat on the train. We bought bread, candy, cheese and for me, two cans of Diet Coke. This was big mistake!

On our way back to the train Sister Stevenson expressed her dismay at my purchase of Diet Coke. She went on to explain how bad this was for me. She explained that if I wanted to have the blessings of the Word of Wisdom in my life I needed to obey that divinely revealed code of health. I knew what she was saying was true. I love her and trust her. Then, she challenged me to never drink a caffeinated drink again. How could I say no to that?

To this day I have not partaken of the "Black Death". Can I run faster and jump higher? Not yet, but, I do feel a lot better that I am no longer drinking diet Coke or other drinks with caffeine. Sometimes I ask myself, how could I ever buy or drink something like that in front of my kids? Over the last ten years of on again - off again coke-drinking, there has never been a good reason for consuming Coca-Cola. I know deep down inside I would not want any of my children to drink Diet coke. I ask your forgiveness for being a bad example and for such misbehavior.

With that confession behind me, there is a lesson out of all of this. Sometimes, all it takes is a person of trust to ask a simple question to someone in need and in the end elicit significant changes in behavior. Think about this: 1) Amanda is someone I trust and respect. She is a missionary/servant of our Heavenly Father, 2) she reviewed with me why it was bad to drink Diet Coke, 3) she told me of greater blessings and happiness if I would obey the Word of Wisdom, 4) She committed me to making decisions that were in my best interest.

We can do this very same thing not only in the lives of our family members but also in the lives of those for whom we have responsibility in our church callings.

I think of Brother Call in the Arvada 5<sup>th</sup> Ward in Colorado. I remember him telling me of doing this same type of thing in Arizona when he was an Elder's Quorum President. He met with a less active member of his quorum and ultimately asked him to make changes in his life for the good of himself and his family. Guess what? He did. All it took in that case was someone to ask.

One of the basic rules in sales is that you will never get the sale unless you ask! So.....