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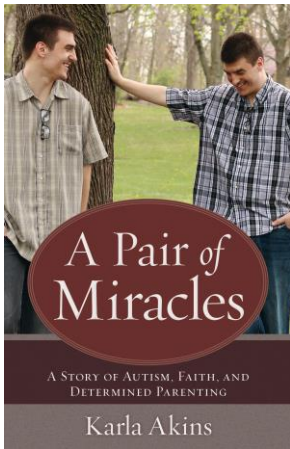


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PRESS RELEASE

A story of autism, faith and determined parenting

Karla Akins' sons, her pair of miracles, are proof of what is possible through God



Seattle: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an estimated one in 68 children has been identified with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Although a growing number of parents face similar circumstances, many still feel isolated and alone. In ***A Pair of Miracles: A Story of Autism, Faith, and Determined Parenting*** (Kregel Publications/July 25, 2017/ISBN: 9780825444845/\$14.99), author **Karla Akins**, the mother of twin sons with autism, offers encouragement and reassurance.

It was not long after Akins and her husband brought their adopted sons home from the hospital they realized the boys were not behaving and developing as they should. A few months later they learned the boys were on the fetal alcohol disorders spectrum, and by the time they were four, they were diagnosed with autism. Twenty years ago, autism was not as prevalent as it is today, and Akins admits she knew nothing about it. When she voiced her hopes her autistic sons could learn to read and function independently, doctors warned her those expectations would never be met. Despite those warnings, she set out to prove all things are possible through God.

Laced with humor and compassion, *A Pair of Miracles* is the heartwarming story of the Akins family's journey of raising Isaac and Isaiah. However, the book is more than a moving biography from a mom on the front lines. It is a powerful tool, full of practical help for parents, educators and church members working with children who have intellectual disabilities, speech impairments and other limitations on the autism spectrum. It is also a challenge to the church to welcome and celebrate all of its members, no matter their abilities.

"I hope families and caregivers will be encouraged by reading about our journey and might gain a few ideas on how to work with their child," shares Akins. "I also hope they will feel like they're not alone in the struggle. I know I like to read books that validate what I'm feeling. It's always good to know you're not the only one in the trenches, fighting the good fight of day-to-day survival with autism."

For parents seeking hope, answers and peace, Akins leads the way to all three down a path she's already been. In addition to the inspiration, lessons learned and advice for becoming your child's best advocate in all aspects of life given throughout the book, she includes appendices, offering: therapy and teaching strategies, listings of autism organizations and websites, skills checklists and suggestions for additional reading resources and online apps.

Thanks in large part to Akins' determination, faith and unconditional love, her adult twins are now able to function independently in many ways, contrary to doctors' predictions. They help their dad install pools, do carpentry work and serve in the church as ushers, sound engineers and children's ministry workers. However, she warns, "Autism is different in every person. It's a spectrum disorder, which means people fall on a wide spectrum. Remember all children are unique, no matter what their ability or diagnosis, and a diagnosis is not who they are. They are children and people first. They just happen to have a label."

Learn more about *A Pair of Miracles* at www.KarlaAkins.com.

About the Author



Karla Akins is the mother of five, including twin sons with autism. She has a bachelor's in special education from Western Governors University and a doctorate in Christian education from Kingsway Theological Seminary. She has nearly four decades of teaching experience in homeschooling, private school and public education.

Akins has also served in ministry for more than 30 years and is co-minister at Christian Fellowship Church in North Manchester, Indiana, with her husband, Eddie. She is also a popular speaker at conferences and retreats.

In addition to *A Pair of Miracles: A Story of Autism, Faith, and Determined Parenting*, Akins is the author of four other books. Her first novel, *The Pastor's Wife Wears Biker Boots*, featured a homeschool mom and a child with autism.

Akins enjoys riding her motorcycle, sipping chai lattes and snuggling with her three dogs and two cats.

Akins loves hearing from her readers. Her online home is www.KarlaAkins.com, and she is also on [Facebook \(KarlaKAkins\)](#) and [Twitter \(@KarlaAkins\)](#).

Suggested interview questions

- Tell us a little bit about your family. How many children do you have, and how did your family come together?
- A few months after you brought your adopted twin sons home from the hospital, you learned they were born with Fetal Alcohol Disorder. How did they behave differently from other children, and what clued you into the fact something else might be wrong?
- How old were the boys when they were diagnosed with autism? How much did you know about autism before their diagnosis?
- Who will benefit from reading your new book, *A Pair of Miracles: A Story of Autism, Faith, and Determined Parenting*?
- What was the doctors' prognosis of how the boys would be able to function as they grew and matured? How did you work through the grief that followed the news?
- When the boys were young, in a meeting with your pastor, he asked, "Do you think you missed the will of God when you adopted them?" Even doctors made hurtful comments to you about your boys. How did you respond?
- You talk about bargaining with God and even encourage readers to "wrestle with God" in difficult times. What were some of the questions you had for God in the early years of raising Isaac and Isaiah?
- What have your boys taught you about God, and how has your faith grown by being their mom?
- You include sections with scripture to meditate on. What verses have meant the most to you throughout the years?
- What misconceptions do most people have about autism? What would you most like your readers to understand about autism?
- For parents who are walking the road of raising children with autism, what advice do you offer for becoming the best advocates for them when it comes to medical care?
- What are some of the other areas you discuss in the book for living life with autistic family members?
- How were your other children impacted by their brothers' autism? What recommendations do you have for parents to make sure their other children don't feel overlooked?
- Tell us about Isaac and Isaiah today. In what ways are they able to function independently, defying what the doctors expected? In what areas do they still need help?
- Can you share some of the basics teachers at church and ministry volunteers should know when working with a child who is autistic or has disabilities? What tools are offered in your book?

To request a review copy of *A Pair of Miracles*, to schedule an interview with Karla Akins or for more information, please contact Audra Jennings, audra@lifusegroup.com.