

# it's a MIRACLE! or is it?



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### REGION/STATE

## Couple believes freezer image is Christ

Associated Press

**ESTILL, SPRINGS, Tenn.** — After dusk each night crowds of curious spectators gather around Luther and Arlene Gardner's Estill Springs mobile home to gaze at a General Electric freezer standing on the porch.

Many say they can see the likeness of a bearded man appear on the freezer's smooth white side. The Gardners, who believe the image is that of Jesus, call the apparition a miracle.

"It's the most beautiful thing I've ever seen. It's a sign. This has been revealed to me in a dream," said Mrs. Gardner. "It's a sign that Jesus is coming again soon."

The image appears after dark when a neighbor's porch light reflects off the freezer. In the past week, 2,000 people have traveled the narrow country road to the Gardners' home to view it, Mrs. Gardner estimates.

Katherine Parton, whose light it is that shines off the freezer, said she saw the image in February but only recently told the Gardners about it.

The best vantage point to view the image is from Mrs. Parton's kitchen window, and she has been hostess to crowds of people filing through her mobile home to see it.

Those who can't fit inside Mrs. Parton's home stand on cinder blocks or climb a ladder to get a view. They're looking for a face that measures about 2 feet long and a foot wide.

"I see a face," said Virginia Biddle of Tullahoma, while viewing the freezer. "It looks like a vision of Jesus Christ. Do you believe in miracles? I do."

"Ah, it's just a wax job," said Biddle's sister, Louise Street.

"It made me cry. Does that tell you something?" said Sarah Butler, of nearby Winchester, wiping tears from her eyes.

"I don't know," another onlooker said. "If it were really Jesus, couldn't we see him when the lights were off?"

The interest in the freezer image concerns the Rev. John Parton Jr., minister of Estill Springs Church of Christ. He is the son of Mrs. Parton, whose porch light creates the shadowy picture.

"I'm afraid it's gotten out of hand for the moment," he said.

"You can make Willie Nelson out of it if you want to. Who knows what Jesus Christ looked like? It disturbs me that some people are almost making an idol out of it. We shouldn't do that."

But the Gardners, who help direct crowds toward the freezer, believe it's a sign from God. They tell the spectators to believe in Christ, his sacred coming and in the miracle of their 7-year-old freezer.

"Jesus said he connected that porch light to my freezer and turned my freezer into a TV by electricity. He made it a TV. That's how I knew he wanted this vision on television for the world to see. When the whole world sees it, it will go away. That's what I believe," said Mrs. Gardner, 66.

The couple stores rabbit, venison, wild hog, fish and vegetables inside the freezer. Three people have offered to buy it. But it's not for sale.

"We are poor people, but you don't try to make money from the works of God," she said, shaking her head. "And this is a work of God."

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## What I am and am not Saying

- I am not denying the miraculous.
- I am not saying God is deficient in power.
- I am not saying God is no longer active.
- I am asking if God still empowers men to perform miracles as he did in Bible times.



## What Difference Does It Make?

- It's a Bible topic.
  - (2 Peter 3:18; Acts 17:11)
- Misunderstanding can damage one's faith.
  - (2 Peter 2:1-2; 2 Timothy 2:18)
- People can be exploited.
  - (Jude 3-4,12; 2 Peter 2:1-3)



## The Purpose of Miracles

- To make believers out of unbelievers.
  - (2 Kings 5:1-15; John 11:45)
- To confirm the spoken word.
  - (Mark 16:20)



## Observations Regarding Miracles

- Why are the alleged miracles performed today nothing like the miracles we read about in the Scriptures?
  - Instant, complete, non-psycho-somatic.
- Why can the claims of those who allegedly perform miracles not be validated?
  - (Acts 2:22).



## What Does The Bible Say?

- Miraculous gifts would cease.
- (1 Corinthians 13:8-13)
  - "When that which is perfect has come."
- (Ephesians 4:8-16)
  - "Till we come to the unity of the faith."



## Common Objections

- The Testimony of Men.
  - (Romans 3:4)
- Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever.
  - (Hebrews 13:8)
- It would make God a respecter of persons.
  - (Acts 10:34)



- God is still as powerful as he ever was!
- He demonstrated his power during the infancy of the church through signs, wonders, and miracles to confirm the truthfulness of the word.
- Today, we have a sufficient written record to produce faith in us (John 20:30-31).

