

GEORGE MÜLLER

My Journal



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Contents

1. My Early Days (1805-1825)	
At School	5
Confirmation	6
Imprisoned.....	7
Outward Reformation	8
Sinful Ways.....	10
Entering Halle University	10
Friendship with Beta	11
Trip to Switzerland	11
Conversion	12
2. A Pilgrimage of Faith (1830-1831)	
Forgoing a Stated Salary.....	15
Financial Trials and Deliverances	16
Temptation to Unbelief.....	17
3. Trusting God for Countless Others (1838)	
A Solemn Crisis.....	20
Coming to Extremities.....	22
4. Large Gifts from Unlikely Sources	
Large Donation from a Poor Seamstress (1835).....	29
Gift of Eight Thousand One Hundred Pounds (1853)	32
Exhortation to Perseverance in Prayer (1863).....	33

These lessons from the pen of George Müller have been used of the Lord to shape our lives and ministries. See too George Müller: Convictions and Teachings, also available from Chapel Library.

Compiled by HeartCry Missionary Society. The HeartCry Missionary Society began in 1988 in Peru with a desire to aid native missionaries so that they might reach their own peoples and establish biblical churches among them. Since then, the Lord has expanded its borders to include not only Latin America, but also Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Russia. The goal of the ministry is to facilitate the advancement of indigenous missionaries throughout the world. Its strategy consists of four primary components: financial support, theological training, Scripture and literature distribution, and the supply of any tool necessary to facilitate the completion of the Great Commission. It currently supports approximately 200 missionary families in 28 countries around the globe.

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Preface

“Practical atheist” is an accurate (albeit not gratifying) appellation used in days gone by to describe a familiar phenomenon: folk claiming to believe in God but living as if He did not exist. How might one earn this ignoble title? To be sure, it may be done in catastrophic fashion: denying Christ (at home, at work, in the public square) under threat of some significant loss (rejection, divorce, destitution, incarceration). But, on the other end of the spectrum, it may be done regularly without noise or tumult—and that by those claiming evangelical and Reformed credentials—simply by a habitual neglect of the duty and privilege of prayer. It all amounts to the same thing: denying by our *actions* that God exists or that is He able or willing to come to our aid.

Such considerations position us to appreciate the genius of Hebrews 11 where faith is described in this fashion:

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Heb 11:6).

Notice, faith embraces the grand reality of God’s existence *in context* of His coming to my aid (“...believe that he is, *and* that he is a rewarder...”). Verses that follow deploy instance after instance of believers putting themselves in jeopardy because they believed God’s promise and trusted He would keep it for *them*. They were not disappointed.

Enter George Müller: the enemy of practical atheism, a proponent of biblical faith. A dissolute youth, he was transformed by the grace of God into a Christ-loving believer.

One of his great projects was the establishment and maintenance of an orphanage in 19th century England. This institution did not exist merely to relieve homeless children. On the contrary, it self-consciously set before the eyes of a watching world an object lesson: that the God of Israel lives and is ready to come to the aid of those that call on Him in faith in accordance with His promises.

And this purpose was fulfilled. The orphanage was built and decently maintained for years in answer to prayer—and this despite “obstacles” that Mr. Müller *deliberately* implemented as part of his procedure. He did not campaign for funds; he renounced debt and a stated salary. In our day of MBA-style financial management, Müller is an alien. Yet the money came in; over 10,000 orphans were cared for—and it was clear to every honest heart acquainted with the facts that God did it.

But must we consent to all-things-Müller? If the Almighty declares “the laborer is worthy of his hire,” can we say he was bound to remove his name from the payroll? We may fear he depended too much upon inward impressions. Might his affinity for A. H. Francke,¹ the Pietist, make us a little nervous. Such cautions may be rightly raised.

Even so, if we miss the clear note Müller is sounding we shall be the losers: “God is *faithful still*, and *hears prayer still*.” Though we cannot follow Müller in everything, surely we must follow him in this. In our day of hedging all bets, covering all bases, where is the God of Müller? Scripture affirms He is searching the earth for others like this friend of the English orphan on whose behalf He might show Himself strong. Will you be such a one?

“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him...” (2Ch 16:9a). ☺

—*HeartCry Missionary Society*

¹ **August Hermann Francke** (1870-1930) – German Lutheran clergyman, philanthropist, biblical scholar, and one of the leaders of Pietism, a movement within Lutheranism that began in the late 17th century, reached its zenith in the mid-18th century, declined through the 19th century, and had almost vanished in America by the end of the 20th century. While declining as an identifiable Lutheran group, some of its theological tenets influenced Protestantism and Anabaptism generally, inspiring Anglican priest John Wesley to begin the Methodist movement and Alexander Mack to begin the Brethren movement. The Pietist movement combined the Lutheranism of the time with the Reformed emphasis on individual piety and living a vigorous Christian life.

1. My Early Days (1805-1825)

Taken from part one of his autobiography, A Narrative of Some of the Lord's Dealings with George Müller, originally published in four parts in 1837, 1841, 1845, and 1856.

I was born at Kroppenstaedt, near Halberstadt, in the kingdom of Prussia, on September 27th, 1805. In January 1810, my parents removed to Heimersleben, about four miles from Kroppenstaedt, where my father was appointed collector in the excise.² As a warning to parents, I mention that my father preferred me to my brother, which was very injurious to both of us. To me, as tending to produce in my mind a feeling of self-elevation; and to my brother, by creating in him a dislike both towards my father and me.

My father, who educated his children on worldly principles, gave us much money considering our age; not in order that we might spend it, but, as he said, to accustom us to possess money without spending it. The result was that it led me and my brother into many sins. For I repeatedly spent a part of the money in a childish way, and afterwards, when my father looked over my little treasure, I sought to deceive him in making up the accounts, either by not putting down all the money which he had given me, or by professing to have more money in hand than was the case, and counting it out accordingly before him. Now, though this deceit was found out at last and I was punished, yet I remained the same. For before I was ten years old I repeatedly took of the government money that was entrusted to my father, and which he had to make up; till one day, as he had repeatedly missed money, he detected my theft by depositing a counted sum in the room where I was and leaving me to myself for a while. Being thus left alone, I took some of the money and hid it under my foot in my shoe. When my father, after his return, missed the money, I was searched and my theft detected.

Though I was punished on this and other occasions, yet I do not remember that at any time when my sins were found out, it made any other impression upon me than to make me think how I might do the thing the next time more cleverly, so as not to be detected. Hence it came that this was not the last time that I was guilty of stealing.

At School

When I was between ten and eleven years of age, I was sent to Halberstadt, to the Cathedral Classical School, there to be prepared for the University; for my father's desire was that I should become a clergyman; not, indeed, that thus I might serve God, but that I might have a comfortable living. My time was now spent in studying, reading novels,

² excise – taxes.

and indulging, though so young, in sinful practices. Thus it continued till I was fourteen years old, when my mother was suddenly removed. The night she was dying, I, not knowing of her illness, was playing at cards till two in the morning, and on the next day, being the Lord's Day, I went with some of my companions in sin to a tavern, and then we went about the streets, half intoxicated.

Confirmation

The following day I attended, for the first time, the religious instruction that I was to receive previous to my confirmation. This likewise was attended to in a careless manner; and when I returned to my lodgings, my father had arrived to fetch my brother and me home to our mother's funeral. This bereavement made no lasting impression on my mind. I grew worse and worse. Three or four days before I was confirmed (and thus admitted to partake of the Lord's Supper), I was guilty of gross immorality; and the very day before my confirmation, when I was in the vestry with the clergyman to confess my sins (according to the usual practice), after a formal manner, I defrauded him, for I handed over to him only the twelfth part of the fee which my father had given me for him.

In this state of heart, without prayer, without true repentance, without faith, without knowledge of the plan of salvation, I was confirmed and took the Lord's Supper on the Sunday after Easter, 1820. Yet I was not without some feeling about the solemnity of the thing, and I stayed at home in the afternoon and evening, whilst the other boys and girls, who had been confirmed with me, walked about in the fields. I also made resolutions to turn from those vices in which I was living, and to study more. But as I attempted the thing in my own strength, all soon came to nothing, and I still grew worse.

Six weeks after my confirmation I went for a fortnight to Brunswick, to a sister of my father, where I became attached to a young female who was a Roman Catholic. My time till Midsummer,³ 1821, was spent partly in study, but in a great degree in playing the pianoforte and guitar, reading novels, frequenting taverns, forming resolutions to become different, yet breaking them almost as fast as they were made. My money was often spent on my sinful pleasures, through which I was now and then brought into trouble; so that once, to satisfy my hunger, I stole a piece of coarse bread, the allowance of a soldier who was quartered in the house where I lodged. What a bitter, bitter thing is the service of Satan, even in this world!

At Midsummer, 1821, my father obtained an appointment at Schoenebeck, near Magdeburg, and I embraced the opportunity of entreating him to remove me to the Cathedral Classical School of Magdeburg; for I thought that, if I could but leave my companions in sin, and get out of certain snares, and be placed under other tutors, I should then live a different life. But as my dependence in this matter also was not upon God, I fell into a still worse state. My father consented, and I was allowed to leave

³ **Midsummer** – the middle of summer; the summer solstice, the longest day of the year when the earth's axis is pointed most directly at the sun, about the 21st of June.

Halberstadt, and to stay at Heimersleben till Michaelmas.⁴ During this time I superintended, according to my father's wish, certain alterations which were to be made in his house there, for the sake of letting it profitably. Being thus quite my own master, I grew still more idle, and lived as much as before in all sorts of sin.

When Michaelmas came, I persuaded my father to leave me at Heimersleben till Easter, and to let me read the classics with Dr. Nagel, a clergyman living in the same place. As he was a very learned man, and also in the habit of having pupils under his care, and a friend of my father, my request was granted. I was now living on the premises belonging to my father, under little real control, and entrusted with a considerable sum of money, which I had to collect for my father. My habits soon led me to spend a considerable part of this money, giving receipts for different sums, yet leaving my father to suppose I had not received them.

Imprisoned

In November I went on a pleasure excursion to Magdeburg, where I spent six days in much sin; and though my absence from home had been found out by my father before I returned from thence, yet I took all the money I could obtain and went to Brunswick, after I had through a number of lies obtained permission from my tutor. The reason of my going to Brunswick was the attachment I had formed eighteen months previously to the young female residing there. I spent a week at Brunswick, in an expensive hotel. At the end of the week my money was expended. This, as well as the want⁵ of a passport, prevented my staying any longer in the hotel. But as I still wished to remain at Brunswick, I went to my uncle, the husband of my father's sister, and made some excuse for not having gone to him in the first instance. My uncle intimated, after a week, that he did not wish me to remain with him any longer.

I then went, without money, to another hotel, in a village near Brunswick, where I spent another week in an expensive way of living. At last, the owner of the hotel, suspecting that I had no money, asked for payment, and I was obliged to leave my best clothes as a security, and could scarcely thus escape from being arrested. I then walked about six miles, to Wolfenbittel, went to an inn, and began again to live as if I had plenty of money. Here I stayed two days, looking out for an opportunity to run away; for I had now nothing remaining to leave as a pledge. But the window of my room was too high to allow of my escaping by getting down at night. On the second or third morning I went quietly out of the yard, and then ran off; but being suspected and observed, and therefore seen to go off, I was immediately called after, and so had to return.

I now confessed my case, but found no mercy. I was arrested and taken between two soldiers to a police officer. Being suspected by him to be a vagabond or thief, I was examined for about three hours, and then sent to gaol.⁶ I now found myself, at the age of

⁴ **Michaelmas** – the feast of St. Michael, a festival of Roman Catholicism, celebrated September 29.

⁵ **want** – lack.

⁶ **gaol** – jail.

sixteen, an inmate of the same dwelling with thieves and murderers, and treated accordingly. My superior manners profited nothing. For though, as a particular favor, I received the first evening some meat with my bread, I had the next day the common allowance of the prisoners, very coarse bread and water, and for dinner vegetables but no meat. My situation was most wretched. I was locked up in this place day and night, without permission to leave my cell. The dinner was such that on the first day I completely loathed it, and left it untouched. The second day I took a little, the third day all, and the fourth and following days I would fain have had more. On the second day I asked the keeper for a Bible, not to consider its blessed contents, but to pass away the time. However, I received none. Here then I was: no creature with me, no book, no work in my hands, and large iron rails before my narrow window.

During the second night I was awakened out of my sleep by the rattling of the bolts and keys. Three men came into my room. When I asked them in my fright what it meant, they laughed at me, continuing quietly to try the iron rails, to see whether I could escape. After a few days I found out that a thief was imprisoned next to me, and, as far as a thick wooden partition would allow of it, I conversed with him; and shortly after the governor of the prison allowed him, as a favor to me, to share my cell. We now passed away our time in relating our adventures, and I was by this time so wicked, that I was not satisfied with relating things of which I had been really guilty, but I even invented stories to show what a famous fellow I was.

I waited in vain day after day to be liberated. After about ten or twelve days my fellow prisoner and I disagreed, and thus we two wretched beings, to increase our wretchedness, spent day after day without conversing together. I was in prison from December 18th, 1821, till January 12th, 1822, when the keeper came and told me to go with him to the police office. Here I found that the Commissioner, before whom I had been tried, had first written to my uncle at Brunswick, and when he had written in reply that it was better to acquaint my father with my conduct, the Commissioner had done so. Thus, I was kept in prison till my father sent the money that was needed for my travelling expenses, to pay my debt in the inn, and for my maintenance in the prison. So ungrateful was I now for certain little kindnesses shown to me by my fellow prisoner, that, although I had promised to call on his sister to deliver a message from him, I omitted to do so; and so little had I been benefited by this my chastisement, that, though I was going home to meet an angry father, only two hours after I had left the town where I had been imprisoned, I chose an avowedly wicked person as my travelling companion for a great part of my journey.

Outward Reformation

My father, who arrived two days after I had reached Heimersleben, after having severely beaten me, took me home to Schoenebeck, intending to keep me there till Easter, and then to send me to a classical school at Halle, that I might be under strict discipline and the continual instruction of a tutor. In the meantime I took pupils, whom I instructed in Latin, French, arithmetic, and German grammar. I now endeavored, by

diligence in study, to regain the favor of my father. My habits were, as to outward appearance, exemplary. I made progress in my own studies, benefited my pupils, and was soon liked by everybody around me, and in a short time my father had forgotten all. But all this time I was in heart as bad as ever; for I was still in secret habitually guilty of great sins.

Easter came, and on account of my good behavior, my diligence in study, and also because I was no expense to my father but earned much more than I cost him, I easily persuaded him to let me stay at home till Michaelmas. But after that period he would not consent to my remaining any longer with him, and therefore I left home, pretending to go to Halle to be examined. But having a hearty dislike to the strict discipline of which I had heard, and knowing also that I should meet there young men attending the University with whom I was acquainted, enjoying all the liberty of German students, whilst I myself was still at school—for these and other reasons I went to Nordhausen and had myself examined by the director of the gymnasium⁷ to be received into that school. I then went home, but never told my father a word of all this deception till the day before my departure, which obliged me to invent a whole chain of lies. He was then very angry; but, at last, through my entreaties and persuasion, he gave way and allowed me to go.

I continued at Nordhausen two years and six months, till Easter, 1825. During this time I studied with considerable diligence the Latin classics, French, history, my own language, etc.; but did little in Hebrew, Greek, or mathematics. I lived in the house of the director, and got, through my conduct, highly into his favor, so much so, that I was held up by him in the first class as an example to the rest, and he used to take me regularly with him in his walks, to converse with me in Latin. I used now to rise at four, winter and summer, and generally studied all the day, with little exception, till ten at night.

But whilst I was thus outwardly gaining the esteem of my fellow creatures, I did not care in the least about God, but lived secretly in much sin, in consequence of which I was taken ill, and for thirteen weeks confined to my room. During my illness I had no real sorrow of heart, yet being under certain natural impressions of religion, I read through Klopstock's works without weariness. I cared nothing about the Word of God. I had about three hundred books of my own, but no Bible. I practically set a far higher value upon the writings of Horace and Cicero, Voltaire and Moliere,⁸ than upon the volume of inspiration. Now and then I felt that I ought to become a different person, and

⁷ **gymnasium** – an upper-level school in Europe for final preparation before university.

⁸ **Horace, Cicero, Voltaire, Moliere** – *Horace* (65-8 B.C.): leading Roman lyric poet during the time of Roman leader Augustus. *Cicero* (106-43 B.C.): a Roman philosopher, statesman, lawyer, political theorist, and Roman constitutionalist. He is widely considered one of Rome's greatest orators and prose stylists. *Voltaire* (A.D. 1694-1778): French Enlightenment writer, historian, and philosopher who advocated civil liberty. He produced plays, poetry, novels, essays, and historical and scientific works that influenced important thinkers of both the American and French Revolutions. *Moliere* (A.D. 1622-1673): French playwright and actor, considered one of the greatest masters of comedy in Western literature.

I tried to amend my conduct, particularly when I went to the Lord's Supper, as I used to do twice every year, with the other young men. The day previous to attending that ordinance, I used to refrain from certain things; and on the day itself I was serious, and also swore once or twice to God, with the emblem of the broken body in my mouth, to become better, thinking that for the oath's sake I should be induced to reform. But after one or two days were over, I was as bad as before.

Sinful Ways

I had now grown so wicked, that I could habitually tell lies without blushing. And further to show how fearfully wicked I was, I will mention, out of many others, only one great sin, of which I was guilty before I left this place. Through my dissipated life I had contracted debts, which I had no means of discharging; for my father could allow me only about as much as I needed for my regular maintenance. One day, after having received a sum of money from him, and having purposely shown it to some of my companions, I afterwards feigned that it was stolen, having myself by force injured the lock of my trunk, and having also designedly forced open my guitar case. I also feigned myself greatly frightened at what had happened, ran into the director's room with my coat off, and told him that my money was stolen. I was greatly pitied. Some friends also gave me now as much money as I pretended to have lost, and the circumstance afforded me a ground upon which to ask my creditors to wait longer. But this matter turned out bitterly; for the director, having ground to suspect me, though he could not prove anything, never fully restored me to his confidence.

As regards my own feeling, though I was very wicked, yet this desperate act of depravity was too much, even for my hardened conscience; for it never afterwards allowed me to feel easy in the presence of the director's wife, who, like a kind mother, had waited on me in my illness, and on whom I had now so willfully brought trouble. How long-suffering was God at this time, not to destroy me at once! And how merciful that He did not suffer me to be tried before the police, who easily would have detected that the whole was a fabrication! I was heartily glad for many reasons, but particularly on account of this latter circumstance, to be able soon after to exchange the school for the University.

Entering Halle University

I had now obtained what I had fondly looked forward to. I became a member of the University, and that with very honourable testimonials. I had thus obtained permission to preach in the Lutheran Establishment, but I was as truly unhappy and as far from God as ever. I had made strong resolutions, now at last to change my course of life, for two reasons: first, because, without it, I thought no parish would choose me as their pastor; and secondly, that without a considerable knowledge of divinity I should never get a good living; as the obtaining of a valuable cure⁹ in Prussia generally depends upon the

⁹ **cure** – spiritual charge or care of souls, as of a priest for his congregation.

degree which the candidates for the ministry obtain in passing the examination. But the moment I entered Halle, the University town, all my resolutions came to nothing. Being now more than ever my own master, and without any control as long as I did not fight a duel, molest the people in the streets, etc., I renewed my profligate¹⁰ life afresh, though now a student of divinity. When my money was spent, I pawned my watch and a part of my linen and clothes, or borrowed in other ways. Yet in the midst of it all I had a desire to renounce this wretched life, for I had no enjoyment in it, and had sense enough left to see that the end one day or other would be miserable, for I should never get a living. But I had no sorrow of heart on account of offending God.

Friendship with Beta

One day when I was in a tavern with some of my wild fellow-students, I saw among them one of my former schoolfellows, named Beta, whom I formerly despised, because he was so quiet and serious. It now appeared well to me to choose him as my friend, thinking that if I could but have better companions, I should improve my own conduct.

This Beta was a backslider. When formerly he was so quiet at school, I have reason to believe it was because the Spirit of God was working on his heart; but now, having departed from the Lord, he tried to put off the ways of God more and more, and to enjoy the world, of which he had known but little before. I sought his friendship because I thought it would lead me to a steady life; and he gladly formed an acquaintance with me, as he told me afterwards, because he thought it would bring him into more immoral company. Thus my poor foolish heart was again deceived. And yet God, in His abundant mercy, made him after all, in a way which was never thought of by me, the instrument of doing me good, not merely for time but for eternity.

About this period, June, 1825, I was again taken ill in consequence of my profligate and vicious¹¹ life. My state of health would therefore no longer allow me to go on in the same course, but my desires were still unchanged. About the end of July I recovered. After this, my conduct was outwardly rather better; but this arose only from want of money. At the commencement of August, Beta and I, with two other students, drove about the country for four days. All the money for this expensive pleasure had been obtained by pledging some of our remaining articles.

Trip to Switzerland

When we returned, instead of being truly sorry on account of this sin, we thought of fresh pleasures, and, as my love for travelling was stronger than ever, through what I had seen on this last journey, I proposed to my friends to set off for Switzerland. The obstacles in the way, the want of money, and the want of the passports, were removed by me. For, through forged letters from our parents, we procured passports; and through

¹⁰ **profligate** – recklessly depraved and immoral.

¹¹ **vicious** – addicted to vice or immorality; wicked.

pledging all we could, particularly our books, we obtained as much money as we thought would be enough. Beta was one of the party.

On August 18th we left Halle. It will be enough to say that we went as far as Mount Rigi in Switzerland. Forty-three days we were, day after day, travelling, almost always on foot. I had now obtained the desire of my heart. I had seen Switzerland. But still I was far from being happy. The Lord most graciously preserved us from many calamitous circumstances, which, but for His gracious providence, might have overtaken us. But I did not see His hand at that time, as I have seen it since. Sickness of one or more of us, or separation from one another, which might have so easily befallen us, would have brought us, being so far from home and having but just as much money as was absolutely needed, into a most miserable condition. I was on this journey like Judas; for, having the common purse, I was a thief. I so managed, that the journey cost me but two-thirds of what it cost my friends. Oh! How wicked was I now. At last all of us became tired of seeing even the most beautiful views; and whilst at first—after having seen certain places—I had been saying with Horace, at the end of the day, in my pagan heart, “Vixi” (I have lived), I was now glad to get home again.

September 29th we reached Halle, from whence each of us, for the remainder of the vacation, went to his father’s house. I had now, by many lies, to satisfy my father concerning the travelling expenses, and succeeded in deceiving him. During the three weeks I stayed at home, I determined to live differently for the future. Once more the Lord showed me what resolutions come to when made in man’s strength. I was different for a few days; but when the vacation was over, and fresh students came and, with them, fresh money, all was soon forgotten.

At this time Halle was frequented by 1,260 students, about 900 of whom studied divinity, all of which 900 were allowed to preach, although, I believe, not nine of them feared the Lord.

Conversion

The time was now come when God would have mercy upon me. His love had been set upon such a wretch as I was before the world was made. His love had sent His Son to bear punishment on account of my sins, and to fulfil the law which I had broken times without number. And now at a time when I was as careless about Him as ever, He sent His Spirit into my heart. I had no Bible, and had not read in it for years. I went to church but seldom; but, from custom, I took the Lord’s Supper twice a year. I had never heard the gospel preached up to the beginning of November 1825. I had never met with a person who told me that he meant, by the help of God, to live according to the Holy Scriptures. In short, I had not the least idea that there were any persons really different from myself, except in degree.

One Saturday afternoon, about the middle of November, 1825, I had taken a walk with my friend Beta. On our return he said to me that he was in the habit of going on Saturday evenings to the house of a Christian, where there was a meeting. On further

enquiry he told me that they read the Bible, sang, prayed, and read a printed sermon. No sooner had I heard this, than it was to me as if I had found something after which I had been seeking all my life long. I immediately wished to go with my friend, who was not at once willing to take me; for knowing me as an immoral young man, he thought I should not like this meeting. At last, however, he said he would call for me. I would here mention that Beta seems to have had conviction of sin, and probably also a degree of acquaintance with the Lord, when about fifteen years old. Afterwards, being in a cold and worldly state, he joined me in that sinful journey to Switzerland. On his return, however, being extremely miserable and convinced of his guilt, he made a full confession of his sin to his father; and, whilst with him, sought the acquaintance of a Christian brother, named Richter. This Dr. Richter gave him, on his return to the University, a letter of introduction to a believing tradesman of the name of Wagner. It was this brother in whose house the meeting was held.

We went together in the evening. As I did not know the manners of believers, and the joy they have in seeing poor sinners even in any measure caring about the things of God, I made an apology for coming. The kind answer of this dear brother I shall never forget. He said, "Come as often as you please; house and heart are open to you." We sat down and sang a hymn. Then brother Kayser, afterwards a missionary in Africa in connection with the London Missionary Society, who was then living at Halle, fell on his knees and asked a blessing on our meeting. This kneeling down made a deep impression upon me; for I had never either seen any one on his knees, nor had I ever prayed myself on my knees. He then read a chapter and a printed sermon; for no regular meetings for expounding the Scriptures were allowed in Prussia, except an ordained clergyman was present. At the close we sang another hymn, and then the master of the house prayed. Whilst he prayed, my feeling was something like this: I could not pray as well, though I am much more learned than this illiterate man. The whole made a deep impression on me. I was happy; though if I had been asked why I was happy, I could not have clearly explained it. When we walked home, I said to Beta, "All we have seen on our journey to Switzerland, and all our former pleasures, are as nothing in comparison with this evening." Whether I fell on my knees when I returned home, I do not remember; but this I know, that I lay peaceful and happy in my bed. This shows that the Lord may begin His work in different ways. For I have not the least doubt that on that evening He began a work of grace in me, though I obtained joy without any deep sorrow of heart and with scarcely any knowledge. That evening was the turning point in my life. The next day, and Monday, and once or twice besides, I went again to the house of this brother, where I read the Scriptures with him and another brother; for it was too long for me to wait till Saturday came again.

Now my life became very different, though all sins were not given up at once. My wicked companions were given up; the going to taverns was entirely discontinued; the habitual practice of telling falsehoods was no longer indulged in, but still a few times after this I spoke an untruth. At the time when this change took place, I was engaged in translating a novel out of French into German for the press, in order to obtain the

means of gratifying my desire to see Paris. This plan about the journey was now given up, though I had not light enough to give up the work in which I was engaged, but finished it. The Lord, however, most remarkably put various obstacles in the way and did not allow me to sell the manuscript. At last, seeing that the whole was wrong, I determined never to sell it, and was enabled to abide by this determination. The manuscript was burnt.

I now no longer lived habitually in sin, though I was still often overcome, and sometimes even by open sins, though far less frequently than before, and not without sorrow of heart. I read the Scriptures, prayed often, loved the brethren, went to church from right motives, and stood on the side of Christ, though laughed at by my fellow students.

What all the exhortations and precepts of my father and others could not effect; what all my own resolutions could not bring about, even to renounce a life of sin and profligacy—I was enabled to do, constrained by the love of Jesus. The individual who desires to have his sins forgiven must seek for it through the blood of Jesus. The individual who desires to get power over sin must likewise seek it through the blood of Jesus. ✍

Sections 2-4 consist of excerpts from George Müller's daily journal that have been used of the Lord to shape many lives and ministries.

2. A Pilgrimage of Faith (1830-1831)

These entries are from Mr. Müller's early years in ministry, when learning to trust God for personal needs.

Forgoing a Stated Salary

About this time¹² I began to have conscientious objections against any longer receiving a stated salary¹³...A box was put up in the chapel, over which was written that whoever had a desire to do something towards my support, might put his offering into the box.

At the same time it appeared to me right, that henceforth I should ask no man, not even my beloved brethren and sisters, to help me, as I had done a few times according to their own request, as my expenses, on account of traveling much in the Lord's service, were too great to be met by my usual income. For unconsciously I had thus again been led, in some measure, to trust in an arm of flesh, going to man instead of going to the Lord at once. To come to this conclusion before God required more grace than to give up my salary.

About the same time also my wife and I had grace given to us to take the Lord's commandment, "Sell that ye have, and give alms" (Luk 12:33), literally, and to carry it out. Our staff and support in this matter were Matthew 6:19-34 and John 14:13-14. We leaned on the arm of the Lord Jesus. It is now sixty-four years since we set out in this way, and we do not in the least regret the step we then took. Our God also has, in His tender mercy, given us grace to abide in the same mind concerning the above points, both as regards principle and practice; and this has been the means of letting us see the tender love and care of our God over His children, even in the most minute things, in a way in which we never experimentally¹⁴ knew them before; and it has, in particular, made the Lord known to us more fully than we knew Him before, as a prayer-hearing God.

¹² **About this time** – five years after the preceding excerpt ends.

¹³ **salary** – Payment for labor is the rule. Nevertheless, Paul himself refused pay and suffered to avoid hindering the gospel of Christ (1Co 9:7-15)—*Editor*.

¹⁴ **experimentally** – through personal experience of something; experientially.

Financial Trials and Deliverances

November 18th, 1830. Our money was reduced to about eight shillings.¹⁵ When I was praying with my wife in the morning, the Lord brought to my mind the state of our purse, and I was led to ask Him for some money. About four hours after, we were with a sister at Bishop Steignton, and she said to me, “Do you want¹⁶ any money?” I said, “I told the brethren, dear sister, when I gave up my salary, that I would for the future tell the Lord only about my wants.” She replied, “But He has told me¹⁷ to give you some money. About a fortnight ago I asked Him what I should do for Him, and He told me to give you some money; and last Saturday it came again powerfully to my mind, and has not left me since, and I felt it so forcibly last night that I could not help speaking of it to Brother P.” My heart rejoiced, seeing the Lord’s faithfulness, but I thought it better not to tell her about our circumstances lest she should be influenced to give accordingly; and I also was assured that, if it were of the Lord, she could not but give. I therefore turned the conversation to other subjects, but when I left she gave me two guineas.¹⁸ We were full of joy on account of the goodness of the Lord. I would call upon the reader to admire the gentleness of the Lord, that He did not try our faith much at the commencement, but gave us first encouragement and allowed us to see His willingness to help us, before He was pleased to try it more fully.

Between Christmas and the New Year, when our money was reduced to a few shillings, I asked the Lord for more; when a few hours after there was given to us a sovereign by a brother from Axminster. This brother had heard much against me, and was at last determined to hear for himself, and thus came to Teignmouth, a distance of forty miles; and, having heard about our manner of living, gave us this money.

With this closes the year 1830. Throughout it the Lord richly supplied all my temporal wants, though at the commencement of it I had no certain human prospect of one single shilling; so that, even as regards temporal things, I had not been in the smallest degree a loser in acting according to the dictates of my conscience, and as regards spiritual things, the Lord has indeed dealt bountifully with me, and led me on in many respects, and, moreover, had condescended¹⁹ to use me as an instrument in doing His work.

¹⁵ **shillings** – silver coins of Great Britain, each equal in value to 1/20 pound.

¹⁶ **want** – lack.

¹⁷ **He has told me** – The reader is cautioned against concluding that every subjective feeling, impression, or thought entering the mind is the immediate direction of God. Great mistakes may be made in this way. The written Word (2Ti 3:16), the prayer for wisdom (Jam 1:5), and the multitude of counselors (Pro 11:14; 15:22; 24:6) are the biblically safe path for the believer—*Editor*.

¹⁸ **guineas** – former gold coins of Great Britain, each equal in value to 21 shillings; or \$4.66 U.S. dollars in 1828; last minted in 1813, officially replaced by the pound in 1816. Two guineas in 1830 would be worth approximately \$260 USD today using a retail index, and \$2,867 using an earnings index. [Source: www.measuringworth.com/calculators/ppoweruk]

¹⁹ **condescended** – descending or stooping to things unworthy.

Temptation to Unbelief

On January 6th, 7th, and 8th, 1831, I had repeatedly asked the Lord for money, but received none. On the evening of January 8th I left my room for a few minutes, and was then tempted to distrust the Lord, though He had been so gracious to us, in that He not only up to that day had supplied all our wants, but had given us also those answers to prayer, which have been in part just mentioned. I was so sinful, for about five minutes, as to think it would be of no use to trust in the Lord in this way. I also began to say to myself that I had perhaps gone too far in living in this way. But thanks to the Lord! This trial lasted but a few minutes. He enabled me again to trust in Him, and Satan was immediately confounded; for when I returned to my room (out of which I had not been absent ten minutes), the Lord had sent deliverance, for a sister in the Lord, who resided at Exeter, had come to Teignmouth, and brought us £2 4s.²⁰

January 10th. Today, when we had again but a few shillings, £5 was given to us, which had been taken out of the box. I had, once for all, told the brethren who had the care of these temporal things, to have the kindness to let me have the money every week; but as these beloved brethren either forgot to take it out weekly, or were ashamed to bring it in such small sums, it was generally taken out every three, four, or five weeks. As I had stated to them, however, from the commencement that I desired to look neither to man nor the box, but to the living God, I thought it not right on my part to remind them of my request to have the money weekly, lest it should hinder the testimony which I wished to give, of trusting in the living God alone. It was on this account that on January 28th, when we had again but little money, though I had seen the brethren on January 24th open the box and take out the money, I would not ask the brother in whose hands it was, to let me have it; but I asked the Lord to incline his heart to bring it, and but a little time afterwards it was given to us, even £1 8s. 6d.²¹

On March 7th I was again tempted to disbelieve the faithfulness of the Lord, and though I was not miserable, still I was not so fully resting upon the Lord, that I could triumph with joy. It was but one hour after when the Lord gave me another proof of His faithful love. There came from some sisters in the Lord £5 with these words written on the paper: “ For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink...Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?...And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Mat 25:35-40).

About April 20th I went to Chulmleigh. Here and in the neighborhood I preached repeatedly, and from thence I went to Barnstaple. Whilst we were at Barnstaple there

²⁰ £2 4s – two pounds and four shillings. The pound is the standard British monetary unit consisting of 20 shillings, valued at ~\$4.44 USD in 1830. £2 4s in 1830 would be worth approximately \$260 USD today using a retail index, and \$2,867 using an earnings index.

²¹ 6d – six pence; the pence was equal to 1/240 pound prior to 1971, and 1/100 beginning in 1971. The use of “d” for pence stems from the Roman denarius coin.

was found in my wife's bag a sovereign,²² put there anonymously. A sister also gave us £2. On our return to Teignmouth, May 2nd, when we emptied our traveling bag, there fell out a paper with money. It contained two sovereigns and three pence, the latter put in, no doubt, to make a noise in emptying the bag. May the Lord bless and reward the giver! In a similar way we found 4s. put anonymously into one of our drawers, a few days after.

June 12th. Lord's Day. On Thursday last I went with brother Craik to Torquay, to preach there. I had only about 3s. with me, and left my wife with about 6s. at home. The Lord provided beds for us through the hospitality of a brother. I asked the Lord repeatedly for money; but when I came home my wife had only about 3s. left, having received nothing. We waited still upon the Lord. Yesterday passed away and no money came. We had 9d. left. This morning we were still waiting upon the Lord and looking for deliverance. We had only a little butter left for breakfast, sufficient for brother E. and a relative living with us, to whom we did not mention our circumstances that they might not be made uncomfortable. After the morning meeting, Brother Y. most unexpectedly opened the box, and, in giving me quite as unexpectedly the money at such a time, he told me that he and his wife could not sleep last night on account of thinking that we might want money. The most striking point is that after I had repeatedly asked the Lord but received nothing, I then prayed yesterday that the Lord would be pleased to impress it on brother Y. that we wanted money, so that he might open the box. There was in it £1 8s. 10 1/ 2d. Our joy on account of this fresh deliverance was great, and we praised the Lord heartily.

July 20th. A shoulder of mutton and a loaf were sent to us anonymously. I understood some time afterwards that Satan had raised the false report that we were starving, in consequence of which a believer sent these provisions. I would mention, by the way, that various reports have been circulated on account of this our way of living.

Sometimes it has been said that we had not enough to eat, and that surely such and such an infirmity of body we had brought on us, because we had not the necessaries of life. Now, the truth is that, whilst we have been often brought low—yea, so low, that we have not had even as much as one single penny left; or so as to have the last loaf on the table, and not as much money as was needed to buy another loaf—yet never have we had to sit down to a meal without our good Lord having provided nourishing food for us. I am bound to state this, and I do it with pleasure. My Master has been a kind Master to me, and if I had to choose this day again as to the way of living, the Lord giving me grace I would not choose differently. But even these very reports, false as they were, I doubt not the Lord has sometimes used as a means to put it into the hearts of His children to remember our temporal necessities.

November 27th, Lord's Day. Our money had been reduced to 2d.; our bread was hardly enough for this day. I had several times brought our need before the Lord. After dinner, when I returned thanks, I asked Him to give us our daily bread, meaning literally

²² **sovereign** – British gold coin minted from 1489-1932, equal in value to one pound.

that He would send us bread for the evening. Whilst I was praying, there was a knock at the door of the room. After I had concluded, a poor sister came in and brought us some of her dinner, and from another poor sister 5s. In the afternoon she also brought us a large loaf. Thus the Lord not only literally gave us bread, but also money.

After we had, on December 31st, 1831, looked over the Lord's gracious dealings with us during the past year, in providing for all our temporal wants, we had about 10s. left. A little while after, the providence of God called for that, so that not a single farthing remained. Thus we closed the old year, in which the Lord had been so gracious in giving to us, without our asking anyone, altogether, £131 18s. 8d. There had been likewise many articles of provision and some articles of clothing given to us, worth at least £20. I am so particular in mentioning these things to show that we are never losers by acting according to the mind of the Lord. For had I had my regular salary, humanly speaking, I should not have had nearly as much; but whether this would have been the case or not, this is plain: that I have not served a hard Master, and that is what I delight to show. For, to speak well of His name, that thus my beloved fellow-pilgrims who may read this may be encouraged to trust in Him, is the chief purpose of my writing. ✍

3. Trusting God for Countless Others (1838)

These journal entries concern a time of crisis in God's care for the several orphan houses and thousands of orphans in Bristol. These demonstrate how God meets the needs of His people on a daily basis.

A Solemn Crisis

September 10th. Monday morning. Neither Saturday nor yesterday had any money come in. It appeared to me now needful to take some steps on account of our need, i.e., to go to the Orphan Houses, call the brethren and sisters together (who, except brother T—, had never been informed about the state of the funds), state the case to them, see how much money was needed for the present, tell them that amidst all this trial of faith I still believed that God would help, and to pray with them. Especially, also, I meant to go for the sake of telling them that no more articles must be purchased than we have the means to pay for, but to let there be nothing lacking in any way for the children as regards nourishing food and needful clothing; for I would rather at once send them away than that they should lack. I meant to go for the sake also of seeing whether there were still articles remaining that had been sent for the purpose of being sold, or whether there were any articles really needless, that we might turn them into money. I felt that the matter was now come to a solemn crisis. About half-past nine sixpence came in, which had been put anonymously into the box at Gideon Chapel. This money seemed to me like an earnest, that God would have compassion and send more. About ten, after I had returned from brother Craik, to whom I had unbosomed my heart again whilst once more in prayer for help, a sister called who gave two sovereigns to my wife for the orphans, stating that she had felt herself stirred up to come, and that she had delayed coming already too long. A few minutes after, when I went into the room where she was, she gave me two sovereigns more, and all this without knowing the least about our need. Thus the Lord most mercifully has sent us a little help, to the great encouragement of my faith. A few minutes after I was called on for money from the Infants' Orphan House, to which I sent £2, and £1 0s. 6d. to the Boys' Orphan House, and £1 to the Girls' Orphan House. Today I saw a young brother who, as well as one of his sisters, had been brought to the knowledge of the Lord through my *Narrative*.²³

September 13th. This morning I found it was absolutely needful to tell the brethren and sisters about the state of the funds, and to give directions as to not going into debt,

²³ *Narrative* – George Müller's autobiography, *A Narrative of Some of the Lord's Dealings with George Müller*, originally published in four parts respectively in 1837, 1841, 1845, and 1856. Many modern reprints are available from various publishers, including www.solid-ground-books.com.

etc. We prayed together and had a very happy meeting. They all seemed comfortable. There was 12s. 6d. taken out of the boxes in the three houses, 12s. one of the laborers gave, and £1 1s. had come in for needlework done by the children. One of the sisters, who is engaged in the work, sent a message after me, not to trouble myself about her salary, for she should not want any for a twelvemonth. What a blessing to have such fellow laborers!

September 14th. I met again this morning with the brethren and sisters for prayer, as the Lord has not yet sent help. After prayer one of the laborers gave me all the money he had, 16s., saying that it would not be upright to pray, if he were not to give what he had. One of the sisters told me, that in six days she would give £6, which she had in the Savings' Bank for such a time of need. God be praised for such fellow-laborers! Up to this day the matrons of the three houses had been in the habit of paying the bakers and the milkman weekly, because they had preferred to receive the payments in this way, and sometimes it had thus been also with the butcher and grocer. But now, as the Lord deals out to us by the day, we considered it would be wrong to go on any longer in this way, as the week's payment might become due and we have no money to meet it; and thus those with whom we deal might be inconvenienced by us, and we be found acting against the commandment of the Lord, "Owe no man anything" (Rom 13:8). From this day and henceforward, whilst the Lord gives to us our supplies by the day, we purpose therefore to pay at once for every article as it is purchased, and never to buy anything except we can pay for it at once, however much it may seem to be needed, and however much those with whom we deal may wish to be paid only by the week. The little which was owed was paid off this day. When I came home I found a large parcel of new clothes, which had been sent from Dublin for the orphans—a proof that the Lord remembers us still. We met again in the evening for prayer. We were of good cheer, and still BELIEVE that the Lord will supply our need.

September 15th. Saturday. We met again this morning for prayer. God comforts our hearts. We are looking for help. I found that there were provisions enough for today and tomorrow, but there was no money in hand to take in bread as usual in order that the children might not have newly-baked bread. This afternoon one of the laborers, who had been absent for several days from Bristol, returned and gave £1. This evening we met again for prayer, when I found that 10s. 6d. more had come in since the morning. With this £1 10s. 6d. we were able to buy, even this Saturday evening, the usual quantity of bread and have some money left. God be praised, Who gave us grace to come to the decision not to take any bread today as usual, nor to buy anything for which we cannot pay at once.

September 17th. The trial still continues. It is now more and more trying, even to faith, as each day comes. Truly, the Lord has wise purposes in allowing us to call so long upon Him for help. But I am sure God will send help, if we can but wait. One of the laborers had had a little money come in, of which he gave 12s. 6d.; another laborer gave 11s. 8d., being all the money she had left: this with 17s. 6d.—which partly had come in

and partly was in hand—enabled us to pay what needed to be paid and to purchase provisions, so that nothing yet in any way has been lacking.

This evening I was rather tried respecting the long delay of larger sums coming; but being led to go to the Scriptures for comfort, my soul was greatly refreshed and my faith again strengthened by the 34th Psalm, so that I went very cheerfully to meet with my dear fellow-laborers for prayer. I read to them the psalm, and sought to cheer their hearts through the precious promises contained in it.

Coming to Extremities

September 18th. Brother T. had 25s. in hand, and I had 3s. This £1 8s. enabled us to buy the meat and bread that was needed, a little tea for one of the houses, and milk for all; no more than this is needed. Thus the Lord has provided not only for this day, but there is bread for two days in hand. Now, however, we are come to an extremity. The funds are exhausted. The laborers who had a little money have given as long as they had any left. Now observe how the Lord helped us! A lady from the neighborhood of London who brought a parcel with money from her daughter, arrived four or five days since in Bristol, and took lodgings next door to the Boys' Orphan House. This afternoon she herself kindly brought me the money, amounting to £3 2s. 6d. We had been reduced so low as to be on the point of selling those things which could be spared; but this morning I had asked the Lord, if it might be, to prevent the necessity of our doing so. That the money had been so near the Orphan Houses for several days without being given, is a plain proof that it was from the beginning in the heart of God to help us; but, because He delights in the prayers of His children, He had allowed us to pray so long; also to try our faith, and to make the answer so much the sweeter. It is indeed a precious deliverance. I burst out into loud praises and thanks the first moment I was alone, after I had received the money. I met with my fellow-laborers again this evening for prayer and praise; their hearts were not a little cheered.

September 20th. Morning. The Lord has again kindly sent in a little. Last evening was given to me 1s. 6d., and this morning £1 3s. Evening. This evening the Lord sent still further supplies; £8 11s. 2½d. came in, as a further proof that the Lord is not unmindful of us. There was in the box of the Girls' Orphan House £1 1s., and in that of the Boys' Orphan House £1 7s. 2½d.

One of the laborers, in accordance with her promise this day week, gave £6 3s. About eighteen months ago she saw it right no longer to have money for herself in the Savings' Bank, and she therefore, in her heart, gave the money which she had there to the Orphan Houses, intending to draw it in a time of need. Some time since (she told me this evening) she drew a part of it to buy several useful articles for the Orphan Houses; now the sum was reduced to £6. When she found out the present need, she went this day week to the Savings' Bank, and gave notice that she wished to draw her money today.

Truly, as long as God shall be pleased to give me such fellow-laborers, His blessing will rest upon the work. This £8 11s. 2½d. was divided this evening to supply the three houses, and we thanked God, unitedly, for His help.

September 29th. Saturday evening. Prayer has been made for several days past respecting the rent, which is due this day. I have been looking out for it, though I knew not whence a shilling was to come. This morning brother T. called on me and, as no money had come in, we prayed together, and continued in supplication from ten till a quarter to twelve. Twelve o'clock struck (the time when the rent ought to have been paid), but no money had been sent.

For some days past I have repeatedly had a misgiving, whether the Lord might not disappoint us, in order that we might be led to provide by the week, or the day, for the rent. This is the second, and only the second, complete failure as to answers of prayer in the work, during the past four years and six months. The first was about the half yearly rent of the Castle-Green school room, due July 1st, 1837, which had come in only in part by that time. I am now fully convinced that the rent ought to be put by daily or weekly, as God may prosper us, in order that the work, even as to this point, may be a testimony. May the Lord, then, help us to act accordingly; and may He now mercifully send in the means to pay the rent!

Whilst in this matter our prayers have failed, either to humble us, or to show us how weak our faith is still, or to teach us (which seems to me the most probable) that we ought to provide the rent beforehand; the Lord has given us again fresh proofs even this day that He is mindful of us. There was not money enough in the Girls' Orphan House to take in bread (we give the bread to the children on the third day after it is baked); but before the baker came, a lady called who had had some needlework done by the children, and paid 3s. 11d., and thus the matron was able to take in bread as usual. I found this morning 2s. in the box in my house, our extremity having led me to look into it. One of the laborers gave 13s. This 15s. was divided amongst the three matrons. Thanks to the Lord, there is all that is needed for today and tomorrow.

September 30th. We are not only poor as regards the Orphan Fund, but also the funds for the other objects bring us again and again to the Lord for fresh supplies. Today, when we had not a single penny in hand, £5 was given for the other objects.

October 2nd. Tuesday evening. The Lord's holy name be praised! He hath dealt most bountifully with us during the last three days! The day before yesterday £5 came in for the orphans. Of this I gave to each house 10s., which supplied them before the provisions were consumed. Oh! How kind is the Lord. Always, before there has been actual want, He has sent help. Yesterday came in £1 10s. more. This £1 10s., with 4s. 2d. in hand, was divided for present necessities. Thus the expenses of yesterday, for housekeeping, were defrayed.

The Lord helped me also to pay yesterday the £19 10s. for the rent. The means for it were thus obtained. One of the laborers had received through his family £10, and £5 besides from a sister in the Lord; also some other money. Of this he gave £16, which,

with the £3 10s. that was left of the above mentioned £5, which came in the day before yesterday, made up £19 10s., the sum which was needed. This day we were again greatly reduced. There was no money in hand to take in bread as usual, for the Boys' and Infants' Orphan Houses, but again the Lord helped. A sister who had arrived this afternoon from Swansea brought £1 7s., and one of the laborers sold an article, by means of which he was able to give £1 13s. Thus we had £3, £1 for each house, and could buy bread before the day was over. Hitherto we have lacked nothing!

October 6th. The Lord has most kindly helped us. It came to my mind that there were some new blankets in the Orphan Houses, which had been given some time since, but which are not needed, and might therefore be sold. I was confirmed in this by finding that moths had got into one pair. I therefore sold ten pairs, having a good opportunity to do so. Thus the Lord not only supplied again our present need for the three houses, but I was also able to put by the rent for this week and the next, acting out the light that He had given us this day week. There came in 9s. 6d., besides £7 for the blankets. The School fund, also, was again completely exhausted, when today and yesterday came in so much, that not only the weekly salaries could be paid today, but also above £1 could be put by for rent.

October 9th. Through the last mentioned supplies for the orphans we were helped up to this day, but today we were brought lower than ever. The provisions would have lasted out only today, and the money for milk in one of the houses could only be made up by one of the laborers selling one of his books. The matron in the Boys' Orphan House had this morning two shillings left. When in doubt whether to buy bread with it or more meat, to make up the dinner with the meat which she had in the house, the baker called and left three quarters of bread as a present. In this great need, some money having been given to one of the laborers, he gave £2 of it, by which we were able to buy meat, bread, and other provisions. Nevertheless, even this day, low as we had been brought before this £2 was given, there had been all in the houses that was needed.

October 10th. The Lord had sent in so much since yesterday afternoon, that we were able at our meeting this morning to divide £2 0s. 2d. between the three matrons, whereby we are helped through this day. But now the coals in the Infants' Orphan House are out, and nearly so in the other two houses. On this account we have asked the Lord for fresh supplies.

October 11th. The "Father of the fatherless" has again shown His care over us. An orphan from Devonshire arrived last evening. With her was sent £2 5s. 6d. The sister who brought her gave also a silver teapot, sugarbasin, and cream-jug, having found true riches in Christ. There was also in the boxes 9s. One of the laborers paid for a ton of coals. We obtained £16 16s. for the silver articles. Thus we were helped through the heavy expenses of the following days.

October 16th. The day commenced with mercies. I was looking up to the Lord for help early this morning, when, almost immediately afterwards, brother T. came, and brought two silver tablespoons and six teaspoons, which had been left anonymously

yesterday afternoon at the Girls' Orphan House. This afternoon I received £12 from Staffordshire. On the seal of the letter which enclosed the money was "Ebenezer" (1Sa 7:12). How true in our case! Surely this instance is a fresh "Ebenezer" to us; for hitherto the Lord has helped us.

October 27th. Saturday. This day we have been again mercifully helped, though our need has been almost greater than ever. But thanks to our adorable Lord! This day also we have not been confounded; for there was 6s. in the box at the Infants' Orphan House, and 6s. came in for things which had been given to be sold. To this one of the laborers added 18s. By means of this £1 10s. we have been able to meet all pressing demands, and to procure provisions for today and tomorrow.

October 30th. This evening a sister gave me £20, ten of which were for the orphans, and ten for the other objects. Thus we are helped for this week.

November 4th. Lord's Day. There was given by a stranger last Wednesday evening at Bethesda Chapel, to one of the sisters, a sovereign for the orphans, which I received today. Thus the Lord has again begun the week with mercy, and His love surely will help us through it, though again many pounds will be needed.

November 7th. The funds are now again completely exhausted. Today I divided £1 3s. 8d. which had come in yesterday; thus the necessary wants were supplied. The Lord be praised who has helped us hitherto!

November 13th. This morning our want was again great. I have £20 in hand which has been put by for rent, but, for the Lord's honor, I would not take of it. Nothing had come in, and the laborers had scarcely anything to give. I went, however, to the Orphan Houses, to pray with my fellow-laborers, and, if it might be, to comfort them, and see what could be done. When I came there, I found that 19s. 6d. had come in this morning. On enquiry, I heard that only 2s. 6d. more was needed to carry us through the day. This one of the laborers was able to add. Thus the Lord has again helped us out of our difficulty. One of the laborers gave some things which he could do without, and another gave a workbox to be sold for the orphans. Before this day has come to an end, the Lord has sent in £1 2s. 4d. more, so that we have also a little for tomorrow.

November 17th. Today above £3 was needed, and as only 15s. 6d. had come in, we found it needful to determine to dispose of a few articles of furniture which we conveniently could do without. One of the laborers gave a good watch to be sold, which she had bought some months since, there being then no timepiece in one of the houses. In consideration of these articles to be sold, I took, for the present necessities of the orphans, £2 10s. of the money which had been put by for the rent, to be replaced when these articles could be sold at a suitable opportunity. Thus we were helped to the close of one more week.

November 20th. Today our need was exceedingly great, but the Lord's help was great also. I went to meet with the brethren and sisters as usual. I found that £1 would be needed to supply the necessities of today, but 3s. only had come in. Just when we were going to pray, one of the laborers came in, who after prayer, gave 10s. Whilst we were

praying, another laborer came in, who had received £1. Thus we had £1 13s.; even more, therefore, than was absolutely needed.

November 21st. Never were we so reduced in funds as today. There was not a single half-penny in hand between the matrons of the three houses. Nevertheless there was a good dinner, and, by managing so as to help one another with bread, etc., there was a prospect of getting over this day also. But for none of the houses had we the prospect of being able to take in bread. When I left the brethren and sisters at one o'clock, after prayer, I told them that we must wait for help, and see how the Lord would deliver us at this time. I was sure of help, but we were indeed straitened. When I got to Kingsdown, I felt that I needed more exercise, being very cold. Therefore, I went not the nearest way home, but round by Clarence Place. About twenty yards from my house, I met a brother who walked back with me, and after a little conversation gave me £10 to be handed over to the brethren, the deacons, towards providing the poor saints with coals, blankets, and warm clothing; also £5 for the Orphans, and £5 for the other objects of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution.²⁴ The brother had called twice while I was gone to the Orphan Houses, and had I now been one half minute later, I should have missed him. But the Lord knew our need, and therefore allowed me to meet him. I sent off the £5 immediately to the matrons.

November 24th. This again has been a very remarkable day. We had as little in hand this morning as at any time, and yet several pounds were needed. But “God, who is rich in mercy” (Eph 2:4), and whose Word so positively declares that none who trust in Him shall be confounded (1Pe 2:6), has helped us through this day also. While I was in prayer about ten in the morning respecting the funds, I was informed that a gentleman had called to see me. He came to inform me that a lady had ordered three sacks of potatoes to be sent to the Orphan Houses. Never could they have come more seasonably. This was an encouragement to me to continue to expect help. When I came to the prayer meeting about twelve o'clock, I heard that 2s. had come in, also £1 for a guitar which had been given for sale. The payment for this guitar had been expected for many weeks. It had been mentioned among us repeatedly, that it might come just at a time when we most needed it—and oh, how true! Also the watch which had been given was sold for £2 10s.

November 28th. This is, perhaps, of all days the most remarkable as yet, so far as regards the funds. When I was in prayer this morning respecting them, I was enabled firmly to believe that the Lord would send help, though all seemed dark as to natural appearances. At twelve o'clock I met as usual with the brethren and sisters for prayer. There had come in only 1s., which was left last evening anonymously at the Infants' Orphan House, and which, except 2d., had already been spent on account of the great need. I heard also that an individual had gratuitously cleaned the timepiece in the Infants' Orphan House, and had offered to keep the timepieces in the three houses in

²⁴ **Scriptural Knowledge Institution** for Home and Abroad – Founded by Müller in 1834, its purpose was 1) aiding Christian schools and missionaries by distributing the Bible and Christian tracts; and 2) providing day schools, Sunday schools, and adult schools, all upon a Scriptural foundation.

repair. Thus the Lord gave even in this a little encouragement, and a proof that He is still mindful of us. On enquiry I found that there was everything needful for the dinner in all the three houses; but neither in the Infants' nor Boys' Orphan Houses was there bread enough for tea, nor money to buy milk.

Lower we had never been, and perhaps never so low. We gave ourselves now unitedly to prayer, laying the case in simplicity before the Lord. Whilst in prayer there was a knock at the door, and one of the sisters went out. After the two brethren who labor in the Orphan Houses and I had prayed aloud, we continued for a while silently in prayer. As to myself, I was lifting up my heart to the Lord to make a way for our escape, and in order to know if there were any other thing which I could do with a good conscience, besides waiting on Him, so that we might have food for the children. At last we rose from our knees. I said, "God will surely send help." The words had not quite passed from my lips, when I perceived a letter lying on the table, which had been brought whilst we were in prayer. It was from my wife, containing another letter from a brother with £10 for the orphans. The evening before last I was asked by a brother whether the balance in hand for the orphans would be as great this time, when the accounts would be made up, as the last time. My answer was that it would be as great as the Lord pleased. The next morning this brother was moved to remember the orphans, and to send today £10, which arrived soon after I had left my house, and which on account of our need was forwarded immediately to me. Thus I was enabled to give £6 10s. for housekeeping, and to put by £3 10s. for rent.

November 29th. The Lord has greatly blessed our meetings for prayer. In the evening I received £50, which was sent from Suffolk by a sister who had often expressed how gladly she would contribute more largely to the work that is in our hands, had she the means, and who just now, in this our time of need, has obtained the means to carry out the desire of her heart. I rejoice in the last donation particularly, not because of the largeness of the sum, but because it enables me to pay my brethren and sisters in the Orphan Houses the salary which is due to them. For though they are willing to labor without any remuneration, nevertheless "the laborer is worthy of his reward" (1Ti 5:18). This donation also proves that the Lord is willing even now, as formerly, to send large sums. But I expect still larger. The same sister who sent the £50 for the orphans, sent at the same time £30 to be divided between brother Craik and me for our personal expenses. How abundantly does the Lord care for us! Truly we serve a kind Master!

December 6th. This day our need was again as great as ever, but the deliverance of the Lord was also as manifest as ever. This afternoon I received £100 from a sister; £50 for the orphans and £50 for the School, Bible, and Missionary Fund. This same sister, who earns her bread with her own hands, had given on October 5th, 1837, £50 towards the Boys' Orphan House, and gave for the necessities of the poor saints in August 1838, £100 more; for she had been made willing to act out those precious exhortations: "Having food and raiment let us be therewith content" (1Ti 6:8). "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Luk 12:33). "Lay not

up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal” (Mat 6:19-20).

December 11th, 12th, and 13th. On these three days there were public meetings, at which I gave an account of the Lord’s dealings with us in reference to the Orphan Houses, and the other objects of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution. As the work, and particularly that of the Orphan Houses, was begun for the benefit of the church at large, it appeared well to us that from time to time it should be publicly stated how the Lord had dealt with us; and as the third year had been completed, this seemed to be a suitable time for having these meetings. Should any one suppose, in reading the plain details of the trials through which we passed during the four months previous to December 9th, 1838, respecting the Orphan Houses, that I have been disappointed as regards my expectations as far as the funds are concerned: my answer is that the reverse is the case. For straits were expected. Long before the trials came I had more than once stated publicly that answers to prayer in the time of need—the manifestation of the hand of God, stretched out for our help—was just the very end for which the Institution was established. I further state that the orphans have never lacked anything. Had I had thousands of pounds in hand, they would have fared no better than they have; for they have always had good nourishing food, the necessary articles of clothing, etc. ❧

4. Large Gifts from Unlikely Sources

These journal entries demonstrate that God not only has the power to deliver on a daily, even hourly basis with small gifts, but He also has the power to send great gifts from the most unlikely sources.

Large Donation from a Poor Seamstress (1835)

December 18th. This afternoon a brother brought from a sister: a counterpane,²⁵ a flat iron stand, eight cups and saucers, a sugar basin, a milk jug, a tea cup, sixteen thimbles, five knives and forks, six dessert spoons, twelve tea spoons, four combs, and two little graters; from another friend a flat iron and a cup and saucer.

At the same time he brought £100 from [another] sister. It has since pleased the Lord to take to Himself the donor of this £100, and I therefore give further account of the donation and the donor, as the particulars respecting both, with God's blessing, may tend to edification. Indeed, I confess that I am delighted to be at liberty, in consequence of the death of the donor, to give the following short narrative, which during her lifetime I should not have considered it wise to publish. A. L., the donor, was known to me almost from the beginning of my coming to Bristol in 1832. She earned her bread by needlework, by which she gained from 2s. to 5s. per week; the average, I suppose, was not more than about 3s. 6d., as she was weak in body. But this dear, humble sister was content with her small earnings, and I do not remember ever to have heard her utter a word of complaint on account of earning so little. Sometime before I had been led to establish an Orphan House, her father had died, through which event she had come into the possession of £480, which sum had been left to her (and the same amount to her brother and two sisters) by her grandmother, but of which her father had had the interest during his lifetime. The father, who had been much given to drink, died in debt, which debts the children wished to pay; but the rest, besides A. L., did not like to pay the full amount, and offered to the creditors 5s. in the pound, which they gladly accepted, as they had not the least legal claim upon the children. After the debts had been paid according to this agreement, A. L. said to herself, "However sinful my father may have been, yet he was my father, and as I have the means of paying his debts to the full amount, I ought, as a believing child, to do so, seeing that my brother and sisters will not do it." She then went to all the creditors secretly and paid the full amount of the debts, which took £40 more of her money, besides her share which she had given before. Her brother and two sisters now gave £50 each of their property to their mother; but A. L. said to herself: "I am a child of God, surely I ought to give my mother twice as much as my brother and sisters." She, therefore, gave her mother £100. Shortly after this she

²⁵ **counterpane** – a particular kind of coverlet for a bed.

sent me the £100 towards the Orphan House. I was not a little surprised when I received this money from her, for I had always known her as a poor girl, and I had never heard anything about her having come into the possession of this money, and her dress had never given me the least indication of an alteration in her circumstances. Before, however, accepting this money from her, I had a long conversation with her, in which I sought to probe her as to her motives, and in which I sought to ascertain whether, as I had feared, she might have given this money in the feeling of the moment, without having counted the cost. I was the more particular because, if the money were given without its being given from scriptural motives, and there should be regret afterwards, the name of the Lord would be dishonored.

But I had not conversed long with this beloved sister, before I found that she was, in this particular, a quiet, calm, considerate follower of the Lord Jesus, and one who desired, in spite of what human reason might say, to act according to the words of our Lord: “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth” (Mat 6:19). “Sell that ye have and give alms” (Luk 12:33). When I remonstrated with her, in order that I might see whether she had counted the cost, she said to me: “The Lord Jesus has given His last drop of blood for me, and should I not give Him this £100?” She likewise said, “Rather than the Orphan House should not be established, I will give all the money I have.” When I saw that she had weighed the matter according to the Word of God, and that she had counted the cost, I could not but take the money, and admire the way that the Lord took to use this poor, sickly sister as an instrument, in so considerable a measure, for helping, at its very commencement, this work, which I had set about solely in dependence upon the living God.

At that time, she would also have me take £5 for the poor saints in communion with us. I mention here particularly that this dear sister kept all these things to herself and did them as much as possible in secret; and during her lifetime, I suppose, not six brethren and sisters among us knew that she had ever possessed £480, or that she had given £100 towards the Orphan House. But this is not all. Sometime after this £100 had been given by her, brother C—r (who was then laboring as a city missionary in connection with the Scriptural Knowledge Institution, and who about that very time happened to visit from house to house in that part of the city where A. L. lived) told me that he had met with many cases in which she had given, to one poor woman a bedstead, to another some bedding, to another some clothes, to another food; and thus instance upon instance of acts of love, on the part of our dear sister, had come before him. I relate one instance more. August 4th, 1836, seven months and a half after she had given the £100, she came one morning to me and said, “Last evening I felt myself particularly stirred up to pray about the funds of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution; but whilst praying I thought, what good is it for me to pray for means,²⁶ if I do not give when I have the means, and I have therefore brought you this £5.” As I had reason to believe that by this time by far the greater part of her money was gone, I again had a good deal of

²⁶ **means** – income, resources, revenue, substance considered as the instrument of effecting any purpose; as in “the means to an end.”

conversation with her, to see whether she really did count the cost, and whether this donation also was given unto the Lord or from momentary excitement, in which case it was better not to give the money. However, she was at this time also steadfast, grounded upon the Word of God, and evidently constrained by the love of Christ; and all the effect my conversation had upon her was, that she said, "You must take five shillings in addition to the £5, as a proof that I give the £5 cheerfully."

Four things are specially to be noticed about this beloved sister, with reference to all this period of her earthly pilgrimage: (1) She did all these things in secret, avoiding to the utmost all show about them, and thus proved that she did not desire the praise of man. (2) She remained, as before, of a humble and lowly mind, and she proved thus that she had done what she did unto the Lord and not unto man. (3) Her dress remained, during all the time that she had this comparative abundance, the same as before. It was clean, yet as simple and inexpensive as it was at the time when all her income had consisted of 3s. 6d., or at most 5s., per week. There was not the least difference as to her lodging, dress, manner of life, etc. She remained in every way the poor handmaid of the Lord, as to all outward appearance. (4) But that which is as lovely as the rest, she continued working at her needle all this time. She earned her 2s. 6d., or 3s., or a little more, a week, as before; whilst she gave away the money in sovereigns or five-pound notes.

At last all her money was gone, and that some years before she fell asleep; and as her bodily health never had been good as long as I had known her, and was now much worse, she found herself peculiarly dependent upon the Lord, Who never forsook her up to the last moment of her earthly course. The very commencement of her life of simple dependence upon the Lord was such as greatly to encourage her. She related the facts to me as I give them here. When she was completely without money, and when her little stock of tea and butter was also gone, two sisters in the Lord called on her. After they had been a little while with her, they told her that they had come to take tea with her. She said to herself, I should not at all mind going without my tea, but this is a great trial, that I have nothing to set before these sisters; and she gave them therefore to understand that their staying to tea would not be convenient at that time. The sisters, however, I suppose, not understanding the hint, remained, and presently brought out of a basket tea, sugar, butter and bread, and thus there was all that was requisite for the tea, and the remainder of the provisions was left for her. She told me that at that time she was not accustomed to trials of faith, as she afterwards was.

Her body became weaker and weaker, in consequence of which she was able to work very little for many months before she died; but the Lord supplied her with all she needed though she never asked for anything. For instance, a sister in communion with us sent her for many months all the bread she used. Her mouth was full of thanksgiving, even in the midst of the greatest bodily sufferings. She fell asleep in Jesus in January, 1844. I have related these facts because they tend to the praise of the Lord, and may be instrumental in stirring up other children of God to follow this dear departed sister in so far as she followed the Lord Jesus; but, in particular, that I may show in what remarkable

ways the Lord proved, from the very beginning, that the Orphan House was His and not mine.

Gift of Eight Thousand One Hundred Pounds (1853)

Day by day I have now been waiting upon God for means for the Building Fund for more than nineteen months, and almost daily I have received something in answer to prayer. These donations have been, for the most part, small, in comparison with the amount which will be required for the completion of this object; nevertheless they have shown that the Lord, for the sake of His dear Son, listens to my supplications and to those of my fellow laborers and helpers in the work; and they have been precious encouragements to me to continue to wait upon God. I have been for many months assured that the Lord, in His own time, would give larger sums for this work; and for this I have been more and more earnestly entreating Him during the last months. Now at last He has abundantly refreshed my spirit and answered my request. I received today the promise that, as the joint donation of several Christians, there should be paid to me a donation of eight thousand and one hundred pounds²⁷ for the work of the Lord in my hands. Of this sum I purpose to take £6,000 for the Building Fund.

See how precious it is to wait upon God (Hos 12:6)! See how those who do so are not confounded (1Pe 2:6)! Their faith and patience may long and sharply be tried; but in the end it will most assuredly be seen that those who honor God He will honor, and will not suffer them to be put to shame. The largeness of the donation, whilst it exceedingly refreshed my spirit, did not in the least surprise me; for I expect GREAT things from God.

March 14th. From Scotland £200, of which the donor kindly wished me to give £10 to Mr. Craik, to take £10 for my own personal expenses, and to use the £180 as most needed. I took, therefore, £100 for the Building Fund.

March 29th. For nearly three months the Lord has been pleased to exercise my patience by the comparatively small amount of means that has come in. Now, this evening, when I came home, I found that £300 had come in. This is a great refreshment to my spirit. As the amount is left to my disposal as may be most needed, I have taken one half of it for the Building Fund.

May 14th. Received £260, of which I took £100 for the Building Fund.

June 28th. From Wakefield £40, with £5 for Mr. Craik, and £5 for my own personal expenses. Also £220 from the West of England, of which the donor kindly wishes me to take £20 for my own private expenses, and to use the £200 as might be most needed. I have taken, therefore, £100 for the Building Fund.

July 14th. Received £541 10s., which being left to me as most needed, I took £341 10s. for the Building Fund.

²⁷ £8,100 – equivalent to £601,000 in 2009 using a retail index, or \$943,570 USD; and £5,800,000 using an earnings index, or \$9,106,000 USD.

July 15th. Received £110 from one who counts it an honor to have this sum to lay down at the feet of the Lord Jesus. I took of this amount £60 for the Building Fund. I cannot help remarking here, that the Lord has used some of the most unlikely persons during the past twenty-two years, in providing me with means for His service. So it was particularly in the case of this brother in the Lord from whom I received the last-mentioned donation of £110. I had not the least natural expectation of receiving this sum, when this brother, sitting before me at the New Orphan House, took out of his pocket a packet of Bank Notes, and gave to me this amount, reserving to himself, as his whole property in this world, a smaller sum than he gave to me, because of his joy in the Lord, and because of his being able to enter into the reality of his possessions in the world to come (Luk 16:9). I delight in dwelling upon such an instance, because: (1) It shows that there is grace, much grace, to be found among the saints even now; (2) It shows the variety of instrumentality that the Lord is pleased to employ in supplying me with means for His service; and (3) Because it so manifestly proves that we do not wait upon Him in vain, when we make known our requests to Him for means.

December 31st. This is the last day of another year. Two years and a half I have now been day by day seeking the Lord's help in prayer for this object. He has also been pledged to give us many proofs that He is remembering our requests...

Exhortation to Perseverance in Prayer (1863)

Thus I saw the close of another year, with reference to this part of the work. The full answer to my daily prayers was far from being realized; yet there was abundant encouragement granted by the Lord, to continue in prayer. But suppose, even, that far less had come in than was received, still, after having come to the conclusion, upon scriptural ground, and after much prayer and self-examination, as stated at full length before, I ought to have gone on without wavering, in the exercise of faith and patience concerning this object (i.e. the building of a new orphanage); and thus all the children of God, when once satisfied that anything which they bring before God in prayer is according to His will, ought to continue in believing, expecting, persevering prayer, until the blessing is granted. Thus am I myself now (viz. in 1864) waiting upon God for certain blessings, for which I have daily besought Him for 19 years and 6 months, without one day's intermission. Still the full answer is not yet given concerning the conversion of certain individuals, though, in the meantime, I have received many thousands of answers to prayer. I have also prayed daily, without intermission, for the conversion of other individuals about ten years, for others six or seven years, for others four, three, and two years, for others about eighteen months; and still the answer is not yet granted, concerning these persons: whilst, in the meantime, many thousands of my prayers have been answered, and also souls converted, for whom I had been praying. I lay particular stress upon this, for the benefit of a certain class of readers, who may suppose that I need only to ask God, and receive at once; or that I might pray concerning anything, and the answer would surely come. One can only expect to obtain answers to prayers which are according to the mind of God; and even then, patience and faith may

be exercised for many years, even as mine are exercised, in the latter to which I have referred; and yet am I daily continuing in prayer, and expecting the answer, and so certainly expecting the answer that I have often thanked God that He will surely give it, though now for 19 years and 6 months faith and patience have thus been exercised. Be encouraged, dear Christian reader, with fresh earnestness to give yourself to prayer, if you can only be sure that you ask for things which are for the glory of God.

