

A Brief Account of

by Mrs. Muller

the Life

and Labors of George Muller

*and George Muller on Money and Possessions*



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of  
The Life and Labors  
of  
George Muller

by Mrs. Muller

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CHRISTIAN COMMUNICATORS WORLDWIDE  
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

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## Preface

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by Jim Elliff

**A**fter hours of useless searching through a mammoth used bookstore in Lexington, Virginia, my eyes fell on a small stack of books at the top of a tall shelf. I remember saying to myself, “Don’t waste your time.” But I reached up and took the books down anyway. In this small pile of books I found the rare volume that you hold in your hands.

Pasted inside the front cover of the book was a tabloid picture of George Muller contemporaneous with the period in which the book was written, along with a statement indicating that this book was first given as a gift.

It certainly was a gift to me.

I’ve been a student of George Muller for thirty-seven years now, having been introduced to him through my father’s preaching and a biography by A. T. Pierson. No other person has so marked my life and ministry in the area of

faith. I have seen firsthand that God can do what George Muller said He would do in answer to prayer. I consider my introduction to Muller to be one of the most significant providences of my life.

George Muller lived from 1805 to 1898. He was born in Kroppenstadt, Prussia, but is best known for his care for orphans in Bristol, England. It was there that he fed and clothed over 10,000 orphans without asking anyone for funds except God. The story of his life of faith is one of the most amazing in the history of the modern church. He believed that he had seen over 50,000 answers to specific prayers.

This unique volume was written by George Muller's second wife, the former Miss Susannah Grace Sangar. She was a remarkable woman. Muller was thankful for her spirituality, but also for her physical ability. She helped him through seventeen years of extensive travels while in his seventies and eighties. A second volume, noteworthy mainly for its details of specific events during these worldwide travels, is an original companion to this work. I have briefly sketched this period in a few short pages at the end of this book.

This biography is a well written, faithful, and stirring summary of Muller's exceptional life of faith, including some nuances not found in other works, even in his own journals. We have only slightly changed some of the punctuation and an occasional spelling or word. Overall it retains the British grammar and vocabulary of the day, except where the meaning for our readers was unclear.

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George Muller's introduction to the book is included. It is a compelling statement on its own, especially in its description of the effect his original *Narratives* had on revival in Ireland.

The year 2005 is the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Muller's birth. I trust that this excellent account will find its way into believer's hands all over the English-speaking world, and will be translated into other language editions.

This book will be of great benefit to believers of all ages. It is my special hope, however, that those still in their student years will catch Muller's vision for living the life of trust.

**Jim Elliff**

Christian Communicators Worldwide  
Kansas City, Missouri  
USA





# Original Title Page

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A Brief Account  
of  
THE LIFE AND LABOURS  
of  
GEORGE MULLER  
(OF BRISTOL)

by

MRS. MULLER.

*This account does not include Mr. Muller's Missionary*

*Travels, which form a separate volume.*

1883.

LONDON: J. NISBET & Co., BERNERS STREET.

TO BE HAD ALSO IN BRISTOL, AT THE BIBLE AND TRACT  
WAREHOUSE OF THE SCRIPTURAL KNOWLEDGE IN-  
STITUTION FOR HOME AND ABROAD, NO. 34, PARK STREET;  
AND THROUGH ALL BOOKSELLERS.



## Introduction

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by George Muller

In August, 1837, the first part of *A Narrative of some of the Lord's Dealings with George Muller* came out of the press; and, since then, four other parts have been published. The first three parts form one volume of 604 pages; the fourth part a volume of 390 pages; and the fifth part a volume of 615 pages; so that the three volumes contain 1,619 pages altogether. These three volumes may be purchased separately or together, and may be ordered from Messrs. Nisbet and Co., London, through any bookseller. The price of the first volume is 3s. 6d., of the second, 2s. 6d., and of the third, 3s. 6d.

During the last twenty-three years I have been *repeatedly* asked to publish this large work in a condensed form, for the benefit of the poor, and also for the sake of those who have but little time for reading; but I have not had leisure for this work, nor have I been led to such a service, because, as the author of the book, I see great difficulty in deciding what to

put in, and what to leave out. At last, however, my beloved wife, (who, like myself, has often heard a desire expressed, that the *Narrative* should be given in as brief a form as possible), during our long missionary tour, between August, 1882, and May, 1883, undertook to write a *very brief* history of my life and labours, which will be found in the following pages. She has also written an account of my missionary travels and labours, which will be published separately because a narrative of them could not be included in *this* book without making it a large volume, and a *short* history of my life and labours is the thing particularly wanted. In writing this smaller book, she has kept this continually in view, and has sought to be as brief as possible.

Before the first part of my *Narrative* appeared, I prayed *many hundreds of times*, that God would bless it abundantly; and since August, 1837, when the first part was published, I have asked Him *many thousands of times* to own this my feeble effort, to benefit the Church of Christ at large, and to show to an unbelieving world the reality of the things of God. These thousands of petitions have been answered beyond my largest expectations.

On my missionary tours in England, Scotland, Ireland, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, France, Italy, Spain, Bohemia, Hungary, Greece, Russia, and Poland, I was known to the thousands who had read about my life and labours in English, German, French, or Dutch, and who desired to hear me preach, because they had received blessing through my *Nar-*

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*narrative*. But the blessing was not confined to these countries. It was found also in Egypt, Palestine, Asia Minor, and Turkey.

Especially, however, when I was labouring in Canada, and preaching in seventeen of the United States, during three different American tours, I obtained hundreds of thousands of hearers, because they knew me through *The Life of Trust*, an abridgment of my larger work, that was everywhere to be found, even as far as California; through which I was continually greeted as an old friend, whom Christians desired to know personally. In this manner I have had *abundant proof* of the blessing my *Narrative* has been to the readers of it; and, besides all this, during the last 46 years I have received many hundreds of letters, in which the writers state, how great the benefit has been, which they have received through this record of the Lord's dealings with me. In further proof of this, I will now relate the following particulars:

In November, 1856, a young Irishman, Mr. James McQuilkin, was brought to the knowledge of the Lord. Soon after his conversion he saw my *Narrative* advertised, and, having a great desire to read the book, procured it accordingly, about January, 1857. God blessed it greatly to his soul, especially by showing him what could be obtained by prayer. He said to himself: "See what Mr. Muller obtains simply by believing prayer. May I not obtain blessing likewise by prayer?" He now set himself to pray, that the Lord would give him a Christian companion, one who knew the Lord. Soon afterwards he became acquainted with a young man who was a

believer, and these two began a prayer-meeting in one of the Sunday Schools in the parish of Connor. Having received an answer to his prayers in obtaining a Christian companion, Mr. McQuilkin asked the Lord to lead him to become acquainted with some more of His children, and, soon afterwards, met two other young men, who were believers, with whom he became intimate.

In the autumn of 1857, Mr. McQuilkin told these three young men what blessing he had received through reading my *Narrative*; how it had led him to see the power of believing prayer; and he proposed that they should meet together for prayer, to seek the Lord's blessing upon their various labours in the Sunday Schools, prayer meetings, and preaching of the Gospel.

Accordingly, in the autumn of 1857, these four young men met together for prayer in a small schoolhouse near the village of Kells, in the parish of Connor, Ireland, every Friday evening. By this time the great and mighty working of the Spirit in the United States in 1857 had become known, and Mr. McQuilkin said to himself, "Why may not *we* have such a blessed work here, seeing that God did such great things for Mr. Muller, simply in answer to prayer?" They accordingly, with renewed earnestness, waited upon God, and on January 1st, 1858, the Lord gave them the first remarkable answer to their petitions, in the conversion of a farm servant, who was taken into the little praying band; and thus there were five who gave themselves to prayer. Shortly afterwards, another

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young man, about 20 years old, was converted, so that there were now six, which greatly encouraged the three, who first became acquainted with Mr. McQuilkin.

Others, too, were soon converted, who were likewise taken into the number of those who were still waiting upon God; but believers only were admitted to these fellowship meetings, where they read, prayed, and offered to each other a few thoughts on passages of Scripture. These meetings, and others for the preaching of the Gospel, were held in the parish of Connor, Antrim, Ireland. Up to this time, though many souls were converted, all was going on most quietly, and there were no physical prostrations, as afterwards.

About Christmas, 1858, a young man from Ahoghill, who had come to live at Connor, and had been converted through the prayers of this little company of believers, went back to Ahoghill to see his friends, when he spoke to them about their own souls and the work of God at Connor. His friends desired to see some of these converts. Accordingly, Mr. McQuilkin, with two of the first, who met for prayer, went on February 2nd, 1859, and held a meeting at Ahoghill in one of the Presbyterian Churches.

Some believed, some mocked, and others thought there was a great deal of presumption in these young converts; yet many wished to have another meeting, which was held on February 16th, 1859, by the same three young men; and now the Spirit of God began to work, and to work mightily. Souls were converted; from that time conversions multiplied rap-



idly; and some of these converts went to other places, carrying the spiritual fire (so to speak) with them. The blessed work of the Spirit of God spread in *many places*.

On April 5th, 1859, Mr. McQuilkin went to Ballymena and held a meeting there at one of the Presbyterian Churches; on April 11th he held another meeting at another of the Presbyterian Churches, when several were convinced of sin, and the work of the Spirit of God went forward in that town. On May 28th, 1859, he went to Belfast, where, during the first week, there were meetings held in five different Presbyterian Churches, and from that time the blessed work of God commenced at Belfast. In all these visits he was accompanied and helped by Mr. Jeremiah Meneely, one of the three young men who first joined him in prayer, after reading my *Narrative*. Such was the *beginning* of that mighty work of the Holy Spirit, which has led to the conversion of hundreds of thousands.

In 1859 this fire was *kindled* in England, Wales, and Scotland. It *spread* through Ireland, England, Wales, and Scotland; the Continent of Europe partook of it more or less; it led thousands to give themselves to the work of Evangelists; and, up to the present time, not only are the effects of this work (first begun in Ireland) felt, but more or less it has been going on in Europe and in other parts of the world.

No honour is due to the instruments, but to God alone, who graciously caused His Spirit thus mightily to work; yet these facts are stated, in order that the great delight He has in answering the believing prayers of His children may be seen.

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All this has shown to me how, with God's blessing, the *Narrative* of my life and labours, *even in the smallest form*, may be helpful both to the Church and to the world; and I see this little book therefore go forth from the press with much pleasure.

The account of my missionary travels will also (the Lord permitting) be ready very shortly. My beloved wife and myself have already hundreds of times sought God's blessing on these two books, and we purpose still further to pray that it may rest abundantly upon them.

**George Muller**

New Orphan Houses

Ashley Down, Bristol

May 1883



## Chapter 1

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### Far from God and Miserable at Heart

**G**eorge Muller, the Founder and Director of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution for Home and Abroad, of which the five Orphan Houses on Ashley Down, Bristol, form a part, is by birth a German, and was born at Kroppenstadt, Prussia, September 27th, 1805.

In January, 1810, his parents went to live at Heimersleben, three miles from Kroppenstadt, where his father had been appointed collector of the excise. When between ten and eleven years of age, he was sent to a classical school at Halberstadt, with his brother—who was two years older than himself—to be prepared for the University, in order that he might become a minister of the Lutheran Church; but, as he did not know the

Lord, and had no desire to serve Him, he spent much of his leisure time in novel-reading, and in many sinful practices.

When he was fourteen, his mother died, but this bereavement made no lasting impression on his mind; and being often

left almost entirely to himself, he not only became idle and dissipated, but was frequently guilty of falsehood and dishonesty. In this state of heart, without faith, destitute of true repentance, and possessing no knowledge whatever, either of his own lost condition as a sinner, or of God's way of salvation through Christ, he was confirmed; and in the year 1820 took the Lord's supper for the first time at the Cathedral Church of Halberstadt.

At Midsummer 1821, his father obtained an appointment at Schoenebeck, near Magdeburg, when George entreated that he might be removed to the Cathedral Classical School of that city; and, his father consenting to this request, he was allowed to leave Halberstadt, and to remain at Heimersleben until Michaelmas. When Michaelmas came, however, instead of going to Magdeburg, he begged permission to read the classics with a clergyman residing at Heimersleben, and leave was given him to stay there until Easter; but he remained in that town for several months under very little control, and the intention to place him at school at Magdeburg, was finally given up.

In November of that year, after obtaining from his tutor leave of absence under false pretences, he set off on a pleasure excursion to Magdeburg, went afterwards to Brunswick, and lived at both places in an expensive manner at hotels, until all the money he had managed to scrape together for the journey was expended. On his way back to Heimersleben, he stopped at Wolfenbittel, went to an hotel there, and again began to live as though he had plenty of money at his command;

but having been suspected he was followed, and when he walked quietly out of the yard, without having settled his account, and afterwards attempted to run away, he was arrested and sent to prison, where, when only sixteen years of age, he found himself shut up with the most depraved characters, such as thieves, murderers, etc. From December 18th, 1821, to January 12th, 1822, he was detained in prison, when, his father having sent money to discharge his debt at the hotel, to defray the cost of his maintenance in jail, and to pay his traveling expenses, he was set at liberty.

In October, 1822, he was sent to school at Nordhausen, and there studied Latin, French, history, Greek, Hebrew, mathematics, German literature, etc., with considerable diligence. Here, in summer and winter, he rose regularly at four, and studied nearly the whole day, being occupied with his books until ten at night; so that through his good conduct and great diligence, he got highly into favour with the Director of the gymnasium, and was held up by him as an example of industry to all the other students of the first class.

But whilst thus exemplary in his conduct *outwardly*, he was totally unconcerned about the salvation of his soul, and utterly reckless regarding the eternal realities of the world to come. He had 300 books of his own, but no Bible; and as he was surrounded by unconverted persons, and never heard the Gospel preached, he had no opportunity whatever of receiving religious instruction, nor of conversing with anyone who would take an interest in his spiritual welfare.

At Easter, 1825, he became a member of the University of Halle, with very honourable testimonials, and thus had liberty to preach in the Lutheran Establishment; but being far from God, he was miserable at heart, and desiring to be happy though he knew not how, eagerly sought pleasure by pursuing a course of worldliness and profligacy, although a student of theology, and preparing to become a minister of the established Church.

On the 18th August, that year, he and three of his university friends set out on a pleasure excursion through Germany and Switzerland; and by pledging everything they could spare, especially their books, obtained money enough for the journey. They travelled forty-three days consecutively, and almost always on foot; but though they ascended the Rigi, visited some of the lakes, and wandered through many of the attractive regions for which Switzerland is celebrated—his cravings for happiness were unsatisfied, and he was glad to get home, and to resume his usual pursuits.

Besides having no Bible, he seldom went to church, and was not acquainted with a single Christian; but soon after his return to Halle, the time arrived when God, in the riches of His grace, would have *mercy* upon him. One Saturday afternoon, in the month of November, 1825, he took a walk with a university friend named Beta, who, when in a backsliding state, was one of his three traveling companions to Switzerland, but whose heart was now restored—and by him, as they were returning from their walk, he was told that a little religious meeting was held every Saturday evening, at the house

of a Christian man living at Halle, where portions of Scripture were read, hymns were sung, and prayer was offered. No sooner had he heard this, than it seemed to him as though he had found something, for which, unconsciously, he had been looking for a very long time, and he requested Beta to conduct him to the meeting; but the latter, knowing his companion to be a loose, thoughtless, unconverted young man, and fearing that he would turn the whole proceedings into ridicule, was extremely unwilling to take him there.

They went together, however, that very evening. On their arrival, being a stranger to the love existing in the hearts of real Christians, Mr. Muller thought he must apologize for his unexpected visit; but he was affectionately welcomed by the master of the house, who shook hands with him, saying—“Come as often as you please, heart and house are open to you.”

The kneeling down to pray—a thing he had never done in his whole life before—the simple earnest prayers, the portions of Scripture that were read, the hymns that were sung, *all—all*, made a deep impression upon the heart of poor George Muller. During this little meeting, the Spirit of God worked mightily within him; he saw his lost, ruined, undone condition by nature—that he was a guilty, hell-deserving sinner, and that, if God were to deal with him according to his deserts, eternal punishment only would be his portion.

He was enabled then and there, however, to believe in Jesus Christ, “who died for the *ungodly*,” and to trust for salvation *only* in the blood and righteousness of Him who “came in



to the world to save *sinner*s.” He *entered* the house, unconverted, far from God, and miserable; he left it, a rejoicing Christian! Fifty-seven long years have elapsed since that memorable evening, but during the whole of this eventful period, he has been enabled—at least in some little degree—to walk with God, and to show that “Wisdom’s ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.”

## Chapter Two

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### From Profligate to Preacher

**N**ow he entered at once upon a new life; his wicked companions were given up, and his evil practices forsaken. He read the Bible diligently, prayed often, loved the children of God, and sought fellowship with them; and though only a young believer and much ridiculed and laughed at by his fellow students for his piety, he stood firmly on the side of Christ.

In January, 1826, he began to read missionary papers, and in this way was stirred up greatly to desire that his own life might be devoted to missionary labours. The example, too, of a devoted young servant of Christ, named Hermann Ball, who, though highly educated, and the son of wealthy parents, preferred toiling arduously as a missionary amongst the Jews in Poland, to living comfortably near his own relations, made a deep impression on his mind. By these means he was encouraged to surrender himself still more unreservedly to the

Lord; and he now began more fully and abidingly to enjoy “the peace of God which passeth all understanding.”

The desire Mr. Muller had to become a missionary, was not, however, to be fulfilled *then*; but at a much later period of his life—as will be seen in another book—when he was led to devote a large portion of his time to extensive missionary labours, which God has condescended wonderfully to own and bless.

About this time the Lord sent Dr. Tholuck, a believer, as professor of theology to Halle, whose friendship was made a rich blessing to the young convert, and by him he was helped on greatly in the divine life. The following Whitsuntide was spent by Mr. Muller at the house of a pious clergyman in the country, who encouraged him greatly in the ways of God; and after his return, when conversing with two university friends—formerly his companions in worldly pleasures and amusements—he told them how happy he was, and urged *them* also to seek the Lord. To this, however, they replied, “We do not feel that we are sinners,” upon which he knelt down in their presence, asked God to convince them of their lost condition by nature, and afterwards went into his bedroom where he continued to pray for them. Upon returning to his sitting-room, he found the two young men in tears; for God, by His Spirit, in answer to prayer, had convinced them both of sin. From that time a work of grace commenced in their hearts, and they became devoted servants of the Lord Jesus.

Mr. Muller desired now more earnestly than ever to live only for the Lord, to be made a blessing to His people, and to

lead sinners to the Saviour; and he who had once served the devil so zealously, now continually sought opportunities of winning souls for Christ. Every month he circulated about 300 missionary papers, during his walks he gave away many tracts, and pressed poor people, whom he met, to believe the glorious gospel of the grace of God. About this time, too, a sick man he visited for thirteen weeks, was converted through his instrumentality, who expressed his gratitude repeatedly, for the blessing he had received.

Up to this period, he had never preached; but having been asked to assist an aged clergyman, living at a village six miles from Halle, he consented to undertake a few services at his Church, and began by writing out a sermon, which he committed to memory, and preached on the morning of August 27th, 1826, at 8 o'clock, at a Chapel of ease connected with this Church. This sermon was delivered, however, without the least power, and with no enjoyment in his own soul. Two hours later that morning—at the parish church two miles distant—he repeated the same sermon, but with no comfort to himself, and apparently without making the slightest impression upon his hearers.

In the afternoon he was not expected to preach; but desiring to benefit the people, he determined—with the help of God—upon *this* occasion, to expound the first six verses of Matthew 5, just as the Holy Spirit might enable him. He began therefore slowly and impressively to read—"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted. Blessed are

the meek for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled,” and then proceeded, verse by verse, to unfold the truth contained in this striking portion of the Holy Scriptures.

He had scarcely commenced his exposition, however, before he was so consciously assisted by the Holy Spirit, and was enabled to speak with so much joy, liberty, and power, that his hearers, instead of being—as before—inattentive and indifferent, now became, as it were, all eyes and ears, and listened with the deepest interest. Fearing, however, that though this mode of preaching might do for country congregations, it would scarcely be suitable in cities, and for the higher classes of society, some time elapsed before he regularly adopted it, but eventually he was led *always* to preach in this plain, simple, expository manner, and to address his hearers—as he still does—without writing his sermons, and without notes, or help of a similar description.

After continuing at the University of Halle, until Michaelmas, 1828—in February, 1829, Mr. Muller went to London, in connection with the London Missionary Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews, because, as he possessed great affection for God’s ancient people, and had made considerable progress in the Hebrew language, he desired to labour amongst them; but about two months after his arrival he was taken ill—the result of over much study in his new position—and went afterwards by medical advice to Devonshire in order to benefit his health. Whilst there, God blessed him

so greatly through conversation with a minister from London, that his experience was like a second conversion.

For three years, after having been first brought to a knowledge of the Lord, he fell into the snare of spending too much time over the perusal of religious books, instead of giving himself thoroughly to the study of the Holy Scriptures, and making *them* his great delight; but now, whilst in Devonshire, having been stirred up to a careful, systematic, daily, consecutive reading of the Bible, accompanied by habitual earnest prayer for the teaching of the Holy Spirit, his soul was wonderfully blessed, and he was enabled to make great progress, spiritually.

After his return to London, heartily desiring to continue his ministry amongst the Jews, he laboured earnestly in his new sphere of service; but, after devoting many weeks to this employment, finding it impossible conscientiously to promise the Society that he would spend his whole time exclusively amongst them (because, when they rejected his testimony concerning the Messiah, and he had opportunities of bringing the gospel before poor *Gentile* sinners, it appeared to him that he ought decidedly to embrace them) he wrote to the Committee stating his difficulties, and offered to serve the Society without remuneration, if he might be permitted to labour not only amongst the Jews, but to seek the salvation of any *Gentile* sinners also, with whom in the providence of God, he might come in contact. In reply to his letter, however, he received a courteous communication declining the proposal, and

thus his connection with the Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews terminated.

Under these circumstances, it became difficult for him, a poor foreigner in a strange country, to know what course he should pursue, especially as his acquaintance with the English language was imperfect; but these verses, “Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son,” and “If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it,” were of wondrous help to him at that time. “If only I seek to serve the Lord (he considered) and have but one object for my life—to live for God—my Heavenly Father will assuredly provide for all my temporal necessities.” These promises therefore were the very stay of his soul; upon them he leaned as upon a staff; and relying confidently upon God alone to supply all his need, he was of good courage.

## Chapter 3

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### Truths of a Most Profitable Character

**S**hortly after the termination of the engagement just referred to, Mr. Muller became the pastor of a Church at Teignmouth, Devonshire, where at first he consented to receive a small salary for his services; but after some time, having conscientious difficulties about continuing to accept it, for reasons which will be found fully stated in the first volume of his *Narrative*—pages 68 and 69—he determined to give it up entirely, to trust in God only for his temporal supplies, and to leave it to the love of brethren and sisters in Christ at Teignmouth and elsewhere, to send him money, or otherwise to provide for his personal necessities—without making any application to them—just as it might be laid upon their hearts to do so.

Since that time, now 53 years ago, though possessing no property whatever of his own, he has never received any salary, either as pastor of a large Church in Bristol, nor as Direc-



tor of the great Institution which he was permitted afterwards to found; nor does he under *any* circumstances that may arise, ever take money from the funds of the Institution, to supply his own temporal wants, nor even to defray his traveling expenses in the Lord's service—as some suppose; but whether in England or in other countries, is as wholly dependent upon the Lord *now*, for everything he needs, as when he first entered upon this path of faith. Soon after his arrival at Teignmouth, the Lord began to teach him the truth concerning several important subjects more fully than he had ever yet learned it, and as the following passages, referring to these points, are of a most profitable character, they are extracted from his *Narrative*, Vol. I. :

1. God then began to show me that His Word alone is our standard of judgment in spiritual things; that it can be explained only by the Holy Spirit, and that in our day as well as in former times, He is the teacher of His people. The office of the Holy Spirit I had not experientially understood before that time, and indeed of the office of each of the blessed persons of the Trinity, I had no experiential apprehension. I had not seen before from the Scriptures, that the Father chose us before the foundation of the world; that in Him the wonderful plan of our redemption originated, and that He also appointed all the means by which it was to be brought about. Further, that the Son, to save us, fulfilled the law to satisfy its demands, and also the holiness of God; that He bore the

punishment due to our sins, and thus satisfied the justice of God; and further, that the Holy Spirit alone can teach us about our state by nature, show us the need of a Saviour, enable us to believe in Christ, explain to us the Scriptures, help us in preaching, etc.

It was my beginning to understand this latter point in particular, which had a great effect on me; for the Lord enabled me to put it to the test of experience, by laying aside commentaries, and almost every other book, and simply reading the Word of God and studying it. The result of this was, that the first evening I shut myself into my room, to give myself to prayer and meditation over the Scriptures, I learnt more in a few hours, than I had done during a period of several months previously. *But the particular difference was, that I received real strength for my soul in doing so.* I now began to try by the test of the Scriptures the things which I had learned and seen, and found that only those principles, which stood this test, were really of value.

2. Before this period, I had been much opposed to the doctrines of election, particular redemption, and final persevering grace. I did not believe that I had brought myself to the Lord, for that was too manifestly false; but yet I held, that I might have resisted finally. And further, I knew nothing about the election of God's people, and did not believe that the child of God, when once made so, was safe for ever. But now I was brought to examine

these precious truths by the Word of God. Being made willing to have no glory of my own in the conversion of sinners, but to consider myself merely as an instrument, and being also made willing to receive what the Scriptures said, I went to the Word, reading the New Testament from the beginning, with a particular reference to these truths. To my great astonishment I found that the passages which speak decidedly *for* election and persevering grace, were about four times as many as those which speak apparently *against* them; and even those few, shortly after, when I had examined and understood them, served to confirm me in the above doctrines.

As to the effect which my belief in these truths had on me, I am constrained to state for God's glory, that I have walked more closely with Him since that period, and I may say that I have lived much more for God than before, strengthened by the Lord, in a great measure, through the instrumentality of these doctrines.

The electing love of God in Christ—when realized—has been the means of producing holiness, instead of leading me into sin. It is only the notional apprehension of such truths, the want of having them in the heart, whilst they are in the head, which is dangerous.

3. Another truth into which I was led during my stay in Devonshire, respected the second coming of Christ. My views concerning this point, up to that time, had been

completely vague and unscriptural. I had believed what others told me, without trying their statements by the Word. I thought that things were getting better and better, and that soon the whole world would be converted. But now I found in the Word, that we have not the least Scriptural warrant to look for the conversion of the world before the return of our Lord. I found in the Scriptures, that it is *the return of the Lord Jesus* which will usher in the glory of the Church, and uninterrupted joy to the saints, and that till then, things will be more or less in confusion.

I found in the Word, that the *return of Jesus* and not death was the hope of the apostolic Christians, and that it became me therefore, to *look* for His appearing; and this truth entered so into my heart, that though I went into Devonshire exceedingly weak, scarcely expecting that I should return to London, yet immediately on seeing it, I was brought off from looking for death, and was made to look for the coming of Christ, and to put the solemn question to myself—“What may I do before His return, as He may soon come?”

4. In addition to these truths, it pleased the Lord to lead me to see a higher standard of devotedness than I had seen before. He led me in a measure to see what is my true glory in this world, even to be despised, and to be poor and lowly with Christ. I saw then in a measure, though I have seen it more fully since, that it ill be-

comes the servant to seek to be rich, and great, and honoured in that world, where his Lord was poor, and lowly, and despised.

Before I left London, my prayer had been, that the Lord would be pleased to bless my journey, to the benefit of my body and soul. This prayer was answered in both respects; for in the beginning of September I returned to London much better in body, and marvelously blessed as to my soul.

Through his diligent study of the Scriptures also, his mind became enlightened as to the privilege and blessedness of *giving*, of laying up treasure in heaven. He found that both in the Old and New Testaments, Christians are distinctly taught, that it is the will of God they should give *regularly* and *systematically* of their means to Him, both for the poor, and for His work, as they are able, and as He has prospered them; and that in so doing they get blessing to their own souls, and are often even greatly prospered with reference to the life that now is, because, when the children of God act faithfully as *stewards*, they are entrusted with more money by the Lord.

He sought therefore to *carry out* the light thus received, and for 53 years has stood habitually with all he is, and has, before God as His *steward*, saying, “Lord, all that I have is Thine; use it as Thou pleasest,” and the happiness and blessedness that have resulted from thus acting have been unspeakable. The following passages of Scripture, he has found in his own experience, to be strictly and literally true:

“There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth, shall be watered also himself” Prov. 11:24-25. “Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom” Luke 6:38. “He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again” Prov. 19:17. “He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound towards you that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. As it is written, ‘He hath dispersed abroad, He hath given to the poor, His righteousness remaineth for ever’” 2 Cor. 9: 6-9.

As this subject, however, is fully entered into, in two little books written by Mr. Muller, entitled—*The Privilege and Blessedness of Giving*, and *On Laying up Treasure in Heaven*, to be obtained from Mr. Stanley, manager of the Bible and Tract Warehouse, 34, Park Street, Bristol, the reader who desires further information on this subject, is referred to these publications.

At Teignmouth, in the summer of 1829, Mr. Muller first became acquainted with Mr. Henry Craik from Scotland, a devoted servant of Christ, with whom he laboured afterwards in Bristol, as fellow-pastor, for 34 years; and having seen

through his study of the Holy Scriptures, that baptism is an ordinance of God intended only for *believers*, in May 1830 he was baptized at Shaldon, Teignmouth, by Mr. Craik. On this account, however, he is not a Baptist—as some suppose—and has never joined the Baptists; nor is he now connected with *them*, any more than with other true believers, who are united by faith to the Lord Jesus Christ; for he loves *all* who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity.

On October 7th, 1830, he was united in marriage to Miss Mary Groves, who afterwards became a most valuable helper to him in his labours, especially when the Orphan Work was established; and her sister, Miss Groves, was also, for a number of years, an active, efficient worker at the Orphan Houses. His only child living—a daughter—was born September 17th, 1832.

After residing for two years and a half at Teignmouth, Mr. Muller saw it to be the will of God that he should remove to Bristol with Mr. Craik, in order that he might labour with him there in the ministry of the Word; he and Mrs. Muller therefore went to live in Bristol, where it pleased God greatly to bless his labours, and those of Mr. Craik. Here great numbers of persons were converted, particularly in the summer of 1832, during the dreadful visitation of cholera, with which the city was at that time afflicted; and in August of that year a little assembly of believers was gathered together—now a church numbering upwards of 1,200 members—of which Mr. Craik and Mr. Muller became the pastors.

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In January, 1866, after a long and painful illness, Mr. Craik fell asleep in Jesus, and was removed to his everlasting rest; but, through the Lord's kindness, his friend and fellow-labourer has had health and strength continued to him, and—though he loves all the true children of God, and preaches everywhere amongst those who hold the foundation truths of our most holy faith—has remained particularly in fellowship with that Church, ever since he first came to Bristol. In Bristol, as at Teignmouth, though he continued to live without any regular income, God never allowed him nor his family to want, and, with the Apostle Paul, he was generally able to say, "I have all and abound."

On the other hand, however, it is right to state, that times without number, his faith was sorely tried—because when God gives faith He always tries it;—but whenever there was no money left, instead of being discouraged, he and his beloved wife would kneel down, and ask God, graciously to send them help; which, sooner or later, was invariably granted.

Sometimes it happened, too, that not only was there no money left, but that all the provisions likewise in the house were gone—a trying state of things indeed; the Lord never suffered them, however, to be confounded.





## Chapter 4

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### Destitute, Neglected Children

**U**nder these circumstances, after receiving innumerable answers to prayer of a marked and memorable character, when Mr. Muller saw destitute, neglected children running about the streets, for whose souls no one cared, and whose countenances plainly indicated that they were suffering from disease and poverty, this thought repeatedly occurred to him:

Ought I not to do something for poor children such as these? Would it not be possible to clothe and educate some friendless little ones, and to have them carefully instructed in the Scriptures, so that they remain no longer in their wretched state? Can I not trust in God for *them*, as I look to Him to provide means for myself and for my family? And did not the Lord Jesus declare plainly, that “Whoso receiveth one such little child in My name receiveth *Me*”?

But through the great amount of work he had in hand, and the numerous demands continually made upon his time and strength, for a good while he was so fully occupied, that no decided steps were taken. At last, however, on the 5th March, 1834, he founded a little Institution, called The Scriptural Knowledge Institution for Home and Abroad, which had the following objects, namely—1st—to establish day-schools, Sunday-schools, and adult schools; 2ndly—to circulate the Holy Scriptures, and particularly amongst the very poorest of the poor; 3rdly—to aid missionary operations; 4thly—to circulate religious books, pamphlets, and tracts, for the benefit of believers and of unbelievers—an Object added sometime afterwards; and 5thly, in 1835, the Orphan Work was established.

Of the principles of the Institution, two only need be mentioned. 1—That debt should never be incurred, a decision which for many years has been scrupulously acted upon. 2—That no rich, great man, no English nobleman, for instance, should be its patron, but that the living God alone, should be the patron of the Institution.

The beginning of this Institution was exceedingly small, but God has condescended greatly to enlarge it, and has acted according to that promise, “Them that honour Me I will honour;” for as His servant sought in the most public way to honour Him, he has ever since been most abundantly honoured by the Lord.

He began with one day-school, but on May 26, 1882, we had 72, of which 13 were in Spain, attended by nearly 1000

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Catholic children, one was in Italy, 5 were in the East Indies, 6 in Demerara and Essequibo, and the others were scattered throughout England and Wales. He began with one Sunday-school; on May 26th, 1882, there were 38 connected with the Institution. One adult school only was founded at its commencement, but on May 26th, 1882, there were 6.

There were then also in all the various schools 9,671 pupils, and from the formation of the Institution up to that time, eighty-eight thousand one hundred and nineteen children or grown-up persons have been taught in these 116 schools. All of them were established, simply through the instrumentality of prayer and faith, and though the annual expenditure connected with them has for many years been £9,500., no one has ever been asked to contribute towards their support, and every shilling *continues* to be obtained in the same manner.

But the most encouraging fact is, that thousands of the pupils, attending these schools, have been brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord, through the instruction there given to them.

The 2nd Object of the Institution, the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, began in a very small way; but God soon increased it greatly, and from the commencement of this department of the work up to May 26th, 1882, 175,898 Bibles, 610,447 New Testaments, 19,966 copies of the Psalms, and 201,427 other small portions of the Holy Scriptures in several different languages, have been circulated. Through this extensive dissemination of the truth multitudes of souls have been converted, particularly in Spain, Italy and England. The entire

amount of means for this Object also, has been obtained by prayer and faith only.

The 3rd Object of the Institution is, to aid missionary efforts. From the commencement of the work, missionaries have been assisted by its funds, and within the last 30 years help has been afforded to great numbers of brethren, through whose labours, with the blessing of God, many thousands of souls have been converted. The vast amount required for this branch of the work, has likewise been obtained solely by believing prayer. The total amount spent on missionary operations, from March 5th, 1834, to May 26th, 1882, is £187,241. 12s. 5d.

The 4th Object of the Institution, is the circulation of religious books, pamphlets and tracts, to benefit both believers and unbelievers. From the commencement of this Department of the work, up to May 26th, 1882, more than seventy-five million, nine hundred and fifty-six thousand books, pamphlets and tracts, in various languages, have been circulated in different parts of the world, by means of which multitudes of souls have been won for our Lord Jesus. The large sum of money required for this Object also has been obtained by the instrumentality of prayer and faith. Immense numbers of these publications have been circulated *gratuitously*, and hundreds of believers have been engaged in scattering them far and wide, not merely in Great Britain and Ireland, but also throughout various parts of the world.

The 5th Object of the Institution is, to board, clothe, and educate scripturally, destitute children who have been be-

reaved of both parents by death. The Orphan Work originated thus: Finding in the course of his extensive pastoral labours, that an increase of faith was the one great thing specially needed by the Church, Mr. Muller judged that, if he should be able to provide everything requisite for the support of orphans—whether many or few—by waiting habitually upon *God*, and by making known his wants to *Him*, and to *Him alone*—indisputable proof would be given that our Heavenly Father is abundantly able and *willing* to provide for the necessities, temporal as well as spiritual, of *all* His children, even the very feeblest of them, who really trust in Him; and that unbelieving cares and anxieties about the life that now is, are not only dishonouring to the Lord, but are a fruitful source of unhappiness to His people. Many real Christians, who can trust Him about their souls, are totally unable to cast all their care upon Him regarding their temporal concerns.

He therefore waited long and earnestly upon God, calling upon Him many times a day, graciously to make known to him His mind with reference to an Establishment for Orphans, and feeling assured at length that he ought to go forward and begin the work, he was one day reading on, as usual, consecutively through the Bible, when he came to the 10th verse of the 81st Psalm;—"I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt. Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it." Here he at once put aside his Bible, and kneeling down prayed thus: "Heavenly Father, Thou knowest that hitherto I have only asked Thee to show me what Thy holy pleasure is concerning an Orphan Institution, and Thou hast taught me

that I should commence the work, but I have never asked Thee for the help I need, only to be guided whether I should found an Establishment or not. Now, Lord, I open my mouth wide; be Thou pleased to fill it.”

He then prayed for a house, for suitable helpers to instruct and take care of the children, and that one thousand pounds sterling might be given him. On the very next day, December 6th, 1835, the first donation was received, namely one shilling from a poor missionary then visiting at his house. In the providence of God, *he* had the honour of contributing the first mite towards establishing an Institution afterwards so greatly blessed, and doubtless will be richly recompensed in the day of Christ’s appearing. Another missionary, too, also visiting at Mr. Muller’s house, gave a small sum of money for the same object, and then a piece of furniture was sent.

A few days afterwards, a poor young woman, who earned about 4s. weekly by her needlework, contributed. £100., but her donation was courteously declined. When sent for and spoken to on the subject, she stated that this money was part of a little property recently left her by her grandfather, who had died; and that feeling deeply interested in the contemplated Orphan Work, it was her desire to give this £100 towards the Orphan fund; but Mr. Muller still refused to accept the contribution. “You are weak and sickly,” said he, “and may need this money for yourself. I fear you have acted hastily, and may regret the step hereafter.” Her reply, however, was—“I have well weighed the matter; the Lord Jesus freely shed His precious blood for me, a poor, lost sinner, and shall I

not in return show my love and gratitude to Him by giving Him this little sum? Rather than this Orphan Work should not come to pass, I would give every penny I possess towards it.” After reasoning further with her on the subject, and finding she was thoroughly decided, he at length reluctantly accepted the £100., though he could not but admire the hand of God, and praise Him for the unexpected help thus given by this poor sister.

Other donations afterwards came in, until at last he was able to rent a large house in Wilson Street, St. Paul’s, and to furnish and prepare it for the reception of 30 orphan girls above 8 years of age, and two helpers who volunteered their services. Now then he was in a position to appoint a time for interviews with persons in the vestry of the Chapel, who desired to obtain for orphan girls admission to the Institution; and accordingly a day and hour for seeing them were fixed.

The morning arrived, when he sat for half an hour in the vestry without receiving any applications; an hour and a-half passed away, but no one came, and as two hours elapsed, and no applicants appeared, he was obliged at last to leave, without having been applied to for the admission of a single child. Whilst walking home, however, this thought occurred to him: “I have prayed about everything connected with this work—for money, for a house, for helpers, about the various articles of furniture, etc.—but I have never asked the Lord to send me orphans.”

Having taken it for granted that they were to be had by hundreds, and by thousands, he had never prayed that God



would send *inmates* for the home prepared; but now, remembering that passage in Phil. 4:6, “In *everything* by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God,” he shut himself up in his own room at home, cast himself upon the floor, and there lay for three hours, upon his face before the Lord, confessing his failure, beseeching pardon for his neglect, and praying that children might be sent.

The very next morning, at 11 o’clock, application was made for the reception of an orphan girl; at the expiration of a month, admission for 42 destitute children had been applied for, and since that time, as years have rolled away, the relatives and friends of many *thousands* of orphans, have sought to place them under Mr. Muller’s care. In a short time, therefore, after the house in Wilson Street had been opened, it was filled with 30 girls, who were taken charge of by a matron and a teacher. At the end of eight months, another house in the same street was taken, fitted up, and furnished for the reception of 36 little boys and girls under the age of eight; suitable assistants for the work also had presented themselves, and in nine months more, a third house in Wilson Street was opened for 30 orphan boys, above the age of eight years. Mr. Muller and his nine helpers had now 96 orphans under their care.

The blessing of God rested manifestly upon the work, and everything went on satisfactorily; but at the expiration of twelve months, the whole of his money was expended. Under these circumstances it may naturally be supposed that he felt extremely downcast and discouraged; but having set about the

Orphan Work for the express purpose of showing what God is able and willing to do in the hour of deepest trial for those who *really* trust in Him, he secretly rejoiced at having this glorious opportunity of taking Him at His word, and of letting a skeptical world and an unbelieving Church see what a deliverance—in answer to believing prayer—He would certainly accomplish.

He therefore called his fellow-labourers together, and kneeling down, they united spread their case before the Lord, earnestly entreating Him to send help in their time of urgent need; nor had they to wait upon Him long; for money, provisions, etc., speedily came in, and thus their prayers and supplications were turned into thanksgivings.

This life of *constant* dependence upon God, this hanging upon Him day after day, week after week, and month after month for everything that was needed, went on for eleven long years, during which time, upon innumerable occasions, and often when in the greatest straits and difficulties, the Lord invariably appeared on behalf of His praying, waiting servants. Sometimes, whilst they were actually engaged in prayer deliverance came, for the postman would frequently bring letters containing money from a distance; or a Christian friend, having been entrusted with donations for the Orphans, would arrive, just at the very moment when assistance was most urgently required.

Occasionally, too, visitors, who went through the houses, dropped contributions for the work into boxes placed for their reception. Then, a great variety of gold and silver articles,

such as brooches, rings, gold chains, ear-rings, gold and silver watches, diamond rings, plate, and other valuables, were frequently sent to be sold for the benefit of the Orphans. Innumerable donations likewise in the form of useful and fancy articles were contributed. Children's clothing, wearing apparel, new and secondhand, material for dresses, ladies' bags, pin-cushions, needle-cases, toilet covers, antimacassars, pen-wipers, sofa cushions, etc., etc., were received and disposed of for the benefit of the Institution.

Sometimes it would happen that at 9 in the morning there were no provisions in the houses, neither was there money in hand to purchase the food needed for the dinner; then, in answer to the earnest cries of those who were engaged in the work, money was received in time to procure supplies and get the meal ready by the dinner hour at one o'clock; but often afterwards there was nothing left for supper.

Another united prayer-meeting was, therefore, held, in order that they might beseech the Lord mercifully to appear on their behalf; and this He invariably did. Sometimes Mr. Muller remained until late in the evening at the Orphan Houses, and when there was nothing left for breakfast the next morning, and no money was in hand to purchase even milk, he had to go home without being able to leave a single copper with his helpers; but on reaching his own house he found, perhaps, that money had come in there, or, if that were not the case, when he returned early the next morning to the Orphan Houses, he would find that the much-desired help had been received in time to get breakfast ready for the children.

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The following instance is related, as a specimen out of many hundreds, of the manner in which it has pleased God to provide for the necessities of the Orphans. One day on which there had been a prayer meeting with the helpers at the Orphan Houses, early in the morning, to ask the Lord for means to get a dinner, and a second between dinner and supper, to pray for the money requisite to provide the latter meal—both of which requests were granted—it became necessary to have a third prayer meeting, late in the evening, because there was nothing left towards the expenses of the next day. The Lord was entreated therefore, either to send help the same evening, or early the next morning.

After this prayer meeting Mr. Muller returned to his own house, about twenty minutes walk from the Orphan Houses, but found that nothing had come in there; and as he himself had no money left to give, the next morning he went very early to the Orphan Houses, to see what God had been pleased to send in. As soon as he arrived, his first assistant showed him three sovereigns, which he had received about five minutes previously. Thus the Orphans not only had money with which breakfast could be purchased, but they were also provided with everything required for that day.

In the next annual Report, a good while afterwards, the particulars of this circumstance were related, for the encouragement of Christian readers with reference to prayer, but in such a manner that no one could possibly know who the donor was. After the Report had been published some time, the gen-

tleman who had given these three sovereigns, called one day on Mr. Muller, and said to him:

I will relate some particulars in connection with that donation which will interest you. On the morning of that day I left home early, and went to my house of business, expecting by the first delivery to receive important letters (he lived about twenty-five minutes walk from his counting-house); but on my way there, this thought occurred to me—"I ought to take some money this morning to the Orphans, for they may be in need." Immediately, however, I considered—"This can be done in the evening, because I have no time now, but must see those important letters first." I therefore walked on, but again and again was pressed in spirit thus—"You ought not to wait until the evening, but should go now at once." At last I turned round to go to the Orphan Houses, but after having walked some distance in that direction said to myself again—"I have no time now, I must see those letters first;" so I turned and walked once more towards my house of business. The Spirit of God, however, gave me no rest, for these words were continually sounding in my ears—"You must go at *once*, you must go at *once*, and not wait until the evening;" so finally I turned back and took the money to the Orphan Houses.

How came all this? The Lord knew there was no money in hand, and in answer to the earnest, believing prayers of the previous evening, gave no rest to this Christian gentleman till he had taken the money for the Orphans.

## Chapter 5

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### In Dependence Upon the Living God

In the foregoing portion of this narrative, three houses only have been referred to; but in March 1843, a fourth large house in Wilson Street was taken, and having received £500 towards the funds of the Institution, of which a considerable sum yet remained in hand, Mr. Muller possessed the means for furnishing another Home, for 30 more orphan girls above 8 years of age, which was also quickly filled with children.

At length, in about a year and eight months after this fourth Home was opened, having been courteously informed by a gentleman of studious habits, residing in Wilson Street next door to one of the Orphan Houses, that the noise made daily by the children in their play-ground, was a serious inconvenience to him, it became necessary for Mr. Muller to think about removing the whole Orphan Institution to an entirely different locality.

During a period of ten years, he and his helpers had been looking about most carefully in all directions for accommoda-

tion for the children, but houses really suitable for them never could be found anywhere, except in Wilson Street. Now this request was made—"Will you kindly remove the Orphans from this street?" But where could they be placed?

No houses elsewhere of a similar character were vacant, and if any could have been found, in course of time other persons also might say—"Please remove these children from *our* neighbourhood like-wise." It had become obvious, too, that houses built for ordinary families of eight, ten, or twelve individuals, were altogether unsuitable for public institutions, because the rooms were comparatively small, the ventilation was imperfect, and in time of sickness, no extra accommodation could be provided. It appeared absolutely necessary therefore to *build*, and to erect a house large enough to receive not only the 126 orphans already gathered in Wilson Street, but a home that would contain 300 boys and girls, because many children were waiting to be received for whom there was no room.

A new building with the land and furniture, however, would cost about £15,000, and whence could all this money be expected? Mr. Muller and his helpers were living as before, from hand to mouth, it might be said, having day by day continually to wait upon God for all their temporal supplies. Occasionally, too, they were reduced to the utmost poverty. As far, therefore, as outward appearances were concerned, nothing could be more improbable than that sums of money would be contributed sufficient to build and furnish a comparatively large Orphan House. So far too was he from pos-

sessing £15,000, that he had not £500, nor £50, nor even £5 actually in hand.

The more, however, he reflected on the matter, and carefully weighed all the reasons for and against taking this important step, the more convinced he was, either that he must build, or that the Orphan Work must be abandoned. But to give up the work was a thought not seriously to be entertained; for God had marvelously set the seal of His blessing on it by the conversion of many of the Orphans, by blessing thousands of persons through reading the annual Reports, and by converting even avowed infidels by means of them.

After much deliberation therefore, accompanied by continual earnest prayer, that he might make no mistake, in dependence upon God alone, and in his inmost soul assured that the

Lord would provide, Mr. Muller determined to build a large Orphan House for 300 children. Having come then to this decision, he began to pray many times a day, that money for the

Building Fund might be sent in; but, in the course of a fortnight, did not receive a penny towards the contemplated work.

For twenty days his petitions were continued, but apparently without success. For twenty-five he went on perseveringly waiting upon God, and for thirty-three days prayed on in

faith, nothing doubting, but with no manifest result. Though his faith, however, was exercised, and his earnest supplications seemed to be in vain, he praised and thanked God many

times *beforehand* for the money he was as *certain* would be given, as if the desired Orphan House, erected, furnished, and filled with Orphan children, had already stood before his eyes.



At last, on the thirty-fourth day, he received £1,000, the largest amount up to that time ever contributed in one donation, for which he thanked God, but without being in the least surprised; and if instead of one thousand pounds, the sum had been *ten* thousand, he would not have been astonished, because he *expected* help, and day by day was *looking out* for it, in large amounts, as well as small ones.

Should not this confident expectation on his part be a lesson to the Church of Christ? In the first place we have to see to it that our petitions are according to the mind of God. Secondly, they must be presented *solely* in the name and for the sake of *Jesus*. Thirdly, we must *believe* that God hears us; and fourthly, *look out*, and patiently *wait* upon Him for the answers until *given*.

The next day more donations were received, other contributions followed, and very shortly afterwards another thousand pounds came in. Mr. Muller was now in a position to look out for land, but had not the slightest natural prospect of obtaining it; for at that time there was quite a mania for building in Bristol and the neighbourhood, and land was everywhere exceedingly expensive. Day by day, however, he gave himself to prayer, bringing *this* matter also continually before God, until, after waiting upon Him for 13 weeks, he heard one morning that a suitable piece of ground might be purchased on Ashley Down.

At 7 in the evening therefore of the same day he called upon the owner of the property, a merchant, who—he was told—would at that hour be at home; but not finding him at

his own house, as was expected, he proceeded—directed by the servants—to his counting-house, where, they said, he would be sure to meet with him.

Upon arriving there, however, he was informed that the gentleman had just left his counting house and had returned to his own residence. “Now”—thought Mr. Muller—“shall I go again to him, or—as the hand of God surely is in this—shall I wait until tomorrow? But, as I was told that he would certainly be found either at home or at his counting-house, and at both places I have failed to meet him, it may be better to wait until tomorrow.”

Accordingly, the next morning at 9 o’clock, he called upon the merchant, who said to him at once—“I have heard about your visit, and of your desire to purchase land in order to build an Orphan House upon it. For three hours last night I lay awake, and during that time kept on thinking—If this gentleman comes again, I must sell the ground to him for £120, instead of £200 an acre; and now I am willing to let you have it at that price.” This kind proposal was immediately accepted, and, in less than ten minutes, a contract was signed for the purchase of seven acres. During three sleepless hours God had spoken to His servant, constraining him to sell the land for £120 instead of £200 an acre, an agreement by which £560 was saved at once, through the interview not having taken place the previous evening. In about a month after the transaction just recorded, this Christian gentleman died.

Land having now been purchased, little by little the money yet needed for the Building Fund came in, so that in

two years from the time Mr. Muller first began to pray that he might obtain sufficient money to erect an Orphan House, he was able to give orders for the building to be commenced.

The blessing of God rested abundantly upon the undertaking; a house large enough to contain 300 orphans, including boys, girls, and infant girls under 8 years of age was erected, fitted up, and furnished, and after everything had been paid for, more than £600 remained in hand, whilst in the meantime money for all the various *other* Departments of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution had come in.

In this new Orphan House—No. 1—on Ashley Down, the work was carried on, exactly as it had been before in Wilson Street. God was trusted in, not only for pecuniary supplies, but as irrespective of the large sums of money continually needed, there were innumerable calls for the exercise of faith in Him; in *all* times of difficulty and perplexity, *He* was relied upon for guidance and direction.

To find suitable helpers for instance, who would work harmoniously together, was not an easy matter; then sickness would break out, with the prospect that infectious maladies might spread; evil, lying reports too about the orphans were occasionally circulated, which, though false, were trying; so that to get *money* for carrying on the work together with the various other operations of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution, was far less difficult than to obtain deliverance from a multitude of trials of a different character which frequently occurred. Still, the Lord's blessing rested manifestly upon it; and after several months had passed away, not only was No. 1

filled with destitute children and those who had the care of them, but admission was sought for hundreds of orphans who could not be received for want of room.

Under these circumstances therefore, Mr. Muller again began seriously to consider how he ought to act. He spread the case accordingly before his Heavenly Father, waiting upon Him for six months, day by day to ascertain *His* mind; and being assured that God would have him further to extend the Orphan Work, decided finally upon building two more Orphan Houses—for 850 children—though, with an additional piece of land for No. 3, they would cost £40,000.

There were, however, particular trials of faith connected with this further enlargement of the work, and one difficulty was, that, immediately after the issue of the next annual Report, in which his decision to enlarge the Orphan Work was stated, a false report was spread to the effect that he already had £30,000 in hand, towards this, in order that people might be deterred from contributing to the funds set apart for an extension of the work.

As an impression also prevailed even in the minds of Christians, that so great an enlargement of the Orphan Work would be presumption, it was considered by some that such a desire ought not to be encouraged. Notwithstanding these obstacles, however, in dependence upon the living God, His servant determined to go forward; and, after patiently waiting upon Him six years for all the necessary means, he had the joy of beholding New Orphan House No. 2, for 400 girls—built upon the ground surrounding No. 1—completed.

The building of New Orphan House No. 3 for 450 girls (upon eleven acres and a half of land purchased on the other side of the public road, a few minutes walk only from Nos. 1 and 2) was also begun, and when this house, too, was finished and ready for their reception, accommodation for 1150 orphans was provided.

Whilst the money for building Nos. 2 and 3 was coming in—which with the furniture for the two houses and the land for No. 3 cost £40,000—the heavy expenses of the various other Objects of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution, namely the support of the Sunday and day schools, the circulation of the Holy Scriptures and tracts, the expenditure connected with Missionary Operations, and the current outgoings for the Orphans at No. 1 were going on, yet God graciously supplied everything required; but it was only after eleven years of patient, believing, persevering prayer, that New Orphan Houses No. 2 and 3, were built and filled with inmates. No. 3 was ready in March 1862, and after this house too was opened, it was found that £1,400 from the Building Fund yet remained in hand. There were also 900 Orphans waiting for admission who could not be received into the three houses already built, for want of room.

After waiting again therefore long upon the Lord, Mr. Muller at last decided upon building two more Houses, large enough to contain 450 children each; namely No. 4 for boys, and infant boys under 8 years of age, and No. 5 for girls, and infant girls not 8 years old; so that altogether there might be five Houses, capable of containing 2050 orphan children and

110 helpers. But money for them came in only by degrees; four years elapsed before the land was purchased and the building of No. 4 could be commenced; but at length, after much prayer and waiting upon God, this house was finished too and opened. No. 5 also was erected, and opened towards the end of 1869.

On the 6th February, 1870, Mrs. Muller died of rheumatic fever at 21, Paul Street, Kingsdown, aged 73, after a few days of severe suffering; and on February 11th her funeral took place, at Arno's Vale Cemetery, near Bristol. Besides her own relatives, and a great number of Christian friends belonging to the Church with which she was in fellowship, her remains were followed to the grave by many hundreds of the Orphans, whose devoted friend she had been so many years. At the earnest request too of the children then in the five houses, and of many of the Orphans formerly under Mr. Muller's care, they were permitted to place a simple monument upon her grave at their own expense. Her loss was greatly felt, especially at the Orphan Houses, where she superintended and executed with her own hands a large amount of work. "The memory of the just is blessed." "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."



## Chapter 6

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### Stand Still and See the Salvation of God

**T**hough “Time rolls its ceaseless course,” and many years have passed away since the Scriptural Knowledge Institution for Home and Abroad was originally founded, it continues to be conducted on precisely the same principles that were acted upon when first established in March, 1834. It is still upheld solely through the instrumentality of prayer and faith, is supported entirely by voluntary contributions, and no one is ever asked for aid either directly or indirectly.

The Orphan boys and girls receive a plain, useful education, and are taught to read and write, besides receiving instruction in arithmetic, history, grammar, geography, etc. They are habitually instructed in the Holy Scriptures. Time is allowed them every day for private reading of the Word of God and prayer; and they have an efficient Christian singing master, whose business it is to teach them how to sing hymns and pieces of poetry, suitable for children, *well*. The girls are



carefully taught needlework, which many of the elder ones do beautifully; they make and mend their own clothes, work in the laundries and kitchens, and are trained to perform all the duties required of good household servants. The boys knit their own socks, make their beds, scrub the floors, go on errands, work in the gardens, and in many other ways are brought up to be generally useful.

All the children have a week's holiday at Christmas, a few days at Easter for play and recreation, and a week at Whitsuntide. In July a holiday is given for an excursion to the New Passage, or some other pleasant spot, where they ramble about, and greatly enjoy taking dinner and their evening meal in the open air; and at the end of September, holidays for another week are given, including the 27th of that month, the anniversary of Mr. Muller's birthday, which is an event always held in special remembrance by the children, when letters of congratulation are sent him from all the different Departments.

In the course of one year there are generally 2,250 Orphans in the Institution; for although the five Houses can accommodate only 2,050 at a time, about 240 newcomers are received annually. The entire number, however, is continually varying, a circumstance to be accounted for by the frequent departure of the elder boys and girls, who are sent away, either that they may become apprentices or take situations as domestic servants, whilst new comers to the Institution are admitted in their stead.

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From the beginning of the work, up to May 26th, 1882, 6,446 Orphans altogether have been received. Orphan children are received into the Institution under the three following conditions. 1st, they must have been deprived of both parents by death;—2ndly, they must be legitimate children, the marriage certificates of their parents being invariably required; [NOTE: The reasons for this requirement are not clear. Perhaps it was thought that receiving illegitimate children would be perceived as sanctioning immorality.]—and 3rdly, they must be in destitute circumstances. Little Orphans from their earliest days occasionally become inmates of the Houses, and many only three, four, and five months old have been received.

A gallery in one of the Infant Departments, filled with about 200 young Orphans some of whom are under 4 and 5 years of age, is an extremely touching sight; and it is almost impossible to see so many little ones deprived of both their parents, without being moved to tears.

There are generally between 500 and 600 of these Infant Orphans at a time in the Institution. The elder girls are trained for domestic service, and are retained until they are from 17 to 18 years of age, when suitable outfits are provided for them, and situations in Christian families are found; but converted girls advanced in their education, and possessing decided ability for instructing others, are trained to become teachers.

The boys are kept until they are 14 or 15 years of age, when they are allowed to choose the trade or business they de-

sire to learn. Upon leaving the Institution, outfits are provided for them, and they are sent as indoor apprentices to Christian masters, about whom particular inquiry has been made. A premium of £13. is paid to the masters for the boys; and, during their apprenticeship, their former teachers and friends at the Orphan Houses seek, by correspondence and otherwise, to keep up an interest in, and to watch over them; but converted boys who possess good abilities, decided aptitude for teaching, and whose behaviour as Christians has been consistent, are trained to become teachers.

In the latter part of 1880, and the beginning of 1881, there was a remarkable work of the Holy Spirit amongst the Orphan boys and girls, hundreds of whom were awakened to an anxious concern about their souls, which ended in very many instances in real conversion, and much joy in the Lord. They held prayer-meetings amongst themselves, and prayed for the conversion of their companions, who yet remained unawakened. Such seasons there have been again and again during the last forty years, especially in 1859, 1860, 1866, and 1873.

From the commencement of the work up to May 26th, 1882, the sum of nine hundred and forty thousand pounds had been received altogether for the various Objects of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution, simply in answer to prayer and by patiently waiting upon God.

Hundreds of times Mr. Muller has been asked by Christians what they must do to have their faith increased, a question to which he gives the following reply. "Stand still and see the salvation of God; take Him at His word and be satisfied

with it; whoever does this will have his faith increased, and those who fail to do so will become weaker and weaker spiritually.”

Irrespective of waiting upon the Lord habitually for the necessary pecuniary supplies there are, in connection with the Institution—as has already been stated—innumerable calls for trusting in Him, of an entirely different character. In 1872, for example, the Orphan Houses were visited by small-pox, when some of the helpers were attacked, numbers of the orphans became alarmingly ill, and two of the teachers and several children died. Then, a few years ago, 526 children were laid down with fever at one time, a heavy affliction, as every one will be ready to acknowledge.

The behaviour of the children, too, occasionally causes sorrow. Sometimes, though very rarely, it is necessary even to expel some for wicked conduct, and to send them to their friends; and the trials, either of a grave description or of a minor character, which occur from time to time in connection with the whole Institution, are so varied, that they can be understood only by those who are engaged in the work.

On November 16th 1871, Miss Muller was married to Mr. James Wright, her father's first assistant at the Orphan Houses, and his valued fellow-labourer, who has been connected with the Scriptural Knowledge Institution for many years; and on November 30th, 1871, after much prayer and waiting upon God for guidance, Mr. Muller was united in marriage, at Bethesda Chapel, Bristol to the writer of this narrative, with whom as a member of the Church of which he is

the pastor, he had long been acquainted. She has since been the companion of his joys and sorrows, and in him God has given to her the best and kindest of husbands.

In 1872 Mr. Wright was appointed by Mr. Muller Co-Director of the Institution.

Before closing this account, it may be desirable to mention, that there is a Bible and Tract Warehouse belonging to the Scriptural Knowledge Institution, at No. 34, Park Street, Bristol, which contains a large assortment of Bibles, and a great variety of religious books and tracts, suitable for believers and for the unconverted. Mr. James Stanley is the manager of this Depository, to whom orders should be sent.

A Catalogue of these Bibles, books, tracts, etc., may be obtained by application to him, either personally or by letter. There are 200 different sorts of English Bibles kept in stock, each copy of the Holy Scriptures varying from the other Bibles in type or binding, or by being with or without marginal references. Their prices range from 6d. to £4. 18s. Thirty different kinds of New Testaments also may be had. Cheap Bibles and Testaments in the following languages are likewise kept for sale, viz.—Welsh, Danish, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish. There are also New Testaments in Russ, Swedish, Ancient Greek, and Greek and English, and the Psalms in Hebrew.

A large room on the first floor of No. 34, Park Street, contains a vast quantity of articles sent by various donors to be sold for the benefit of the Orphans, the sale of which is under the superintendence of Mrs. Stanley. Since the formation of

the Institution, articles of almost every conceivable description have been presented, and still continue frequently to arrive in such numbers that an enumeration even of only *some* of them would be inconsistent with the brevity aimed at in this narrative.

Besides the contributions sold in Park Street, presents of bread, oatmeal, potatoes, rice, treacle, cheese, flour, sugar, currants and raisins for Christmas puddings, boxes of oranges, and similar valuable donations, most acceptable towards housekeeping at the Orphan Houses, have repeatedly been sent, and often continue to arrive, in answer to prayer.

Nine thousand one hundred pounds is the largest sum of money that has ever been given in *one donation* for the Orphans, and the *smallest* amount ever contributed for them was a present of a farthing.

A poor Christian woman living at some distance from Bristol, a cripple, who began by giving one penny per week out of her little earnings to the work on Ashley Down, was so blessed and prospered by the Lord, that in time she was able to afford a weekly contribution of six shillings for the Orphans. Upon one occasion her gift was wrapped up in a little piece of paper, inside which these words were written; "*Give; give; give; be ever giving. If you are living, you will be giving. Those who are not giving, are not living.*"

Numbers of other small donations of a very interesting character have also been received at different times during the many years this work has been in existence; but as an account of them would make this narrative too long, persons who de-

sire minute details, are referred to the Reports of the Institution, published every year, and to the three volumes of Mr. Muller's *Narrative*.

## Chapter 7

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### The Grace of Faith

**T**he following important passages in the 1st Vol. [of Mr. Muller's *Narrative*] are given for the benefit of Christians and inquirers:

*How to Read the Holy Scriptures  
in the Most Profitable Manner.*

If any one should ask me how to read the Scriptures most profitably, I would advise that:

I.—Above all things we seek to have it settled in our own minds, that God alone by His Spirit can teach us, and that, therefore, as He will be inquired of for blessings, it becomes us to *seek* His blessing previous to reading, and also whilst reading.

II.—We should have it, moreover, settled in our minds, that although the Holy Spirit is the *best, sufficient, and only* Teacher whose instructions are of any value, yet that He does



not always teach immediately when we desire it, and that, therefore, we may have to entreat our Heavenly Father again and again for the explanation of certain passages; but that He will surely teach us at last by His Spirit, if indeed we are seeking for light prayerfully, patiently, and with a view to the glory of God.

III.—It is of immense importance for the understanding of the Word of God, to read it in course, so that we may read every day a portion of the Old and a portion of the New Testament, going on where we previously left off. This is important—1. because it throws light upon the connection, and a different plan, according to which we *habitually* select particular chapters only, will make it utterly impossible ever to understand much of the Scriptures. 2. Whilst we are in the body, we need a change even in spiritual things, and this change the Lord has graciously provided in the great variety which is to be found in His Word. 3. It tends to the glory of God; for the leaving out some chapters here and there, is practically saying, that certain portions are better than others; or that there are certain parts of revealed truth unprofitable or unnecessary. 4. It may keep us by the blessing of God, from erroneous views, as in reading thus regularly through the Scriptures, we are led to see the meaning of the whole, and are also kept from laying too much stress upon certain favourite views. 5. The Scriptures contain the whole revealed will of God, and therefore we ought to seek to read from time to time, through the whole of that revealed will. There are many believers, I fear, in our day, who have not even read once

through the *whole* of the Scriptures; and yet in a few months, by reading only a few chapters every day, they might accomplish it.

IV. —It is also of the greatest importance to meditate on what we read, so that perhaps a small portion of that which we have read, or, if we have time, the whole may be meditated upon in the course of the day. Or a small portion of a book, or an epistle, or a gospel, through which we go regularly for meditation, may be considered every day, without, however, suffering ourselves to be brought into bondage by this plan.

Learned *commentaries* I have found to store the *head* with many notions, and often also with the truth of God; but when the *Spirit* teaches, through the instrumentality of prayer and meditation, the *heart* is affected. The former kind of knowledge generally puffs up, and is frequently renounced, when another commentary gives a different opinion, and often also is found good for nothing, when it is to be carried out into practice. The latter kind of knowledge generally humbles, gives joy, leads us nearer to God, and is not easily reasoned away; and having been obtained from God, and thus having entered into the heart, and become our own, is also generally carried out.

If the inquirer after truth does not understand the Hebrew and Greek languages, so as to be able to compare the common translation with the original, he may, concerning several passages, get light by an improved rendering, provided he can be sure that the translator was a truly spiritual person.” (Vol. I. page 30.)

*Differences Between the Gift and the Grace of Faith*

That the faith God has graciously given to Mr. Muller, is the *grace* of faith and not the *gift* of faith, mentioned in 1 Cor. 2:9, is proved from the following extracts from his *Narrative*:

I desire that all the children of God who read these details, may thereby be led to increased and more simple confidence in Him, for everything which they may need under any circumstances, and that the many answers to prayer I have received, may encourage them to pray particularly for the conversion of their friends and relatives, their own progress in grace and knowledge, the state of the saints whom they know personally, the state of the Church of Christ at large, and the success of the preaching of the gospel.

Especially I affectionately warn them against being led away by the device of Satan, to think that these things are peculiar to *me* and cannot be enjoyed by all the children of God; for though every believer is not called upon to establish Orphan Houses, Charity Schools, etc., and to trust in the Lord for means, yet all believers *are* called upon, in the simple confidence of faith, to cast all their burdens upon Him, to trust in Him for everything; and not only to make everything a subject of prayer, but to expect *answers* to their petitions, which they have asked according to His will, and in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Think not, dear reader, that I have the *gift of faith* of which we read in 1 Cor. 12:9, and which is mentioned along with the

gifts of healing, the working of miracles, and prophecy; and that on *that* account I am able to trust in the Lord. *It is true* that the faith which I am enabled to exercise is altogether God's own gift; it is true that He alone supports it, and that He alone can increase it; it is true that moment by moment, I depend upon Him for it, and that if I were only one moment left to myself, my faith would utterly fail; but it is *not* true that my faith is the gift of faith which is spoken of in 1st Cor. 12:9, for the following reasons:

1. The faith which I am enabled to exercise with reference to the Orphan Houses and my own temporal necessities, is not that "faith" of which it is said in 1st Cor. 13:2 (evidently in allusion to the faith spoken of in 1st Cor. 12:9), "Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity (love) I am nothing;" but it is the self-same faith which is found in *every believer*, and the growth of which I am most sensible of myself; for, by little and little, it has been increasing for the last 57 years.

2. This faith which is exercised respecting the Orphans, and my own temporal necessities, shows itself in the same measure for instance concerning the following points:

I have never been permitted to doubt during the last 57 years that my sins are forgiven, that I am a child of God, that I am beloved of God, and that I shall be finally saved; because I am enabled, by the grace of God, to exercise faith in His Word, and believe what He says in those passages which settle these matters. See 1st John 5:1; Gal. 3:26; Acts 10:43; Romans 10:9-10; John 3:16, etc.

Further, when sometimes all has been dark, exceedingly dark, with reference to my service amongst the saints, judging from natural appearances, yea, when I should have been overwhelmed indeed in grief and despair, had I looked at things after the outward appearance, at such times I have encouraged myself in God, by laying hold in faith on His almighty power, His unchangeable love, and His infinite wisdom, and I have said to myself, God is able and willing to deliver me, if it be good for me; for it is written: “He that spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” Romans 8:32. This, *this* it was which, being believed by me through grace, kept my soul in peace.

Further, when in connection with the Orphan Houses, day schools, etc., trials have come upon me which were far heavier than the want of means; when lying reports were spread that the Orphans had not enough to eat, that they were cruelly treated, and the like, or when other trials have befallen me in connection with this work, and that at a time when I was nearly a thousand miles away from Bristol, and had to remain absent week after week; at such times my soul was stayed upon God; I believed His word of promise which was applicable to such cases; I poured out my soul before Him, and arose from my knees in peace, because the trouble that was in the soul was in believing prayer cast upon the Lord, though I saw it to be His will I should remain far away from the work.

By the grace of God I desire that my faith in Him should extend towards *everything*, the smallest of my own temporal

and spiritual concerns, of those of my family, towards the saints amongst whom I labour, the Church at large, the Scriptural Knowledge Institution, etc.

Do not, dear reader, think me an extraordinary believer; make but trial! Do but stand still in the hour of trial, and you will see the help of God, if you trust in Him. But there is so often a forsaking the ways of the Lord in the hour of trial, and the *food of faith*, the means whereby our faith may be increased, is lost.

In order to have our faith *strengthened*, we must remember that “every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” James 1:17. As the increase of faith is a good gift, it must come from God, and therefore He should be asked for this blessing. The following means, however, ought to be used:

1. The careful, diligent reading of the Word of God, combined with meditation on it. Through reading His Word, and especially through meditation on it, the believer becomes increasingly acquainted with the nature and character of God, and thus sees more and more, besides that He is just and holy, what a kind, loving, gracious, merciful, mighty, wise and faithful Being He is. Therefore, in poverty, affliction of body, bereavement in his family, difficulty in his service, want of a situation or employment, he will repose upon the *ability* of God to help him, because he has not only learned from His Word, that He is of almighty power and infinite wisdom, but he has also seen instance upon instance in the Holy Scriptures,

in which His almighty power and infinite wisdom have been *actually exercised* in helping and delivering His people; and he will repose upon the *willingness* of God to help him, because he has not only learned from the Scriptures, what a kind, good, merciful, gracious, and faithful Being God is, but because he has also seen in the Word of God, how in a great variety of instances, He has *proved* Himself to be so. Thus the reading of the Scriptures, together with meditation on them, will be one especial means to strengthen our faith.

2. It is of the utmost importance that we seek to maintain an upright heart and a good conscience, and therefore do not knowingly and habitually indulge in those things which are contrary to the mind of God; and this is particularly the case with reference to *growth in faith*. All my confidence in God, all my leaning upon Him in the hour of trial will be gone, if I have a guilty conscience, and do not seek to put away this guilty conscience, but still continue to do things which are contrary to His mind. And if in any particular instance I cannot trust in God because of my guilty conscience, then my faith is weakened by that instance of distrust; for faith with every fresh trial of it, either increases by trusting God, or decreases by not trusting Him; and thus there is less and less power of looking simply and directly to Him, and a habit of self-dependence is begotten or encouraged. Either we trust in God, and in that case we neither trust in ourselves, nor in our fellow men, nor in circumstances, nor in anything besides; or we *do* trust in one or more of these, and in that case do *not* trust in God.

3. If we indeed desire our faith to be strengthened, we should not shrink from opportunities where our faith may be tried, and therefore through the trial may be strengthened. In our natural state we dislike dealing with God alone. Through our natural alienation from God, we shrink from Him, and from eternal realities, and this tendency cleaves to us even after our regeneration. Hence it is, that more or less, even as believers, we have the same shrinking from standing with God alone—from depending upon Him alone—from looking to Him alone—and yet this is the very position in which we ought to be, if we wish our faith to be strengthened.

The more I am in a position to be tried in faith with reference to my body, my family, my service for the Lord, my business, etc., the more shall I have opportunity of seeing God's help and deliverance; and every fresh instance, in which He helps and delivers me, will tend towards the increase of my faith. On this account, therefore, the believer should not shrink from situations, positions, circumstances, in which his faith may be tried but should cheerfully embrace them as opportunities where he may see the hand of God stretched out on his behalf, to help and deliver him, and whereby he may thus have his faith strengthened.

4. The last important point for the strengthening of our faith is, that we let God work for us, when the hour of the trial of our faith comes, and do not work a deliverance of our own. Wherever God has given faith, it is given, among other reasons, for the very purpose of being tried—"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that per-



isheth, though it be tried with fire, may be found unto praise, and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” 1 Peter 1:7. Yea, however weak our faith may be, God will try it; only with this restriction, that, as in every way, He leads on gently, gradually, patiently, so also with reference to the trial of our faith. At first it will be tried very little in comparison with what it may be afterwards; for God never lays more upon us than He is willing to enable us to bear.

Now when the trial of faith comes, we are naturally inclined to distrust God, and to trust rather in ourselves, or in our friends, or in circumstances. We will rather work a deliverance of our own somehow or other, than simply look to God, and wait for His help. But if we do not patiently wait for God’s help, if we work a deliverance of our own; then, at the next trial of our faith, it will be thus again; we shall be again inclined to deliver ourselves; and thus, with every fresh instance of that kind, our faith will decrease; whilst on the contrary, were we to stand still in order to see the salvation of God, to see His hand stretched out on our behalf, trusting in Him alone, then our faith would be increased, and with every fresh case in which the hand of God is stretched out to help us in the hour of trial, our faith would be increased yet more.

Would the believer therefore have his faith strengthened, he must, especially, *give time to God*, who tries his faith in order to prove to His child, in the end, how willing He is to help and deliver him, the moment it is good for him. (Vol. I., page 451.)

Should the reader say that he thinks "*I must find this a very trying life, and that I must be tired of it,*" I beg to state that he is entirely mistaken. I do *not* find it a trying life, but a very happy one. It is impossible to describe the abundance of peace and heavenly joy that has often flowed into my soul by means of the fresh answers which I obtained from God after waiting upon Him for help and blessing; and the longer I have had to wait upon Him, or the greater my need was, the greater the enjoyment when at last the answer came, which has often been in a very remarkable way, in order that the hand of God might be more manifest.

I therefore solemnly declare that I do *not* find this life of faith a trying life, but a very happy one, and that I am consequently not in the least tired of it. Straits and difficulties I expected from the very beginning. Before I began this service, I expected them; nay the chief object of it was, that the Church at large might be strengthened in faith, and be led more simply, habitually and unreservedly, to trust in the living God, by seeing His hand stretched out on my behalf in the hour of need. The longer I go on in this service, the greater the trials of one kind or another become; but at the same time the happier I am in this my service, and the more assured, that I am engaged as the Lord would have me to be. (Vol. II., page 139.)

The believing reader of the foregoing pages, is earnestly requested to make it a subject of prayer, that my beloved hus-

band may be *upheld* in this path of faith to the very end of his course—that he may “finish it with joy,” and that we may *both* be abundantly blessed to the close of our earthly pilgrimage.

The End

# George Muller's Last Years of Ministry

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by Jim Elliff

**T**he book you just completed was written in 1883, fifteen years before George Muller's death. In 1889 a companion volume was written by Mrs. Muller entitled *The Preaching Tours and Missionary Labours of George Muller*.

The first of these tours began in 1875, when George Muller was seventy; the last ended in 1892, when he was eighty-seven. This book is longer because it covers the time of the second Mrs. Muller's own experience with George Muller. Even so it does not describe his complete missionary work; George Muller's missionary tours continued for three years after the book was published.

Here, from his own introduction to the second volume, is his rationale for these extensive preaching tours and something of their benefit:

Before the perusal of this book is entered upon, it seems desirable that I should myself state to the reader what led

me to undertake these missionary tours. It may be well to refer also to the objects I had particularly in view in connection with them; to mention how far the desired result has been attained; and to notice a few other points relating to these journeys.

During many years the thought occurred to me again and again, that it might be the will of God I should seek to benefit His children and the unconverted, not through my publications only, but by ministering personally amongst them in other places besides Bristol; but my position as pastor of a large church, and as Director of a great Institution, which seemed to require my constant presence, for a long time put aside the thought. At last, however, when staying in the Isle of Wight in the autumn of 1874, finding that my preaching at Ventnor and Ryde had been unusually blessed and valued, I judged that having very efficient fellow labourers in the church at Bristol, I could be spared, and that my absence would not be particularly felt.

With reference to the work on Ashley Down, too, as Mr. Wright had for many years been an able helper in connection with it, as he had by that time been appointed Assistant Director of the Institution, and as I had laboured in Word and doctrine in Bristol (almost exclusively) for forty-three years, it was laid upon my heart to go from city to city, and from country to country, in order to benefit (if possible) both the Church of God and the world at large, by my ministry and experience. Accordingly, after much prayer and waiting upon God, I decided upon devoting a

very considerable portion of my time habitually to this service, as long as health and strength should be continued in me.

The objects I have in view in undertaking these tours are the following:

1. To preach the Gospel in the simplest way possible, that persons may understand how the blessing which sinners receive through faith in Christ is to be obtained. Many who are really in earnest about their salvation, are nevertheless without peace, because they rest upon their *feelings*. They do not see that everyone who is convinced that he is a lost sinner by nature, and confesses this before God, passes sentence upon himself (so to speak), that, if he depends solely upon the perfect obedience of the Lord Jesus unto death, even the death on the cross, and upon His substitutional sacrifice, he receives the forgiveness of all his sins, *is* justified the moment he believes in Jesus, and shall not perish, but have everlasting life. (Rom. 5:1; Acts 10:43; John 3:16)

2. During my pastoral labours for many years, I found that numbers of true children of God are without the knowledge of their standing in Christ. They do not enter into the fact that they have passed from death unto life, that they are regenerated, pardoned, justified, accepted in the Beloved, and are no longer under condemnation. Now, having entered into all this experientially for more than half a century myself, I desire (with the help of God) to bring others also to an apprehension of these blessings.

How greatly this service is needed is obvious from the fact that there are great numbers of preachers of the Gospel and pastors, who, being without the knowledge of their own personal salvation, are, in consequence, entirely destitute of any real peace and joy in the Lord.

3. Another object I aim at is to bring Christians back to the Holy Scriptures; to urge them to try everything by the Word of God, and to value that *only* which will stand this test. I endeavor, therefore, to lead believers to become *lovers* of the Bible, by exhorting them to a daily, systematic, consecutive, reading and study of it; for I know from an experience of more than half a century the blessedness of doing this myself, and also what loss I experienced, during the first three years after my conversion, from not attending to it.

4. Further, I aim at a removal of sectarianism, at promoting brotherly love amongst true Christians; and with this object in view go amongst all real believers, by whatever name they are called, *provided* they are sound in the foundation truths of our holy faith. Though not agreeing at all with some of their opinions and practices, I nevertheless preach amongst all, having seen for many years how greatly the heart of the Lord Jesus must be grieved by the disunion that exists among His own true disciples. On this account, therefore, I have sought to unite all real believers; but, as this cannot be done by standing aloof from our brethren in Christ until they see eye to eye with us in every point, I have gone amongst them and have united

with them, in so far as nothing has been required of me which I could not do with a good conscience.

5. As for more than half a century I have seen how very little real trust in the living God there is, even amongst true Christians, I have sought also, in these my missionary tours particularly, to strengthen their faith because, in the course of my pastoral labours, the blessed results of *real* confidence in God on the one hand have come to my knowledge, and the misery of distrusting Him also on the other.

6. Both in my public ministry of the Word, and in private conversation with Christians, I seek to lead my fellow disciples to more real separation from the world and deadness to it, and to promote heavenly mindedness in them, according to the Scriptures. At the same time, however, I warn them against *extravagances*, such as sinless perfection in the flesh, which are not to be found in the Word of God.

7. As the Lord enables me, I give instruction also about the true character of the present dispensation and the end thereof, and strive to lead the Church of God to look for the second coming of Christ as her great hope.

In these nine long missionary tours, I have gladly embraced every opportunity also of having meetings with ministers and pastors of Churches, both for the sake of encouraging them in their service, and that I might benefit them through my own experience of fifty-seven years in the ministry of the Word. I have availed myself too of



every opportunity of addressing students in Universities, Theological Seminaries, and Colleges, and have had opportunity likewise of addressing 1,000 or 1,500 Christian workers at a time, and of seeking to benefit them by my experience. This kind of work I have now been able to do in twenty-two different countries, for after having spent a considerable time in such labour in England, Scotland, and Ireland, I was led in the providence of God to Switzerland, Germany, Holland, France, Spain, Italy, Canada, the United States, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, Turkey, Greece, Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, Russia, and Russian Poland.

In the above account, George Muller mentions nine tours and twenty-two countries. In the second book by Mrs. Muller, fifteen tours are mentioned. But Muller's complete missionary work spanned seventeen years (1875-1892) and included seventeen tours, with trips, in addition to the countries mentioned above, to Ceylon, India, Australia, China, Japan, the Straits of Malacca, Tasmania, and New Zealand. Apparently the above words were written during the midst of Muller's tours, and the book by Mrs. Muller was published during the fifteenth tour.<sup>1</sup>

George Muller's fourteenth and fifteenth missionary tours, beginning when he was eighty years old and ending when he was eighty-four, lasted one year and seven months, and two years and seven months respectively. At the end of

his missionary journeys, when he was eighty-seven years old, he wrote the following words in his journal:

In the course of the last seventeen years, having traveled about 200,000 miles altogether, by land and by sea, in the Lord's service, my dear wife and I have abundant reason to praise God for having sustained us in health and vigor of mind and body up to the present time.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Muller returned to the work in Bristol in 1892, living and serving there until he was ninety-three. He died in 1898.

These next statistics, taken from his autobiography, will help you see something of the magnitude of God's work through George Muller:

*Brief Summary of the Statistics of Orphan, and Bible, School, Tract, and Missionary Work done during Mr. Muller's life*

***I. Donations for the Institution***

ORPHANS: Without anyone having been personally applied to for anything, £988,829 0s. 10 ½d. was given for the orphans *as the result of prayer to God* from the commencement of the work up to May 26<sup>th</sup>, 1898.

SCHOOL, BIBLE, TRACT, AND MISSIONARY FUND: The total amount voluntarily given for the School, Bible, Tract, and Missionary funds from the commencement of the work, was £392,341 18s. 7d.

TOTAL OF DONATIONS TO THE INSTITUTION: The total of the above voluntary contributions amounted to *One million, three hundred and eighty-one thousand, one hundred and seventy pounds, nineteen shillings and fivepence halfpenny* (£1,381,170 19s. 5 ½d.), given solely as the result of prayer.\*

## ***II. Donations for Personal Expenses***

The amount received by Mr. Muller during his life for his personal expenses was over £93,000. [NOTE: As Roger Steer notes in his biography of Muller, “It is known that during his life he received about £93,000 for his personal expense: of this he gave away over £81,000; and at his death his sole estate was valued at about £160, including household furniture.”<sup>3</sup>]

## ***III. Income from Sales, Etc.***

In addition to the above, there came in from the commencement by the sale of Bibles, £22,123 1s. 3 ½d.; by the sale of Tracts, £25,474 4s. 4d.; and by the payment of the children in the Day Schools, £24,745 8s. 2d.

## ***IV. Total Income for the Institution***

Thus the total income of the Institution from its commencement up to the year in which Mr. Muller died amounted to *One Million, four hundred and fifty-three thousand, five hundred and thirteen pounds, thirteen shillings, and threepence* (£1,453,513 13s. 3d.).

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**V. *Number of Orphans cared for***

From April, 1836, to May 26<sup>th</sup>, 1898, *ten thousand and twenty-four* Orphans were cared for in the Homes.

**VI. *Bibles, etc., circulated***

There were circulated between March, 1834, and May, 1898, 285,407 Bibles; 1,459,506 New Testaments; 21,365 copies of the Book of Psalms; and 222,986 other portions of the Word of God in several languages. The total amount expended on this Object from March, 1834, was £41,090 13s. 3 ½d.

**VII. *Tracts circulated***

The sum total expended on this Object amounted to £47,188 11s. 10d.

**VIII. *Missionary Funds***

There was expended from the commencement of the Institution £261,859 7s. 4d. on this Object.

\*The stream of contributions has not ceased since Mr. Muller's death, for the total of the donations received from May 26<sup>th</sup>, 1898, to May 26<sup>th</sup>, 1906, was £230,388 9s. 5 ¼d.; so that the total amount received for the work in answer to prayer up to the year in which this volume is published is ONE MILLION, SIX HUNDRED AND ELEVEN THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-NINE POUNDS, EIGHT SHILLINGS, AND TENPENCE THREE FARTHING.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to all of this, Mr. Muller provided funds for the training of over 123,000 day school students in various countries. He also gave generously to many missionaries. Of particular interest is his support of the China Inland Mission and the work of Hudson Taylor. Beginning in 1870, he gave approximately £2,000 annually to support Taylor's work. In fact, George Muller was the main source of support for the entire staff of the CIM at that time—twenty-one missionaries and their families.

George Muller died quietly, alone in his room in the early morning hours of March 10, 1898. His death was mourned by tens of thousands who lined the route of his funeral procession through the streets of Bristol, England.

During the funeral service at Bethesda Chapel, Mr. James Wright, George Muller's son-in-law and the Assistant Director of the orphan work, spoke these words which explain Muller's exceptional life, vibrant faith, and tireless work:

I hardly ever went into his room but that the Bible was open, and when no break in his ordinary life occurred, seven, eight, or ten chapters a day were his ordinary reading. Reading systematically, he imitated and applied the teachings of Scripture to his own state of life. He fed on the bread of life, and that was why he was strong. He said, "I am a lover of the Word of God," and to this he added a living grasp of the Person who is the center of that Word. This was the secret of the power of his testimony for God. To the last moment of his life *his one ground of confi-*

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*dence before God* was the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. On that hinged his whole work. He went to the Father relying on the infinite merits of the High Priest, and felt he could never exhaust the loving heart of his Father if he only came relying solely on the merits of the Savior.<sup>5</sup>

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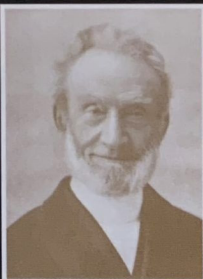
<sup>1</sup> George Muller, *Autobiography of George Muller*, G. Fred Bergin, ed., (Denton, TX: Westminster Literature Resources, Inc., 2003), 526-564.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 564.

<sup>3</sup> Roger Steer, *George Muller; Delighted in God*, (Wheaton, Harold Shaw Publishers, 1981), 299.

<sup>4</sup> George Muller, *Autobiography of George Muller*, 693.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 703.



George Muller (1805-1898) believed he had seen over 50,000 answers to prayer. Refusing to ask anyone but God alone for help, he fed, clothed and housed 10,024 orphans during his lifetime in Bristol, England. Perhaps no one in modern history has demonstrated the life of trust in God more persistently and conspicuously than this man.

*A Brief Account of the Life and Labors of George Muller* was written by Muller's second wife. It is a concise, faithful, and intriguing overview of Muller's remarkable life and work up until he began his missionary journeys in his seventies. A summary of this later period is also included.

Two sections of this book were written by George Muller himself: first, his original introduction to Mrs. Muller's work, notable particularly for the explanation of how his *Narrative* ignited revival in Ireland, and, second, a collection of his journal entries which we have called *George Muller on Money and Possessions*. This compilation presents a challenging alternative to 21st century presuppositions and practices regarding business, investment, retirement, and charitable giving.

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