



The Real Hero Of "It's a Wonderful Life" by Bill Young

*All Scriptures and comments are based on the **New King James Version**, unless otherwise noted.*

I realized something while watching "It's a Wonderful Life" recently. It was something I missed the first 3,317 or so times I watched it. That is, ***I think the hero of the story isn't George, it's Mary.***

The movie starts off with *Mary praying for God to be with George*. Her prayer (and others) is the catalyst for the angel, Clarence, being sent to George. *Mary is the one who sees the beauty of the old broken down house*. "It's full of romance, that old place." George sees empty space; Mary sees a space that can be filled with a family's love.

That's why George kisses the broken banister knob in the end; he finally sees what Mary always saw in that house. *Mary saw it on the day of their wedding. She was the one who transformed the house into "honeymoon suite."* Of course, that happened after *she had the idea to offer her \$2000 honeymoon money to the people of the town during the bank run*. When George is depressed by his friends moving onward and upward in the world and think he's a disappointment to his wife because of it, Mary makes it clear that she "didn't want to marry anybody else in town." *Never complaining, she worked "day after day remaking the old Granville house into a home."* This while having 4 children and running the USO.

Finally, *Mary is the one who goes all over town to ask for help for her husband*. Uncle Billy remarks, "Mary did it, George! Mary did it!" I had never noticed her expression before when Uncle Billy says this. She's in the background as he says it, and she mouths "No..." while she shakes her head and moves further into the background. It's an incredibly subtle but important feature of her character: do good for others, but let others receive the credit. She moves fully into the background so that everyone giving money to George can come front and center. *This was all orchestrated by Mary but she fades into the background.*

Now look at the picture below where Mary is again in the background. Note where she's positioned: over George's shoulder. *The one watching over George all these years was Mary*. She was as much a guardian angel to George as Clarence was.



In the end, ***George was a good man; even a great one.*** He was after all, "The richest man in town." ***But would he have accomplished all he did, and been the man he was without Mary?*** I think the answer is definitely not.

And there are many such Marys in this world who quietly go about, offering their prayers, works, and sufferings; raising their children; praying for their husbands and making them 10x the men they would have been without them. Most of their deeds won't be known this side of heaven. Until they're known, we, the Georges of this world, offer to you Marys our profound thank you. And we promise to keep trying to lasso the moon for you. You deserve nothing less.

—— Bill Young, December, 2023