CHRIST IS VICTOR

"if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." (John 7:37)

George Mueller

He dared to trust God for the needs of countless orphans

Nobody? Mary looked up at him as if she were going to cry. She sat on the parlor floor, surrounded by bolts of flannel and calico. He saw at a glance that she had been cutting out dresses for the little girls to wear. She looked like a forlorn child herself, asking him again, "Nobody at all, George? Are you sure?"

"Nobody came near 6 Wilson Street. Not a child. Not a grandmother. Not a city official. Nobody."

"Nobody applied?" She repeated dully, rolling the bolt of flannel back and forth on the rug. "Where were they?"

The drabness of the parlor, the pitifulness of her evenings spent over the cheap flannel, all that they had sacrificed-it was overwhelming. "Maybe we better ask ourselves-where was God?" he retorted. Mary's eyes widened in horror.

"All right, where was He?" George persisted, flogging himself as well as Mary with the torturous thought. Then suddenly, he wanted to throw himself down beside the chair and beat it with his fist until the stuffing wheezed out, and cry out to God. "Mary, Mary," he said.

"All the way home from Wilson Street, I've been praying. God, where did I fail? 'Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.' That's what He said. I believed He would."

"He did. George, He did. Until-."

"Yes, I prayed for money." There were both bitterness and sadness in his voice. "He sent gifts larger than I dreamed about. From people I didn't know.

"I prayed for kitchen things—."

"-and a strange man came to the door with his arms full. I know, Mary. We prayed for cooks and teachers—."

"-and they came. You prayed for clothes and got them. You prayed for—." She stopped suddenly, her eyes widening. "Oh, George!"

He was too preoccupied with his tragedy to see that her eyes were sparkling. "I believed He would go on giving me what I prayed for. I believed that, Mary. Until today."

"George, George, that's it!"

What ailed the woman? There was a joyous lilt

to her words that made no sense at all. "That's it," she said again. "Everything you prayed for."

"Don't you understand what's happened, Mary? He gave me everything I prayed for, all right. Except children."

She looked as if she wanted to laugh. "That's it. You didn't ask for children."

"Didn't ask for—." What was she saying?

"Well, did you? I didn't. We never prayed together for them. Did you, George?"

He suddenly felt weak, as if he had awakened from a terrifying dream. She was right. They had prayed for everything-everything from plates to underwear. But they hadn't asked God to send the orphans.

"I didn't. Mary, I didn't." Now he wanted to laugh and take his wife in his arms and kiss her and praise God all at the same time.

What they did next was the only logical thing to do, in George's mind. There in the parlor, they bowed their heads and in a few simple sentences made the request they had forgotten. They asked God for orphans and then, after Mary had picked up the flannels and all the parts of the little girls' dresses, they went out to the kitchen and had their supper of lamb stew. George could not remember when lamb stew had tasted so good.

The next morning, he woke full of confidence. At 6 Wilson the key stuck in the lock, and he was twisting and jiggling it when he realized that there were two people on the pavement, watching him curiously. One was a young woman, whose bonnet perched like a giant pink bird on a nest of frizzy yellow straw. Every once in awhile, she reached out to cuff the ten-year-old boy whose grimy shirt matched his face.

"About time," he heard the young woman say. "Come here, stupid. Drop it, I say. Don't go tossing rocks around here. Now mind."

George forgot his key. "Are you talking to me?" "Sure, who else?" The young woman fluffed up the yellow curls. "Oh, and him too. The crosseyed brat. Hey, this 6 Wilson?"

He pointed to the number above the door, and

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"I was Smuggling Liquor and Cigarettes out of U.S. Military Camps- Eberhard Schmid"

I grew up as the only child of a Christian family where I was very early taught the Word of God. Thus I was familiar with Christian life and teaching since my childhood.

Around the age of twelve, when I was in great need, I prayed for the first time to God for help. Then help came in a special and unexpected manner.

In spite of the Christian meetings and the different Christian youth-group activities which I attended, I was not converted; and all the time the attraction towards the world grew stronger and stronger.

During the periods when I served as an apprentice and as a student at college (when I lived away from home), I got more and more into the grip of darkness. I was soon enslaved by all kinds of worldly distractions and pleasure-seeking.

At this time of life, God twice seemed to clearly call me to follow Him. each time I wanted to begin a new life, but the strength of these decisions lasted only for a few days or weeks.

The unexpected and sudden death of my father, of which I received news right after an evening of pleasure at a ballet-performance, shocked me profoundly. But even that could not move me to repentance.

Two years after I had finished my studies I started a second-hand car business, selling cars chiefly to the US-Army personnel to earn much

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she nodded, shoving the boy ahead of her. "Well, we're here then."

Briefly, the young woman told him her story. Jerry was her sister's boy. The sister had died. As for the father—. She arched her eyebrows and shruged, and the pink bird bobbed and almost took flight.

"Madam," he said, "you are the first applicant and I'm delighted to see you."

Within a month, applications for forty-two children had been filed. And in the spring, May, 1836, the orphanage at 6 Wilson Street officially opened, and the children, the cooks, and the housemother moved in. Now George and Mary had forty-three children-counting four-year-old Lydia-as their responsibility. And soon they heard of so many little babies who desperately needed a home that George rented a second house on Wilson Street. At the end of the year, he opened his second orphanage. And nine months after that, he rented a third house on the same street and before anybody had time to repaint the parlors, or polish the windows, thirty orphan boys from the Bristol slums were sliding down the bannisters.

A year and a half went by. George kept his word; he never talked about money in public; he refused to ask anyone for a donation. But Bristol people gave regularly and generously to the three Homes. There was more than enough for food bills, staff salaries, clothing, and school books.

But two years after the first Home opened-on August 18, 1838-George was forced to write in his diary: "I have not one penny in hand for the orphans! In a day or two, many pounds will be needed!" He was terribly concerned. In Teignmouth, when the deacons forgot to empty the contributors' box, he had been responsible only for Mary. Now there were ninety-six orphans!

That day, he pleaded with God. "God, the Infants' Home needs ten pounds today. I've given them all that's in the treasury, but it was only five pounds. They need five pounds more, and they need it today. God, I'm trusting You to supply it, somehow."

The woman, who fluttered into his home on Paul Street a little later, was wearing a silk dress that rustled under her cape, and George sniffed perfume as she sat down in his study. But she reached a tiny gloved hand into her purse, sighing confidentially, "So when God told me not to wear those glittering gaudy jewels any more, Brother Mueller, He told me something else too. He told me to get rid of them." A tiny handful of coins tinkled on his desk. "And give the money to somebody. I thought of the orphans. Now I do intend to sell them but it might not be for weeks, so I thought I'd come right here today with what they're worth." His eyes sorted out the coins while she talked. "Actually those giddy gaudy jewels weren't worth very much. I'm afraid. The coins won't amount to much."

"More than five pounds.", said George. He gives the exact answer to prayer. Right down to the very pound!"

For the next two weeks money only trickled in. The housemothers bought bread for one meal at a time. And on September 5, George faced serious trouble again. In his journal, he wrote, "Our hour of trial continues still. The Lord mercifully has given enough to supply our daily needs. But He gives by the day now, and almost by the hour, as we need it."

Now he ate his meals in discouraged silence. When Lydia wanted to play, he turned away. Yet doggedly, he held to his determination: he would prove that God hears and answers prayer. He would prove it, and all that it required was patience.

But Henry Craik thought differently. "George, you've worked yourself into a fine mess. All I suggest is a way out."

"Your way isn't God's way," George said stubbornly. "I won't ask anybody for money. What would that prove? I'll ask God, and that's all."

"But *Christian* friends are different. They're interested in this thing, old man. All you need to do is go to them and tell them how things are financially and—."

"No!" George exploded.

"But look here, fellow, you've got almost a hundred children to feed. You can't be irresponsible about things. It's rather like you were their father." "'Father to the fatherless,' "George muttered. That was the verse he had counted on.

"Quite. How many times have you quoted that verse yourself?"

"Who is 'Father to the fatherless'? Not I. It's God in Heaven. 'Father to the fatherless.' He'll provide."

"Through channels, George," Henry prodded. "He'll choose the channels. Not Mueller. You'll see, Henry, He hasn't failed yet. I'll pray, and the money will come in."

Henry picked up his great coat from the sofa and buttoned it up carefully. Then he said clearly, "The money will come in. But it'll go out again, just as fast. And more will come in, and it will go out. And it's my wager some day it'll go out faster than it comes in." At the front door, he called back, "And then where will you be, George Mueller?" The door closed behind him, and George was alone in the parlor, remembering his words.

But even Henry's pessimism could not turn him away from his bargain with God. He would not ask anybody for money, only God.

A little later, Brother Terrence, from the staff, walked into his study. On George's desk, he unloaded a pocketful of small coins. Five people had stopped at the orphanage that morning, all to make donations. They had been small gifts, but they added up to something helpful.

George swept the money into his purse. The young staff member scowled. "Aren't you going to give me that money to use for the house? I've a bill due tomorrow and I-well, I thought, after all."

George interrupted. "Tomorrow! 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.' Brother Terrence, today I prayed for this money to make up an overdue salary. God sent my answer by you. This money goes for that-today. Tomorrow we pray for your bill."

But the fear that Henry Craik had not been wrong nagged him. For the money did go out as fast as it came in. Every day he watched it happen, and at the end of the week-on September 10-George knew he must take drastic action.

George faced his staff with a pounding heart. For days now he had fought against what he was about to do. Call the staff together and tell them the

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Vol.10, No.5

This newsletter is produced six times per year by the Laymen's Evangelical Fellowship International. It is printed and distributed in the US, UK, Germany, Singapore, Canada, and Australia and is supported by unsolicited sacrificial gifts of young people. For a free subscription or for other enquiries, please contact any of the addresses below.

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truth? Say "We are down to nothing and God sends help or else we close our doors?" How could he? Wasn't that the same as asking them for money, as asking men for money?

But it had been no mere rationalization that had brought him to this point, facing his staff in the Wilson Street parlor. Before God, he had seen the light. By not telling his own staff the state of affairs, he had been cheating them. He had been cheating them by not letting them pray with him and experience the excitement of God's answer. He had prayed alone, and he had told them about it, and they had used the money. But it wasn't the same. In a way, he had been cheating them.

So he was breaking no pact with God. He was renewing it by sharing it.

"Staff," he said, "I have something very sad and very wonderful to share with you." The small talk about head colds and gruel hushed, and they all waited for George Mueller's next words.

He had not expected anything like their response. When he finished, one woman rose and faced him accusingly. "It might help matters a little to cut expenses."

"We've pared them to the bone, sister."

"No, you haven't. You forget one item." "What's that?"

"My salary. My widow's penson is very adequate. No, Mr. Mueller, I won't take another pound from you as long as I work for your orphanages."

"I couldn't," George began.

"And I couldn't get on my knees and ask God for money while I was holding back the cash. Take it."

The little cook's lips were quivering but she blurted out, "Count on six pounds from me. It's my little nest egg up to the bank. But I'm sending for it directly. If you'll excuse me now, I'm going out to tend the soup, and get some praying done while it's simmering."

Well, he had done it. He had told his staff the truth about the money. He felt strangely sure that he had done right. But the rest was in God's hands. It was up to Him.

He smiled over the assortment of coins they had given. Enough to pay the baker and the grocer for a day or two, but not much else. Yet they had meant so well. Now, if they would pray.

By the end of the week, the pitifully small collection was gone too.

That night, he ate his supper at the orphanage. After supper the young staff member who stuttered a little stood up to make a speech. After a few laborious sentences, he pushed an envelope down the table toward George. "...every t-t-tuppence for the orphans," he said.

In bewilderment, George took the envelope. "Where did this come from? You don't have any money. None of you."

"It's your answer to p-prayer. So the orphanage can stay open."

"I want to know where it came from." George was on his feet.

"We had some things we didn't need," somebody called up from the end of the table. "In our rooms. Silverware, pictures, a little furniture."

"You sold them?"

"They were things we didn't need. That's all. After all," the young staff member blushed, "we didn't want you to have all the f-f-fun, Mr. Mueller."

"Fun?" George asked, aghast.

"We wanted to have a hand in some answered prayer too."

But in a very few days, this too was all gone. Then for five terrible days God kept the orphanages from hour to hour. But on September 18, George know he could go on no longer. The houses had been stripped of everything but their essentials. None of the staff members had a shilling left in the bank. The only resource was God.

And this was the last possible moment for God to step in and save George Mueller's experiment.

He saw a woman pass in front of the parlor windows and wished in a moment of unreasonable irritation that strangers would not always peer into street-level windows. In his own home on Paul Street, the first floor was nicely above the sidewalk. Then to his surprise, the woman he had noticed was inside the orphanage, fidgeting with an immense carryall as she crossed toward him.

"Well, Mr. Mueller, they told me you were in your study but I said to them, I've waited a long time to see you and I didn't care if it was an imposition."

Like a gull exclaiming ove a fish, she told him a short excited sentences that she was visiting next door and she had just come down from London for five days or so, and already the change of air was doing her the world of good. He caught her words. "We do like Bristol. So restful after London. Don't you think so, Mr. Mueller? Nobody here ever worries."

Why should this nervous woman be added to his burden of the day? How could he stop the flood of words. "Would you like to look around the house?" he asked politely.

"Well, yes," she rattled on. "But before I do, I'll settle up my business with you. Well, it isn't really business. We don't like to think of it that way, do we? Now let's see. This purse of mine is all of a clutter. Ah, here it is." She laid on his desk some pounds, some shillings. He saw in a swift glance it was more than enough to pay the bills for a week, and perhaps if they were careful, two weeks.

"I would have been here before. I've been next door for five days. But you were so busy. I kept peeking over. Meetings going on. Everybody looking so solemn. And then the other day, everybody rushed out carrying bundles. Picnic goodies, I suppose?"

"Not exactly." He resisted a hearty laugh.

"Dear me, I wish you'd explain it to me. All the busyness that goes on over here."

"My dear woman, you've explained our busyness to me."

"I don't understand."

"Madam, we've been busy these last five daysand three weeks-so God would make His answer to our prayers more wonderful. Take a chair, madam. I'll tell you the whole story."

(Edited excerpt from <u>George Mueller-He dared to</u> <u>trust God for the needs of countless orphans</u>, by Faith Coxe Bailey. Published by Gospel Literature Service, Bombay, 1985)

...Say What? Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways. Psalm 128:1

How we misuse our tongues!

"The Lord hath given to me the tongue of the learned that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary..." (Isaiah 50:4)

How we misuse our tongues! It looks like we ooze with ill feeling to-wards others, just ooze with evil speaking. I can't understand why we should ooze like a slithering snail, and be speaking some evil about somebody else. Some people take great delight in speaking evil of God's children. Let me tell you, it is very dangerous to do so. Great darkness will come into your heart, and you will find yourself declining and getting into a deep morass from where you will never get out. God wants to fill your heart with all goodness and love. Look at the patience of God towards you. Why is it impossible for your to be patient towards some frail person?

As a matter of fact I was very frail myself. I had many many weaknesses, and it is only the longsuffering of God that has held me and kept me and strengthened me. When I came to the Lord Jesus Christ, the tongue was one of my great weaknesses.

But the Lord Jesus Christ put a clamp on it right away. He bridled my tongue. And thereafter God began to teach me to speak those things which He had first spoken to me. And when I began to just relay some of the things which God was speaking to me, I found people getting blessed. That was way back 54 years now. As a boy I saw the Lord take hold of my foolish tongue, and began to teach me the words which came from Him, so that when I spoke to some people, some of them would be startled, because they were the secrets of their hearts.

The Bible says that you will prophesy the secrets of men's hearts, so that they will fall on their faces and say, 'surely God is in you'.

Now I find that many people who pretend to teach others know nothing about spiritual diagnosis. For spiritual diagnosis you need to go into the presence of God and pray. And without His awakening your ear, you can talk a ton of rubbish and get nowhere with the person you are speaking to or trying to help.

Friends! What does the Bible say? "He gives me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." We sometimes come out with an avalanche of words at a time when a person is totally unfit to receive even one plain honest sentence. Why waste your breath, when somebody is ill-prepared to receive it? You must first go and pray. And when you

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money in a short time. Running this business meant getting more and more involved in the sin of deceit and dealing in stolen goods. I fell also into uncleanness and sins of the flesh. As a backwash of my evil life, there came such a feeling of despair upon me that I had to leave that town as if I was hunted, and flee. In order to get quickly away from that place, I preferred to leave the cars and other property behind and just leave.

Back with my mother who was alone, I asked God for help and forgiveness. At that time I met the girl who was to become my wife. She was brought up in a good Christian family. After marriage there came certain changes in my life. What seemed impossible to me, God did. God richly blessed our marriage and family-life. Three children were born to us. By adopting a new life-style some changes for the better took place in me. God helped me also to change my occupation. He entrusted me with a new field of activity. But in spite of all that, there was no real peace and no complete rest in my heart.

A few years later we were invited to a Gospel meeting where Joshua Daniel was the preacher. Shortly after attending one of his retreats, I realized that while the old sins did no more dominate me, they still seemed to accuse me. at this retreat I also made a clean breast of my hidden sins and was counselled. After a hard inner battle, with great joy I was able to set things right, which I would never have revealed to anybody before.

I needed to confess to the Customs Search Office (on state level) that I had, for two years, sold many thousands of undeclared cigarettes and some hundreds of liters of whiskey, which I had bought from American soldiers, in Germany. The Director of the Customs Investigation Office said, "In my fifteen-year long service, I have never seen such a thing." I could testify to him and to his colleague how Jesus had changed my life. They wanted to help me as much as they could. They found a section in the regulations which said that my offences were just timebarred by the statute of limitations. So I had to pay only a few thousand Deutsche Marks as a penalty.

I returned also the tools, sleeping bags, and so on to the US-Army and testified there to a pretty large group of young soldiers of my life in Jesus. They asked me, however, to take all the things back with me because the necessary procedures to return these smuggled articles were just too complicated for them to undertake the process.

I returned the Diploma in Business Administration to the college where I had studied, confessing that I had used forbidden and deceitful means at the exams. They returned the Diploma to me with the confirmation that the college had accepted my confession and that I would be allowed to keep the Diploma.

Besides these things, I had to ask a number of people whom I had wronged personally to

pardon me. Again and again, I saw that the Lord was blessing these steps which I was taking in obedience to His Word.

Many things I could no more set right as the persons concerned could not be traced, but I asked God to pardon me for them. in the following retreat, God gave me a promise from His Word that He had received me, through Romans 8:1-2, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after of the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." This settled in entirely for me-God's Word coming to me that here was NO CONDEMNA-TION any more for me.

We have been experiencing deep inner rest and the assurance that Jesus is Lord over all the difficulties and temptations in our family and in the small factory which I run today.

In these fifteen years which have passed since my conversion, we have seen and proved, in so many unforeseeable difficulties and problems, how faithful God is. Often there were numerous hindrances, recessionary pressures and hard times; but it is wonderful how God time and again worked out His purpose and saw us through.

The challenges and problems in family and factory are constantly increasing; but they only bring us into a more intimate walk with God. Many factories in my area have been collapsing and my hands are often quite full. In spite of this, God helps me to make myself available to Him. I am grateful that the Lord is using me to serve Him in our house-meeting at Stuttgart and the meeting in my home at Aldingen as well as in the Sunday evening meeting at Spaichingen. God grants me to experience the truth of His promise that Jesus is faithful. "When we are weak, then are we strong."

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pray, the God who gives you the tongue of the learned will also tell you the season when you should speak.

If you want to have the tongue of the learned, you need to have an ear that hears. What is it that your ear is attuned to most? It has become a normal habit these days for young people to turn on the radio as soon as they enter a room. If your ears are attuned to the noises of the devil and those erotic suggestions, how can you hear the voice of God? Your ears are not awakened to hear the voice of God. That is why we constantly say to people, as we address the multitudes, "Go home and pray, God will speak to you." We have a speaking God. He is no dumb God.

Some people apparently think that God is very deaf. That is why they make a big noise.

Sometimes I miss my ear plugs when I sit on the platform when some of these people really get going. They get so effervescent and emotional, that by the time they quit singing, I suppose all their strength is gone. And they are not even fit enough to listen to the Word of God. The devil will make some people abject slaves. Outside the church doors they are worthless. What is the use of leaping to the roof? What good does it do? It does nothing. God is not deaf. He does not require high decibel religion. That is the idea that the heathen have of religion. High decibel and endless noise, have no place in the Church of Jesus Christ. We need the ears that listen to the still small voice of God. 'Be still and know that I am God.' Never mind the raging Red Sea before you. 'Stand still and see the salvation of God.' If your religion does not bring you to the stillness, it is no religion at all. You might as well practice your religion out in the street or in the market place. It will not work. You need the ear of the learned.

'For the tongue is a world of iniquity', says the Bible. It is a fire. It is a tongue of iniquity. How much evil comes out of that mouth! Some religious people can't speak a kind word. If somebody is weary, or sick, or discouraged, all that they can speak is some harsh, hard word which will just break them and turn them off. It takes years for them to recover from this hard usage. Friends, I tell you, that is not the tongue of the learned. That is not the ear of the learned. It is a world of iniquity that comes out of you.

God wants you to have the tongue of the learned. Where do you get the learning? Not in the university. You learn it at the foot of the Cross. When you humble yourself you receive this great favour from God. May the Lord give you the lips and the tongue and the ears of the learned!

- Joshua Daniel

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