

The Power of *LIVING* FAITH!

What is the KEY to having REAL faith in God and in Christ? Do you know what real faith is? Do you know how you can develop MORE life-sustaining spiritual FAITH in your life? Why do you sometimes feel so empty, powerless, spiritually weak? How can you come to possess REAL DYNAMIC FAITH in God and in Christ?

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Jesus Christ declared to His disciples, “Verily, verily (or, most assuredly), I say unto you, He that BELIEVETH ON ME, the works that I do (including performing miracles, and great healings!) SHALL HE DO ALSO; and GREATER WORKS THAN THESE shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask IN MY NAME (there is awesome POWER in the name of Jesus Christ, when used rightly), that will I DO, that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (John 14:12-13).

Jesus went on, “If ye shall ask ANYTHING in my name, I will DO IT!” (verse 14).

In the tumultuous days of the early Church, the power of God was evident in the lives of the apostles. “And by the hands of the apostles were many SIGNS AND WONDERS WROUGHT among the people . . . Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the SHADOW OF PETER passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: AND THEY WERE HEALED EVERY ONE” (Acts 5:12-16).

There was awesome spiritual POWER present in the early Church of God! The apostles had FAITH. But why has the Church lost that power? What happened to it after the days of the apostles? What happened to the kind of FAITH they had? Why is it generally missing in the Church today?

What IS Faith?

The apostle Paul declared, “Now Faith IS the substance [margin, “realization”] of things hoped for, the evidence [or, confidence] of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the

word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible” (Heb.11:1-3).

Faith is the substance or reality of belief – conviction – assurance. Faith is BELIEVING that what God says in His Word is TRUE, and can be relied upon – even unto death! Job expressed this thought and conviction when he said, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him” (Job 13:15). That shows REAL faith, doesn’t it?!

Job also declared in persuaded conviction, “For I KNOW that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last upon the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another” (Job 19:25-27). Job was firmly convinced of the existence of God, and believed that he would see Him one day, and be redeemed and saved by Him.

Faith then is simply belief, or strong conviction, that what God says is true and what He says He *will* do, He will do without doubt or question!

But how can we increase our faith?

The KEYS to Greater Faith

The apostle Paul gives us the fundamental key to greater faith and conviction. He wrote, “For whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things’” (Rom.10:13-15).

Paul concludes, “So then *faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*” (verse 17).

Christ Himself put it this way: “SEARCH the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me” (John 5:39). In other words, STUDY the Bible! Pour over it! Meditate upon it daily, constantly! This is the way to increase your faith!

As king David wrote, “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he MEDITATES day and night” (Psalm 1:1-2).

Why People Lack Faith and Spiritual Power

But today the Church of God is powerless -- insipid, lacking in true spiritual POWER! Why is this? What is the CAUSE?

Oh, Satan has his lackies who “seem” to demonstrate power and faith, by showmanship and fraudulent “miracles” of healing, and phony “healings” – but it is all a hypocritical pretense to real spiritual power – a Satanic deception!

One real reason most Christians are lacking in the POWER of God is revealed in Revelation, chapter 3, where God describes the “end-time” Church of God, the Church which would exist just prior to the Second Coming of Christ, and which would include the VAST, OVERWHELMING MAJORITY of Christians in the “last days.”

Notice what Jesus said:

“And unto the angel of the Church of the Laodiceans write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I KNOW THY WORKS, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then BECAUSE THOU ART LUKEWARM, and neither cold nor hot, I WILL SPUE THEE OUT OF MY MOUTH” (Rev.3:14-16).

Notice! How can a Church which is predominantly LUKEWARM expect to exert or manifest any spiritual POWER? How can a Church which is in dire danger of being EJECTED like spit from the mouth of Christ possess any spiritual POWER WITH GOD? Impossible!

Many today are not filled with God’s Spirit, but are GRIEVING the Spirit of God (Eph.4:30). Rather than putting on Jesus Christ, as a garment, they are putting Him off, shoving Him away from their lives (Rom.13:14). Instead of the Spirit of God bubbling up in their hearts, like a fountain of fresh water, they are drying up spiritually, like a parched, seared, scorched desert. Rather than STIRRING UP the flame of God’s Spirit (II Tim.1:6-7), they are in the process of QUENCHING the Spirit of God (I Thess.5:19).

Instead of burning brightly with the oil of God's Spirit, they are sputtering and flickering and in danger of their light going OUT (Matt.25:8).

Jesus says of such compromise artists, who are NOT filled with the ZEAL of the Lord of Hosts (Psa.69:9), like Jesus Christ Himself, “Because THOU SAYEST (they have a big mouth, and are proud spiritually), 'I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of NOTHING (they are spiritually self-sufficient in their own eyes); and KNOWEST NOT that thou art WRETCHED, and MISERABLE, and POOR, and BLIND, and NAKED” (Rev.3:17).

What does Jesus Christ say, first, to these end-time Christians who have lost their first love, their earnest zeal, and much spiritual truth?

He tells them to BE ZEALOUS, and to REPENT! These two prerequisites are the key elements that we all need in order to recapture the POWER of God’s Holy Spirit which was poured out upon the New Testament Church of God, and the apostles of olden times!

To have our prayers answered, WITH POWER, with dynamic and direct intervention of Almighty God, we must rekindle the Spirit of God and become renewed in WHITE-HOT SIZZLING ZEAL AND SPIRITUAL ENERGY of God!

The Example of Abraham

Abraham was a key example of faith. He was known as the “father of the faithful.” “He believed God,” Paul says, “and it was accounted to him for righteousness” (Rom.4:3). Abraham believed God first – so then he did what God said to do! God told him to leave the land of Babylon, and to go Canaan. So Abraham went. He did not argue, or hesitate. Later in his life, God told Him to go and sacrifice his only beloved son, Isaac, the son of promise – as a “test” of his faith. Again, Abraham believed God, had faith in Him, and “rose early in the morning” to obey (Gen.22:3).

Notice the faith of Abraham! Paul said of him, “Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham [who obey God without “seeing” because of their faith in Him], who is the father of us all. As it is written, ‘I have made you a father of many nations’ in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, ‘So shall your descendants be.’

“And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being FULLY CONVINCED that what He had promised He was ALSO ABLE to perform” (Rom.4:16-21).

The King James Version has it, “He *staggered not* at the promise of God through unbelief; but was *strong in faith*, giving glory to God; and being FULLY PERSUADED that, what He had promised, he was able also to perform.”

Consider this man of faith. Notice how his faith wrought with his works and deeds. James explained, “Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that FAITH was working together with his works, and *BY WORKS WAS FAITH MADE PERFECT?*” (James 2:21-22). James concludes, “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (v.26).

Our obedience to God evidences our faith, and enables our faith to grow greater! Faith without obedience is like a dead mackerel. It is useless – a “dead” faith – dead as a doornail!

How can we have real, true, genuine faith?

“Increase Our Faith”

The disciples knew they had a need for greater faith, as they saw the miracles Christ performed. They asked Him, “Lord, *increase our faith*” (Luke 17:5). It is a good thing to ask God for increased faith.

In answer He said, “If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you” (v.6).

On another occasion, after He had cursed a fruitless fig tree, and it withered away, He told them, “Have faith in God. For assuredly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, *believe that you receive them*, and you will have them” (Mark 11:22-24).

Faith Is a Gift

Christ also told His disciples, “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?” (Luke 11:13).

Living faith is an attribute of God’s Holy Spirit. Paul wrote, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, *faith*, meekness, self control” (Gal.5:22-23).

Paul also declared, “For by grace you have been saved THROUGH FAITH, and that [the faith] not of yourselves; *it is the GIFT of God*, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Eph.2:8-9).

Through faith, Christ is to live His life in us. Paul explained, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives IN me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by FAITH in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Gal.2:20).

Thus it is Christ IN us, through the Holy Spirit, who imparts LIVING FAITH to our hearts and minds – REAL genuine faith – faith that can result in moving mountains and accomplishing great miracles!

Christ meant it when He said, “Most assuredly I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and GREATER WORKS than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (John 14:12-13).

Powerful Impact of Faith

Notice two things. The apostle James wrote, “The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much” (James 5:16, NKJV). The effectual FERVENT prayer of a righteous man availeth MUCH” (KJV). It has a “POWERFUL EFFECT,” according to the Good News Bible. The Living Bible says, “The EARNEST prayer of a righteous man has GREAT POWER AND WONDERFUL RESULTS.”

The Phillips Translation says, “TREMENDOUS POWER IS MADE AVAILABLE through a good man's earnest prayer.”

James Moffatt translated, “The prayers of the righteous have a POWERFUL EFFECT.” Says the Amplified Bible, “The earnest (heart-felt, continued) prayer of a righteous man MAKES TREMENDOUS POWER AVAILABLE -- DYNAMIC IN ITS WORKING.”

James goes on to cite the example of the prophet Elijah – a praying man, who spent much time *communing* with God in prayer. James wrote, “Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are (he was human, and had weaknesses just as we do), and HE PRAYED EARNESTLY that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit” (Jas.5:17-18).

How much zeal do you have in your prayers? Do you raise your arms and hands toward heaven, sometimes, and your arms tremble and shake with the intensity and exertion of your emotion and prayer? As the prophet Hosea says, ““They never put their *heart* into their prayers” (Hos.7:14, Moffatt).

Jesus Christ was filled with the ZEAL of God, and His Spirit. This is one reason He could do the amazing miracles which documented His Messiahship! Prophesying of Christ, David wrote, “FOR THE ZEAL OF THINE HOUSE HATH EATEN ME UP (CONSUMED ME); and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me” (Psalm 69:9).

The Hebrew word for “zeal” here is *qinah* and means “jealousy, ardent zeal, ardent love” (see *Gesenius Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon*, Strong’s #7068). The word “zeal” in English is defined as “ardor in a cause or in promoting some end,” “great earnestness, intensity.” It also means “jealousy,” as in a love relationship, as of rivals. The Scriptures speak of God’s zeal toward His people (Isa.9:6-7).

If you begin to manifest ZEAL for God, as Jesus did, then no doubt some men will begin to reproach you, too. They cannot stand a white-hot, fervent servant of God. “Take it easy,” they will tell you; “Calm down. Go with the flow. Don't get all wrought up because of the situation, or the world condition. You can't change anything anyway!” But it is the subtle voice of Satan the devil, who is trying to subvert you and steal your salvation!

One reason there is such a lack of powerfully answered prayers, today, is the tremendous lack of real spiritual ZEAL! That is why God commands us, through the apostle Paul, “That is why I would remind you to STIR UP -- REKINDLE THE EMBERS, FAN THE FLAME AND KEEP BURNING -- the (gracious) gift of God, (the inner fire) that is in you” (II Tim.1:6, Amplified Bible). Often we need to “stir up” faith by stirring up God’s Spirit within us!

What Faith IS

The apostle Paul declared: “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).

When a man brought his son to the disciples for healing, they could not cast the demon out. Then the man implored Jesus Himself, “*IF* you can do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us” (Mark 9:22).

Jesus rebuked the man's lack of faith, answering, “(You say to Me), If You can do anything? (Why,) all things can be – are possible – to him who believes!” (verse 23, Amplified Bible). Moffatt translates this, “Jesus said to him, ‘If you can’! Anything can be done for one who believes.” The Phillips translation has it, “ ‘*If you can do anything!*’ retorted Jesus. ‘Everything is possible to the man who believes.’ ‘I do believe,’ the boy's father burst out. ‘Help me to believe MORE!’”

Jesus then proceeded to heal the boy. “The spirit gave a loud scream and after a dreadful convulsion left him. The boy lay there like a corpse, so that most of the bystanders said, ‘He is dead.’ But Jesus grasped his hands and lifted him up, and then he stood on his own feet” (Mark 9:22-27).

In another place, Jesus asked two blind men, who cried out to Him to have mercy on them, “Believe ye that I am able to do this?” When they answered, “Yea, Lord,” He responded by touching their eyes, and said, “*According to your faith be it unto you*” (Matt.9:29). And their eyes were opened.

When a centurion came to Jesus to heal his servant, Jesus replied, “I will come and heal him.” But the centurion said that wasn't necessary, and said, “Lord, I am not worthy that thou should come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed” (Matt.8:5-9).

Jesus replied, speaking to all the audience which had gathered, “Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel” (v.10). He then told the soldier, “Go your way; and as you have believed, so be it done to you” (v.13). The man's servant was healed that very hour.

Do you have that kind of faith? Let’s examine ourselves, and PRAY for it!

The Power of Even a “Little” Faith

The fact is, it does not require very much. Great miracles can be accomplished with just a “smidgen” of faith – just an “ounce” of faith will go a long way. In fact the power of faith is far greater than Einstein’s famous formula where $E = mc^2$. There is far more POWER in an ounce of faith than in a nuclear bomb!

Jesus later said to His disciples, who asked Him why they could not cast out the demon from the man's son, “Because of your UNBELIEF: for verily I say unto you, If ye have *faith as a grain of mustard seed* (a very tiny seed, almost microscopic), ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and *NOTHING SHALL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO YOU*” (Matt.17:20).

Faith to move mountains! How much faith is required to do that? Jesus answered, just faith the size of a tiny seed of mustard! That isn't very much, is it? A mustard seed is one of the tiniest seeds!

In another place, where Jesus cursed a barren, unfruitful fig tree, and a day later the disciples saw it all withered up from the roots, they marveled. Jesus told them, “Verily I say unto you, If you have faith, and doubt not, you shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if you shall say to this mountain, Be you removed, and be you cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, *BELIEVING, YOU SHALL RECEIVE*” (Matt.21:21-22).

Mark records this incident also, and quotes the words of Jesus as follows: “*Have faith in God.* For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say to this mountain, Be you removed, and be you cast into the sea; and shall *not doubt in his heart, BUT SHALL BELIEVE that those things which he says shall come to pass; HE SHALL HAVE WHATSOEVER HE SAYS*, Therefore I say to you, What things soever you desire, when you pray, *BELIEVE THAT YOU RECEIVE THEM*, and you shall have them!” (Mark 11:22-24).

Sometimes, however, circumstances assail us, and troubles mount up like waves of the sea, and we begin to have our faith waver, and weaken. It happened to Peter. He saw Christ walking on the water, and asked that he could walk on the water, too. But when Peter tried to walk on the water, imitating Christ, he took his eyes off Christ and looked at the surging seas, and boisterous waves, and fear entered his heart, and he began to sink, and cried out, “Lord, save me!” Jesus grabbed him by the hand to rescue him, saying, “O you of *little faith*, why did you doubt?” (Matt.14:31).

Often we begin to doubt because, like Peter, we are too close to the problem and too far away from God. Unless we are walking with God, and talking with God often, and studying His Word deeply and prayerfully, unless we are filled with the Word of God, we honestly don't know how to exercise faith in a given situation, and often become desperate, like the man with the demon-possessed son. So we pray the prayer of desperation – crying out to God for mercy, and He hears us, because God is a merciful, compassionate God. He does not want us to suffer, or die, and does not try us beyond our means (I Cor.10:13).

I have heard of many prayers of “desperation” which were prayed in utter sincerity and were heart-felt, and even if faith were lacking, God remembers that we are weak and are made of dust, and he often overlooks our weakness and lack of faith, because of the urgency of the situation. He still rescues us, and heals us, and delivers us from death, even as He did Peter.

Do you lack faith?

Jesus said, “*Ask*, and it shall be given you; *seek*, and ye shall find; *knock*, and it shall be opened unto you” (Luke 11:9).

You begin by *asking*, And then you keep on asking, and never give up!

The Power of Importuning -- Chuzpah

The amount of faith in God in our lives is up to us. Are we willing to pay the price? Are we willing to seek God with all our hearts? Are we willing to WALK with God? James writes, “If any of you lacks wisdom [or even faith, for that matter], let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways” (James 1:5-8).

The size and scope of our faith is up to us. We ourselves, by our actions, determine the amount of our faith, and the answers to our prayers. Unless we begin to *exercise faith*, by using it often, it will remain weak and impotent, and grow even weaker and more powerless.

But if we ask God for greater faith, and seek His will in our lives, and OBEY His commandments, statutes, and laws, then He will answer us -- and He will give us greater faith and more spiritual POWER in our lives, to resist the devil and overcome our sins and weaknesses, and grow in spiritual energy, faith, humility, and zeal – more and more like Jesus Christ every day! (Gal.4:19; II Pet.3:18).

Jesus gave a parable to His disciples, saying: “Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine, in his journey, is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

“I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet BECAUSE OF HIS *IMPORTUNITY* he will rise and give him as many as he needeth”

(Luke 11:5-8).

The Greek word for “importunity” here is *anaideia*, #335 in *Strong's Concordance*, and means: “impudence.” Says *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary*, this word denotes “shamelessness, importunity” – the negative *a* followed by the word *aidos* meaning, “shame, modesty.”

In other words, the man has no shame, no modesty – he begs for the bread regardless of the impropriety of the situation – shamelessly, with what the Jewish people would call *sheer chuzpah* or brazen impudence! The word *chuzpah* literally means “shameless audacity, presumption, or gall”!

A Man of Faith and Prayer

George Mueller of the last century was known as the “apostle of faith.” He was led by God to build a tremendous orphanage work in the nineteenth century, based on nothing but answered prayer. God used him mightily, and therefore it is fitting that we look into his *Autobiography* to see what he has to say on this subject. The lessons of faith and prayer he learned are very instructive for us today.

What was George Mueller's attitude when he began the orphan work? Was he presumptuous, confident, sure of himself? Did he begin the work, just *assuming* that God would be with him? Not at all. He relates in his *Autobiography*, “On this point, however, I had no anxiety; for I considered that, as long as I really sought to serve the Lord, that is, as long as I sought '*the kingdom of God and His righteousness,*' my temporal supplies would be added to me. The Lord most mercifully enabled me to take the promises of His Word, and rest upon them, and such as Matthew 7:7,8, John 14:13,14, Matthew 6:25-34, were the stay of my soul concerning this point” (p. 37).

Mr. Mueller searched his heart repeatedly and carefully, to be certain that he had no false or deceitful motives in beginning the orphan work. He searched every cranny and nook of his mind and heart to be sure it wasn't a matter of personal pride, vanity or selfish desire that motivated him. He wrote:

“I had before this been repeatedly tried, whether I might not, after all, against the Lord's mind, have engaged in the work. This circumstance now led me to lie low before my God in prayer the whole of the evening, February 3rd, and to examine my heart once more as to all the motives concerning it; and being able, as formerly, to say, that *His glory was my chief aim*, i.e., that it might be seen that it is not a vain thing to trust in the living God, and that my second aim was the spiritual welfare of Orphan children, and the third their bodily welfare; and still continuing in prayer, I was at last brought to this state, that I could *say from my heart*, that I should rejoice in God being glorified in this matter, though it were by *bringing the whole to nothing*. But as still, after all, it seemed to me more tending to the glory of God, to establish and prosper the Orphan House, I could then ask Him heartily to send applications. I enjoyed now a peaceful state of heart concerning the subject, and was also more assured than ever that God would establish it” (p. 89).

Even after the work began, sometimes Mr. Mueller thought that perhaps God

would *decrease* it because of his own lack of faithfulness and unworthiness. He confessed: “I have sometimes thought, whether it might not be His will, on account of my want of faithfulness, in His work, to decrease the field; but now I see, that notwithstanding my unworthiness, His allowing us to pray so frequently was only that the deliverance might be felt so much the more when it came” (p. 91).

A Man of Humility and Faith

Even though George Mueller felt totally undeserving and unworthy of being used in such a profound manner, he rejoiced in the Word of God and God's leading in his work. He exclaimed: “It is a wonderful thing that such a worthless, faithless servant as I am, should have power with God. Take courage from this for yourselves, brethren. Surely, if such a one as I am, so little conformed to the mind of Jesus, has his prayers answered, may not you also, *at last*, have your requests granted to you?” (p. 93).

Mueller knew that the main reason so many prayers of so many people go unanswered is simply lack of faith, or belief. He declared: “The thing after which we have especially to seek in prayer is, that we believe that we receive, according to Mark 11:24, '*What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*' But this I often find lacking in my prayers. When, however, I have been enabled to believe that I receive, the Lord has dealt with me according to my faith” (*ibid.*).

Mr. Mueller was very concerned in beginning the orphan work that God was with him. He didn't want to start out on his own, as it were, and then fail miserably. He wanted to be *sure* that God was with him, so he examined the matter repeatedly, carefully and urgently in continual prayer, Bible study and meditation over the Scriptures. And when he began, he had the assurance from God's Word and its promises that God was with him. “How evident is the hand of God in all these matters!” he wrote. “How important to leave our concerns, great and small, with Him; for He arranges all things well! If *our* work be *His* work, we shall prosper in it” (p. 92).

Through the practice of walking in faith, Mr. Mueller's own faith grew. He reached the point he could say: “The children I have years ago cast upon the Lord. The whole work is His, and it becomes me to be *without carefulness*. In whatever points I am lacking, in this point I am able, by the grace Of God, to roll the burden upon my Heavenly Father” (p. 124).

How Faith Is Developed

When asked in a letter: “Could you tell me how faith is developed?” Mueller replied: “Faith is developed (or increased) by clinging to the Word of God, looking for its fulfillment in the time of need, expecting the answer to prayer, and doing this in spite of all contrary appearances” (*Autobiography*, p. 674).

When trials and troubles came up in the orphan work, and the income upon which

they depended fell off, what did he do? He relates: "I gave myself to prayer. God, whom I have now been enabled to make my refuge, and my only refuge, for more than twenty years [this section was written in the mid-nineteenth century], I have besought day by day. And when now day by day I still have received only small sums, and sometimes nothing or scarcely anything at all, the only effect that it has had upon me has been, *to pray the more earnestly*. My confidence in God is not at all shaken. I have never had a thought that He would not help me; nor have I even once been allowed to look upon these seven weeks in any other way than that the Lord, for the trial of my faith, has ordered it thus that only so little should come in. I am sure that, when He has tried me sufficiently, there will come in again larger sums" (*ibid.*, p. 364).

God answered George Mueller's patient, expecting prayers, again and again, for over sixty years. And each time, when the answers would come, Mr. Mueller's heart was encouraged. He wrote: "The joy which such answers to prayer afford cannot be described. My soul does magnify the Lord for His goodness. When help comes, after many seasons of prayer it may be, and after much exercise of faith and patience it may be, how sweet it is, and what a present recompense does the soul at once receive for trusting in God, and waiting patiently for His deliverance! Dear Christian reader, if you have never walked in this path of obedience before, do so now, and you will then know experimentally the sweetness of the joy which results from it" (p. 367).

Simple Confidence of Faith

Although George Mueller's life was a living example of the power of faith and prayer, was he some special, unique individual in this respect, with a special gift of faith? He himself remarked in answer to this question:

"I desire that all the children of God, who may read these details, may thereby be led to increased and more simple confidence in God for everything which they may need under any circumstances, and that these many answers to prayer may encourage them to pray, particularly as regards the conversion of their friends and relatives, their own progress in grace and knowledge, the state of the saints whom they may know personally, the state of the Church of God at large, and the success of the preaching of the gospel. Especially I affectionately warn them against being led away by the device of Satan, to think that these things are peculiar to me, and cannot be enjoyed by all the children of God; for though, as has been stated before, every believer is not called upon to establish Orphan Houses, Charity Schools, etc., and trust in the Lord for means, yet all believers are called upon, in the simple confidence of faith, to cast all their burdens upon Him, to trust in Him for everything, and not only to make everything a subject of prayer, but to expect answers to their petitions which they have asked according to His will, and in the name of the Lord Jesus" (p.172-173).

Mr. Mueller added: "From my inmost soul I do ascribe it to God alone that He has enabled me to trust in Him, and that He has not suffered my confidence in Him to fail. But I thought it needful to make these remarks, lest any one should think that my depending upon God was a particular gift given to me, which other saints have no right to look for; or lest it should be thought that this my depending upon Him had only to do with the obtaining of money by prayer and faith. By the grace of God I desire that my faith in God should extend towards EVERY thing, the smallest of my own temporal and spiritual concerns" (p. 174).

The "Food of Faith"

Even little things Mueller took to God in prayer. He said:

“When I lose such a thing as a key, I ask the Lord to direct me to it, and I look for an answer to my prayer; when a person with whom I have made an appointment does not come at the fixed time, and I begin to be inconvenienced by it, I ask the Lord to be pleased to hasten him to me, and I look for an answer; when I do not understand a passage of the Word of God, I lift up my heart to the Lord, that He would be pleased, by His Holy Spirit, to instruct me, and I expect to be taught, though I do not fix the time when, and the manner how, it should be; when I am going to minister in the Word, I seek help from the Lord, and while I, in the consciousness of natural inability as well as utter unworthiness, begin this His service, I am not cast down, but of good cheer, because I look for His assistance, and believe that He, for His dear Son's sake, will help me. Oh! I beseech you, do not think me an extraordinary believer, having privileges above other of God's dear children, which they cannot have; nor look on my way of acting as something that should not do for other believers. Make but trial! Do but stand still in the hour of trial, and you will see the help of God, if you trust in Him. But there is so often a forsaking the ways of the Lord in the hour of trial, and thus the *food of faith*, the means whereby our faith may be increased, is lost” (pp. 114-175).

Regarding the trials and troubles that come upon us as Christians, Mr. Mueller wrote: “If we, indeed, desire our faith to be strengthened, we should not shrink from Opportunities where our faith may be tried, and, therefore, through the trial, be strengthened. In our natural state we dislike dealing with God alone. Through our natural alienation from God we shrink from Him, and from eternal realities. This cleaves to us, more or less, even after our regeneration (or, conversion). Hence it is, that more or less, even as believers, we have the same shrinking from standing with God alone, -- from depending upon Him alone, -- from looking to Him alone; -- and yet this is the very position in which we ought to be, if we with our faith to be strengthened. The more I am in a position to be tried in faith with reference to my body, my family, my service for the Lord, my business, etc., the more shall I have opportunity of seeing God's help and deliverance; and every fresh instance, in which He helps and delivers me, will tend towards the increase of my faith. On this account, therefore, the believer should not shrink from situations, positions, circumstances, in which his faith may be tried; but should cheerfully embrace them as opportunities where he may see the hand of God stretched out on his behalf, to help and deliver him, and whereby he may thus have his faith strengthened.”

Mueller added, regarding strengthening faith:

“The last important point for the strengthening of our faith is, that we let God work for us, when the hour of the trial of our faith comes, and do not work a deliverance of our own. Wherever God has given faith, it is given, among other reasons, for the very purpose of being tried. Yea, however weak our faith may be, God will try it; only with this restriction, that as in every way He leads on gently, gradually, patiently, so also with reference to the trial of our faith. At first our faith will be tried very little in comparison with what it may be afterwards; for God never lays more upon us than He is willing to enable us to bear. Now when the trial of faith comes, we are naturally inclined to distrust God, and to trust rather in ourselves, or in our friends, or in circumstances. We will rather work a deliverance of our own somehow or other, than simply look to God and wait for His help. But if we do

not patiently wait for God's help, if we work a deliverance of our own, then at the next trial of our faith it will be thus again, we shall be again inclined to deliver ourselves; and thus, with every fresh instance of that kind, our faith will decrease; whilst, on the contrary, were we to stand still, in order to see the salvation of God, to see His hand stretched out on our behalf, trusting in Him alone, then our faith would be increased, and, with every fresh case in which the hand of God is stretched out on our behalf in the hour of the trial of our faith, our faith would be increased yet more. Would the believer, therefore, have his faith strengthened, he must, especially, *give time to God*, who tries his faith in order to prove to His child, in the end, how willing He is to help and deliver him, the moment it is good for him" (pp. 175-177).

The worse the trial, the more *secret delight* George Mueller had in it. He said:

"Nay, I had a secret satisfaction in the greatness of the difficulties which were in the way. So far from being cast down on account of them, they delighted my soul; for I only desired to do the will of the Lord in this matter. In honesty of heart I had examined the matter, as standing before God. I wished only to know His will, that I might do it. . . . When I therefore saw the difficulties, they did not cast me down, but cheered me; for as it was the will of God, according to my judgment, that I should go, I was sure He would remove the obstacles out of the way; and therefore the greater the obstacles, the more abundantly plain the proof, that I had come to a right judgment, if they were removed by prayer; but if after all I had been mistaken, which I could not think I had been, then the sooner I was undeceived the better" (p. 195).

The Universal Remedy

What was George Mueller's remedy in every need and difficulty? "Prayer and faith, the universal remedies against every want and every difficulty; and the nourishment of prayer and faith, God's holy Word, helped me over all the difficulties. -- I never remember, in all my Christian course, a period now [in March, 1895] of sixty-nine years and four months, that I ever SINCERELY and PATIENTLY sought to know the will of God by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, through the instrumentality of the Word of God, but I have been ALWAYS directed rightly. But if *honesty of heart and uprightness before God* were lacking, or if I did not *patiently* wait upon God for instruction, or if I preferred the *counsel of my fellow men* to the declarations of *the Word of the living God*, I made great mistakes" (p. 196).

At one point during the orphan work the income fell off sharply. But the heavy expenses still had to be paid. Mr. Mueller wrote of this trial of faith: "In the beginning of June, I began to give myself to prayer. Faith saw all the difficulties already removed. Faith could give thanks, while the difficulties yet remained. Faith could triumph, though there seemed the death blow coming, since there not only was no money coming in, but the considerable sums, lately in hand, were rapidly diminishing. Thus forty days passed, whilst day after day we had been waiting unitedly upon the Lord, but the obstacles were greater than ever; yet my confidence in the Lord, that He would remove the difficulties in His own time, was greater than ever also" (P. 196).

On July 12th, he remarked to a sister in the faith: "Well, my soul is at peace. The Lord's time is not yet come, but, when it is come, He will blow away all these obstacles, as chaff is blown away before the wind."

It was only a quarter of an hour later when a paper was put into his hands giving him authority over the equivalent of \$70,000 in today's money!

Patience, or patient waiting, was one of the keys that George Mueller learned and practiced. He declared: “The Lord may see it needful, for the trial of our faith, to seem for a season not to regard our supplications; yet, if we patiently and believingly continue to wait upon Him, it will be manifest in His own time, and way, that we did not call upon Him in vain” (p.223).

Mueller continued: “We may have to wait upon the Lord, yea, even a long time; but at last He helps. It may seem as if the Lord had forgotten us, by allowing us to be poor, and very poor, and that week after week; but at last He helps abundantly, and shows that only for the trial of our faith, both for our own benefit and the benefit of those who might hear of His dealings with us, has He allowed us to call so long upon Him” (p. 229).

George Mueller carried on a huge orphan work, sustaining over 2,000 orphans, besides all the needed helpers, nurses, assistants, a large work in publishing the gospel and distributing Bibles and aiding other servants of God, without ever asking a single individual for a dime. He never sent out a “co-worker” letter, or a letter screaming, crying, or begging for money. He just prayed. And once a year he sent out a “report” to all his donors, contributors, and interested people, informing them of the news, updates, and progress of the Work. God used him mightily. Over the span of his fifty or sixty year ministry, hundreds of millions of dollars (or English pounds) were sent to him for the Work of preaching the gospel and the support of the orphans.

Why would a man undertake such a thing?

His answer was: “*That it may be seen how much one poor man, simply by trusting in God, can bring about by prayer; and that thus other children of God may be led to carry on the work of God in dependence upon Him, and that children of God may be led increasingly to trust in Him in their individual positions and circumstances, therefore I am led to this further enlargement*” (pp. 292-293).

Day by day George Mueller trusted in God. Week after week, and month by month, he continued pouring out his needs and the needs of the Orphan Work and the related objectives of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution. He never asked people for money, solicited donations, or begged for offerings. He took his needs to God in prayer – consistently, persistently, unabashedly, shamelessly. He importuned God. He wrote in his *Autobiography*:

“I have not been allowed to have a shadow of doubt as to whether God *can or will* give me the means; but day by day, in the full assurance of faith, I renew my requests before God; and generally day by day the amount of the Building Fund (for additional orphan houses) is to a greater or less degree increased. I then give thanks, and ask for more; and as the days come I look out for answers to my prayers” (p. 297).

In his *Autobiography* Mr. Mueller dwelt minutely upon the trials and tests and

difficulties in his path. He then shows, time after time, how God intervened for him, and sent the funds *just as they were needed!* He discovered: “In truly knowing the Lord, in really relying upon Him and upon Him alone, there is no need of giving hints directly or indirectly, whereby individuals may be induced further to help” (p. 301).

Notice how COMPLETELY he put his trust in GOD -- and not in men!

How To Pray Effectively

In answer to this question, Mr. Mueller writes from his depth of experience:

“But in order to have your prayers answered, you need to make your requests unto God on the ground of the merits and worthiness of the Lord Jesus. You must not depend upon your own worthiness and merits, but solely on the Lord Jesus, as the ground of acceptance before God, for your person, for your prayers, for your labours, and for everything else. Do you really believe in Jesus? Do you verily depend upon Him alone for the salvation of your soul? See to it well, that not the least degree of your own righteousness is presented unto God as a ground of acceptance. But then, if you believe in the Lord Jesus, it is further necessary, in order that your prayers may be answered, that the things which you ask of God should be of such a kind, that God can give them to you, because they are for His honour and your real good. If the obtaining of your requests were not for your real good, or were not tending to the honour of God, you might pray for a long time, without obtaining what you desire. The glory of God should be always before the children of God, in what they desire at His hands; and their own spiritual profit, being so intimately connected with the honour of God, should never be lost sight of, in their petitions.”

But even if we do believe in Jesus Christ and have a proper, right motivation for our prayer to God, there is still more that is required in effectual prayer.

Continuing in Prayer

Mr. Mueller continues: “It is not enough to begin to pray, nor to pray aright; nor is it enough to continue *for a time* to pray; but we must patiently, believingly continue in prayer, until we obtain an answer; and further, we have not only *to continue* in prayer unto the end, but we have also *to believe* that God does hear us, and will answer our prayers. Most frequently we fail *in not continuing* in prayer until the blessing is obtained and *in not expecting* the blessing. As assuredly as in any individual these various points are found united, so assuredly answers will be granted to his requests” (pp. 320-321).

George Mueller, known as the “apostle of faith,” in stirring words declared:

"We cannot limit the extent to which God may use us as in communicating blessing, both temporal and spiritual, if we are willing to yield ourselves as instruments to the living God, and are content to be only instruments, and to give Him all the glory" (p. 217).

How much can God do through you? How much are you willing to yield yourself to Him? The apostle Paul said: “I CAN DO ALL THINGS through Christ who strengthens me!” (Phil.4:13). “ALL THINGS”! *Overcome ANY problem! So can you!*