Week 20—Relying on God

Read

Bristol, England. Tuesday, February 8, 1842

Enough food remained in George Mueller's orphan houses for that day's meals, but that was it. There was no money to buy bread or milk for the following morning. And two of the orphan houses needed coal.

Mueller believed that if God sent nothing before nine o'clock on Wednesday morning, "His name would be dishonored." Tuesday afternoon nine plum cakes arrived from a kindly sister. But the situation was still grim, as Mueller noted in his diary: "Truly, we are poorer than ever; but, through grace, my eyes look not at empty stores and the empty purse, but to the riches of the Lord only."

Any other man responsible for the continual care and feeding of scores of children would have been climbing the walls. But Mueller believed in a God who is eternally faithful. He had, in fact, bet his entire career on the proposition that such a God could be relied upon implicitly and exclusively.

Mueller would not be disappointed. Wednesday morning just after seven he walked confidently to the orphan house on Wilson Street to find out how his Lord was going to provide food for that day. Mueller discovered that the need had already been met. A Christian businessman walking to work early that morning
had suddenly wondered whether "Mueller's children" might need funds. He decided to take something by the homes that evening. But, he later said, "I could not go any further and felt constrained to go back." The man delivered three sovereigns just in time to make purchases for the orphan's breakfast.

Timely provisions like this came in to Mueller's homes countless times in his more than six decades of work. Never once did the orphans lack for food or clothing. There was always enough, sometimes just enough, but the children never knew a moment's anxiety.

Mueller's work was entirely supported by donations. During his 63-year career nearly 1,500,000 pounds was given, enough to care for some ten thousand children and to build several orphanages. It was quite an undertaking: two thousand children to be fed each day, their clothes washed and repaired, five large buildings to be kept up, matrons, overseers, nurses, and teachers to be paid.

And, according to Mueller, over these six decades God never missed a step. No child ever went without a meal; no baker or milkman ever settled for an IOU.

But now we come to the real catch: George Mueller accomplished all this without ever once asking a soul for a penny and without ever making any needs known. This man had embarked on his enterprise as a grand experiment. He wanted "something that would act as a visible proof that our God and Father is the same faithful God as ever he was...to all who put their trust in Him." So this devout believer decided to demonstrate that the Almighty "had not in the least changed" by the fact that "the orphans under my care are provided, with all they need, only by *prayer* and *faith*, without anyone being asked by me or my fellow-labourers, whereby it may be seen, that God is faithful still, and hears prayer still." [1]

[1]Mosley, Steven R., *God: A Biography,* (Phoenix: Questar Publishers, Inc., 1988), p. 230-232.

Reflect

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:6)

Respond

God will never lead you to a task that He will not equip you with all you need to accomplish that task. God always provides what we need to serve Him effectively, but sometimes (like Abraham who was promised an heir) we get impatient and try to work out God's purposes in our own strength, resources, and timing. How are you relying on God's strength to accomplish the ministry to which He has called you? How has God provided you with the resources you need to be effective in serving Him? (God built some of these resources into you before you were born!) What are you trusting God to do in and through your life?

Write your thoughts here:

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Prayer Requests for yourself, your students, and others with whom you serve in ministry:

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Remember

Many believers expect too little from a God who can do all things. What are you trusting God for in your life and ministry that no man could accomplish apart from the moving of the Holy Spirit?