

Compiled by Joseph Herrin

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Living Epistles - Introduction Joseph Herrin (08-09-09)

This compilation of testimonies derived from my own reading of the lives of men and women who have manifested faith, casting themselves wholly over into the hands of Yahweh, when He led them to such acts of obedience. An introduction is required lest some should have a wrong understanding of what true faith is. Let me introduce this select list of testimonies, this hall of fame of modern men and women of faith, by providing a discourse on faith excerpted from the article "*Faith and Healing*."

[Begin Excerpts]

Faith always has two parts. Faith consists of revelation that originates with God and a response of trust and obedience. In order for the saint of God to walk in faith, he must first have received a revelation from God that requires a response of obedience. There is no such thing as a general principle of faith, or faith being applied in a general sense. Faith is always a trusting response to a specific revelation of God.

It is at this point that many saints find themselves in desperate situations. Many saints have been taught that no specific word or revelation from God must precede an act of trust or obedience. Many have been taught principles such as the one which states that God wants everyone to be healed. This is often based upon Scripture verses such as "by His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). Christians try to stand upon such Scriptures, claiming the healing of God without God having given them a specific word for their situation. This often ends in tragedy, and many have even abandoned the faith as they have met with severe disappointment when they trusted and stood and claimed with all of the conviction that was within them according to the manner in which they were instructed...

The tragic thing is that many saints have taken such verses and attempted to stand upon them. God never intended this verse, or others, to be used in such a manner. This verse doesn't even speak to the issue of physical healing. It is speaking of reconciliation between man and God through the sacrifice of Yahshua the Messiah. By misapplying Scriptures such as this, many saints have endured tremendous heartache and disappointment, for their actions and beliefs were based upon error.

Although such teachings on faith are widely believed and accepted,

proclaiming to many that they need to pick out key verses and take a stand upon them, I want to share from Scripture how this is actually a misunderstanding of the word of God. God has given us the Holy Spirit to make His mind and His will known to us. He never intended for us to apply the Scriptures to circumstances as we see fit, independent of His leading.

Faith must always consist of a word from God and a response of trusting obedience. At times we may not realize that God has spoken to us until after the fact, but this vital ingredient of faith is always present. Faith can be said to have an object and an action, which is a response to the object. The object is that which God reveals to us or speaks to us regarding a specific situation or condition.

Let us examine the following Scripture:

Romans 10:17

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

This verse clearly demonstrates that in order for there to be faith there has to be something that is first heard that requires a response. Faith comes by hearing. The literal rendering of this verse is "faith comes out of hearing", that is, a word must come first from which true faith arises. In this particular passage that which is heard is defined in verses 8 and 9.

Romans 10:8-9

But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart"-- that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Yahshua as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved...

The object of faith that is revealed here is that Yahshua is Lord and God has raised Him from the dead. The response is to confess these truths with your mouth and believe them in your heart. Here we see that faith has two parts, revelation and response. As we look at further examples of faith in Scripture we will see that there are no exceptions to this pattern.

There are many places in Scripture where both of these parts of faith are not clearly stated. Sentences are constructed in this very same manner. Every sentence must have a subject and a verb, however, sometimes the subject is inferred. Similarly, when faith is spoken of the response of faith is often stated

and the subject of faith, the revelation that requires a response, is not clearly stated. Instead, it is inferred. Following is an example.

Luke 17:19

And He said to him, "Rise, and go your way; your faith has made you well."
(NAS)

In this passage Yahshua tells the leper that his faith has made him whole. Was it some mysterious power inherent in this man called faith that healed him? We know that it was the power of God that healed him. What then was the revelation that was given to this man and what was the trusting response that was required of him? To find the answer we must look at some preceding verses.

Luke 17:12-14

And as He entered a certain village, ten leprous men who stood at a distance met Him; and they raised their voices, saying, "Yahshua, Master, have mercy on us!" And when He saw them, He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And it came about that as they were going, they were cleansed.

Here we see that there were ten leprous men who approached Yahshua for healing. Yahshua revealed that He would have mercy on them and heal them if they would go and present themselves to the priests. According to Levitical law, in order for a man who had been unclean to be made clean and enter back into society he had to be examined by the priests and declared to be disease free. As the lepers left Yahshua they were still leprous. They had to believe that by the time they arrived before the priests that they would be cleansed. Their trusting obedience to the word of Christ led to them being cleansed. Let us look at another example.

Acts 27:23-25

Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.

Here Paul makes the statement that he has faith in God. Again is this some mysterious principle or force that allows the miraculous to happen? Paul's faith in God actually has a very specific basis. An angel of God appeared to him and gave him a word of revelation. Paul's faith is not some general belief in

God, but it is a trusting response to the word that God presented to him. Again we see the two ingredients of revelation and trusting response.

I am convinced that every instance of faith includes these two vital ingredients, revelation and trusting response. Even in instances where both are not clearly stated, as one examines the situation it can be shown that both were present.

To see the principle of faith having two parts even more clearly, let us look at the example of Abraham who is called the father of faith. If Abraham is the father of faith then we should be able to glean some very important teachings about faith from his life.

Romans 4:16-21

For this reason it is by faith, that it might be in accordance with grace, in order that the promise may be certain to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, (as it is written, "A father of many nations have I made you") in the sight of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. In hope against hope he believed, in order that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which had been spoken, "So shall your descendants be." And without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what He had promised, He was able also to perform.

This passage speaks of the faith of Abraham and it clearly speaks of a spoken promise and Abraham's response of belief. We too are the children of Abraham if we walk in the same faith. Our faith must have the same components, a revealed word from God and a response of trusting obedience.

Another test of Abraham's faith was when God asked him to take his son Isaac and sacrifice him on an altar to God. Abraham responded in faith, having heard God clearly give him instructions to do this thing. Abraham did not have to wonder, "Does God want me to do this?" Abraham had heard God give him specific instructions and Abraham responded in trusting obedience. How many of us, however, have been tormented because we were not sure that we had heard God speak? How many have heard some man tell them that they

needed to take a group of scriptures and stand on them, but they had no specific word from God relating to their circumstance? This does not lend itself to faith, for there is no clear revelation from God regarding the circumstance or situation in question...

The saint of God is to be led of the Spirit of God as he walks out his life. God doesn't want the saints to be led of their own reason and intellect. This will not lead to the will of God. God knows man's tendency toward independence and self initiative. He has therefore devised things to keep man from walking apart from Him. He wants His children to know His mind and this takes diligent searching and great obedience to what is revealed...

God determined that the saints should always be in tune with Him so they would avoid deception and they would not get into lawlessness. The saint that takes the word of God and develops principles of living and ministry and then goes out and applies them as he sees fit, according to his reason and understanding, is walking in lawlessness. This is not God's will. He wants us to hear His voice. We need to develop an ear that is sensitive to the Spirit of God. Only in this way will we be kept from error and preserved in a day of much deception. Knowing the voice of God is critical to being preserved from following after that which does not originate with God.

John 10:3-5

"To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out. When he puts forth all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. And a stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers."

The saint that is versed in the word of God, but does not know the voice of the Spirit, is a prime candidate for following the voice of another...

God knows that we are beset with many weaknesses and that we do not always hear very clearly. God seems more than willing to confirm His word to us when we ask Him to do so. Gideon's experiences provide a clear example of this.

Judges 6:36-40

Then Gideon said to God, "If Thou wilt deliver Israel through me, as Thou hast spoken, behold, I will put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor. If there is

dew on the fleece only, and it is dry on all the ground, then I will know that Thou wilt deliver Israel through me, as Thou hast spoken." And it was so. When he arose early the next morning and squeezed the fleece, he drained the dew from the fleece, a bowl full of water. Then Gideon said to God, "Do not let Thine anger burn against me that I may speak once more; please let me make a test once more with the fleece, let it now be dry only on the fleece, and let there be dew on all the ground." And God did so that night; for it was dry only on the fleece, and dew was on all the ground.

Judges 7:9-15

Now the same night it came about that Yahweh said to him, "Arise, go down against the camp, for I have given it into your hands. But if you are afraid to go down, go with Purah your servant down to the camp, and you will hear what they say; and afterward your hands will be strengthened that you may go down against the camp." So he went with Purah his servant down to the outposts of the army that was in the camp. Now the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the sons of the east were lying in the valley as numerous as locusts; and their camels were without number, as numerous as the sand on the seashore. When Gideon came, behold, a man was relating a dream to his friend. And he said, "Behold, I had a dream; a loaf of barley bread was tumbling into the camp of Midian, and it came to the tent and struck it so that it fell, and turned it upside down so that the tent lay flat." And his friend answered and said, "This is nothing less than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; God has given Midian and all the camp into his hand." And it came about when Gideon heard the account of the dream and its interpretation, that he bowed in worship. He returned to the camp of Israel and said, "Arise, for Yahweh has given the camp of Midian into your hands."

God was asking Gideon to go and do battle with enemies that had enslaved the people of God. The children of Israel had previously had no strength or ability to resist these enemies. Because Gideon had no history of seeing anyone else withstand this enemy, the Lord was more than willing to confirm His words to him, and to give Gideon even further encouragement before the battle.

In a similar way today, because the church in the western world has so little experience in achieving any victory against the enemy in the area of healing, God is willing to give His saints strong confirmation of His will for them when He asks them to step out in faith. If God finds a child of His that He can use in this way He is quite willing to make His will plainly known to them.

The Father knows that the first step in walking in faith is for His children to receive revelation from Him. He wants us to hear Him clearly in this so that we will have a solid basis for a trusting response of obedience. Abraham knew clearly that God told him to go sacrifice his son on an altar. He didn't have to wonder about God's direction. He knew what God was requiring. Likewise, God's will was made plain to Gideon. It still required a tremendous response of trust in God to follow through on what God required, but God made it plain what He was requiring...

[End Excerpts]

I have felt it necessary to stress that faith consists of an initial word from God and a response of trusting obedience, lest some should think while reading the testimonies that follow that all one need do is step out in some area of need and expect God to respond according to their desire. As you read the testimonies that follow, if you will look closely you will see that there was always a word of revelation from God that preceded any act of faith.

Another point to understand when considering a life of faith is that God leads each one of us differently, and we are all at different levels of maturity. The apostle John in his first epistle speaks of three levels of saints. He addresses little children, young men, and fathers. God will not ask a little child to do the same thing He will require of a father. Nor will He ask all fathers in the faith to do the same things. We all have different areas of testing, and various trials of obedience. The common factor is that all are to be led of the Spirit, and all are to obey the Spirit's leading.

In Revelation the overcomers are identified by the fact that "they follow the Lamb wherever He goes." A little child in Christ can be an overcomer if they will not shrink back, but will follow Christ wherever He leads. A young man in Christ can be an overcomer if he will also follow the Lamb wherever He goes. The same is true for a father in the faith. So the mark of the overcomer is not that they all look the same, or do the same works, but rather that they are all following God, walking by the Spirit, hearing God's voice, and responding with trusting obedience.

May many saints be encouraged to this life of intimacy with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as they venture forth in response to the Lord's call.

The days ahead will test the faith of God's people. Only a remnant will be willing to follow wherever Yahweh would lead them, casting their entire lives

over into His care. This “little flock” will be tested as they look to God for protection, shelter, food, health, and every other necessary thing.

I have found that reading the testimonies of other saints who have followed God into difficulties and found Him faithful does much to bolster my faith. I began reading such testimonies in my late teens and early twenties, and I am certain that the seed that was planted bore fruit to my benefit when years later I found God calling me to follow Him in ways that to me seemed extraordinary.

I want to share with you the witness of some saints of God who looked to their Father for very practical matters, as well as very pressing needs. May their testimonies strengthen your faith that you might be willing to cast all your cares upon God, knowing with full assurance that He cares for you.

Watchman Nee



Watchman Nee was seventeen years old when he became a Christian. He was a citizen of mainland China, and the year of his salvation was 1920. He began writing and teaching almost immediately. For about thirty years he served freely as a minister to the Chinese church, and he made trips abroad, visiting with believers in England and elsewhere. In 1952 he was imprisoned by the Communist government of China because of his Christian beliefs and teaching, and he remained in prison until his death in 1972.

The Following testimony is taken from the book *Watchman Nee* as written by Witness Lee.

LIVING BY FAITH

From the very beginning, Watchman Nee realized fully that he should live by faith, not only for his living, but also for the Lord's work. Thus he learned to trust in the Lord for all his needs. This forced him to pray much, to consecrate himself to the Lord absolutely, to thoroughly deal with the Lord, and to obey the Lord in everything. In order to trust God in a living and practical way, he needed to keep his conscience free of offense. He would often say that a hole in our conscience would cause our faith to leak out.

Living by faith kept him in the Lord's will. When living and working by our own means, we do not need to be restricted and limited by the Lord's will. We can do whatever we like, whenever we like, without needing to seek the Lord's will or to wait for His guidance. But to live by faith requires us to be restricted to the Lord's will; otherwise, when we pray in faith He will not answer. He will never support us and supply our need in anything we are doing according to

our own preference. Through living by faith, Watchman Nee was preserved from being distracted by the outward appearance of the work. What he cared for was the Lord's will, not a booming work. His desire was to live by a faith that God would honor. He knew that if he performed any work which was not done in life and according to God's will, God would never respond to his faith. For this reason, both his personal life and his work were continually under restriction.

Down through the years, he continually exercised himself to live such a life of faith. In China he pioneered such a life. He became a strong example for all his close associates who had been called by the Lord to live and work for Him by faith...

WATCHMAN NEE'S PERSONAL TESTIMONY GIVEN AT KULANGSU,
FUKIEN,
OCTOBER 20, 1936

Matters concerning Money

The matter of money can be either a small or a big problem. When I began to serve the Lord, I was somewhat anxious about the question of my livelihood. Had I been a preacher in a denomination, I would have been on a large monthly salary. But since I was to walk in the Lord's way, I would only rely upon Him to support me; I could not depend upon a monthly salary. In the years 1921 and 1922, very few preachers in China lived in sole reliance on the Lord. It was difficult to find even two or three; the great majority lived on salary. At that time many preachers were not bold enough to devote their entire time to serving the Lord; they felt that if they were not receiving a regular salary, they would not know how to face a situation in which they had nothing to live on. I also had such thoughts. In China today [1936] there are approximately fifty brothers and sisters in fellowship with us who live by relying solely on the Lord. Such a situation is more common now than it was in 1922. Brothers and sisters in various places today also care for the workers more than before. I think that after ten years or so, brothers and sisters will show even greater concern for the need of the servants of the Lord. But it was not very common ten years ago.

Declaring to My Parents My Desire to Live by Faith

I have pointed out in a previous testimony that after I was saved I continued

to study in school and at the same time work for the Lord. One evening I spoke with my father concerning the matter of receiving financial assistance. I said, "After praying for several days, I feel that I must tell you that I will no longer spend your money. I appreciate that you have spent so much on me in accord with your sense of fatherly responsibility. But you will expect me to earn money in the future and support you in return, and I must tell you beforehand that since I am going to be a preacher, I will not be able to repay you in the future nor pay you interest. Even though I have not completed my studies, I wish to learn to depend solely upon God."

When I said this, my father thought I was joking. However, from then on, when my mother would occasionally give me five or ten dollars, she would write on the envelope: "To Brother Nee To-sheng." She was not giving me money as a mother.

After I had expressed myself thus to my father, the devil came to tempt me by saying, "Such an act is very dangerous. Suppose one day you are unable to maintain your living and you again approach your father for money. Won't that be disgraceful? You have spoken to your father too soon; you should have waited until there was more progress in your work, until many people had been saved and you had many friends, before you began to live a life of faith." But thank the Lord, ever since I expressed my decision to discontinue receiving my father's support, I have never asked him for money.

Looking to God for Sustenance while Working

To the best of my knowledge, Sister Dora Yu was the only preacher at that time who did not receive a salary and who depended wholly upon God for her living. She was my spiritual elder sister, and we knew each other very well. She had many friends, Chinese and foreign, and the field of her work was very wide since she preached everywhere. But my condition was just the opposite; few cared for me, so I found it rather difficult. Yet when I looked to the Lord, He said to me, "If you cannot live by faith, you cannot work for Me." I knew that I needed living work and living faith to serve a living God.

When once I found that there was only about ten dollars in my wallet, which before long would be fully spent, I suddenly recalled the widow of Zarephath, who had only a handful of meal in the barrel and a little oil in the cruse (1 Kings 17:12). There were not two handfuls of meal. I did not know by what means God sustained her, but I knew He had the means.

In 1921 two co-workers and I went to a place in Fukien province to preach, intending to go from there to another place. In my pocket were only four dollars, an insufficient amount for three bus tickets. But, thank the Lord, a brother gave us three tickets.

Again, at Kulangsu, in the south of Fukien province, my money was stolen from my pocket, so that I had no traveling expenses to return home. We were then staying in someone's house and preached once a day in a small chapel. We finished and were ready to leave. My two co-workers had money to return home, but mine had been stolen. (At that time each of us was spending his own money.) They made the decision to leave on the following day. When I heard this I was embarrassed, but I was not willing to borrow money from them. That evening I prayed to God, beseeching Him to provide the needed money for traveling expenses. Nobody knew this. That afternoon some people had come to speak with me about the Word, but I was in no mood to do so. At that time the devil came to tempt me and shake my faith, but I was firm in believing that God would not let me down.

I was then merely a youth, just embarking on serving the Lord by faith; I had not yet learned the lesson of living by faith. I continued praying to God that evening, thinking that perhaps I had done something wrong. The devil said, "You could ask the co-workers to buy your ticket, then repay them when you reach the provincial capital." I did not accept this suggestion and continued looking to God. When the time came for us to leave, there was still no money in hand. I packed my luggage as usual and hired a rickshaw. At that moment, I recalled the story of a brother who had no train ticket when the train was about to leave, but at that very instant, God ordered someone to give him a ticket.

We were all ready and boarded the rickshaws, of which there were three. I took the last one. When the rickshaw had been pulled about forty yards, an old man in a long gown came from behind shouting, "Mr. Nee, please stop!" I ordered the rickshaw boy to halt. After handing me a parcel of food as well as an envelope, the old man departed. I was then so grateful for God's arrangement that my eyes were filled with tears. When I opened the envelope, I found four dollars inside, just sufficient for a bus ticket. The devil kept speaking to me, "Don't you see how dangerous it is?" I replied, "I was indeed a little anxious about it, but it is by no means dangerous, for God has supplied my need in time." After arriving in Amoy, another brother gave me a return ticket.

In 1923 Brother Weigh Kwang-hsi invited me to preach in Kien-ou in the north of Fukien province. I had only about fifteen dollars in my pocket, one-third of the traveling expenses. I decided to leave on Friday evening and continued my prayer on Wednesday and Thursday. The money, however, did not come in. I prayed again Friday morning. Not only was no money forthcoming, but also I had a feeling within that I should give five dollars to a certain co-worker. I recalled the Lord's words: "Give, and it will be given to you." I had not been a money lover, but on that day I really loved money and found it extremely difficult to give. I prayed to the Lord again, "O Lord, if You really want me to give away five dollars, I will," but I was still rather unwilling inwardly. I was deceived by Satan into thinking that after praying I would not have to give away the five dollars. That was the only time in my life that I shed tears over money. Eventually, I obeyed the Lord and gave the five dollars to that co-worker. After the money was given, I was filled with heavenly joy. When the co-worker asked why I gave him the money, I said, "You need not ask; you will know later."

Friday evening I prepared to begin my journey. I said to God, "Fifteen dollars was already insufficient, and You wanted me to give away five dollars. Won't the sum be even more inadequate? Now I don't know how to pray." I made up my mind to go first to Shui-Kow by steamer and then to Kien-ou by a small wooden boat. I spent only a little for the journey to Shui-Kow. As the steamer was about to arrive, I felt that if I would not pray according to my own concept, the result would be much better. So I said to the Lord, "I do not know how to pray; please do it for me." I added, "If You will not give me the money, please provide a boat for me with a little fare."

When I arrived in Shui-Kow, many boatmen came to solicit business. One asked only seven dollars for my passage. This price was beyond expectation; the usual fare was several times more. I asked the boatman why his price was so low, and he replied, "This boat is hired by the magistrate, but I am allowed to take one passenger only for the space at the stern, so I do not care how much the fare is. But you have to provide your own food." Originally, I had fifteen dollars in my pocket. After giving five dollars to a co-worker and spending a few dimes for the journey by steamer, seven dollars for the small wooden boat, and a dollar or so for food, there was still a dollar thirty left when I reached Kien-ou. Thank the Lord! Praise Him that His ordering is always good.

After I completed my work at Kien-ou and was ready to return to Foochow, the

problem arose again: I did not have sufficient funds for traveling expenses to return. I had decided to leave on the following Monday, so I continued praying until Saturday. This time I had a feeling of certainty in my heart, recalling that before I left Foochow, God had asked me to give five dollars to a co-worker, which I then begrudged giving. At that time I read Luke 6:38: "Give, and it will be given to you," and I laid hold of this sentence. I said to God, "Since You have said this, I beseech You to provide me with the necessary money for traveling expenses according to Your promise."

On Sunday evening a British pastor, Mr. Philips, a true brother, assuredly saved and loving the Lord, asked Brother Weigh and me to dinner. At dinner Mr. Philips told me that he and his church had received great help through my messages, and they offered to be responsible for my traveling expenses both ways. I replied that there was already someone who had accepted this responsibility, meaning God. Then he said, "When you get back to Foochow, I will give you *The Dynamic of Service* written by Mr. Paget Wilkes, a gospel messenger greatly used by the Lord in Japan." I soon felt that I had missed a great opportunity; what I needed then was money for traveling expenses, not a book. I somewhat regretted that I had not accepted his offer.

After dinner Brother Weigh and I returned home together. I had refused Mr. Philips's offer for my traveling expenses so that I might look solely to God for help; nevertheless, there was joy and peace in my heart. Brother Weigh was unaware of my financial situation. I had a slight thought of borrowing money from him for my expenses and then reimbursing him when I returned to Foochow, but God would not allow me to divulge this matter to him. I was under full conviction that God in heaven is forever dependable, and I wished to see how He was going to provide for me.

When I left the following day, I had only a few dollars in my pocket. Many brothers and sisters came to see me off, and some carried my luggage. While walking I prayed, "Lord, surely You wouldn't bring me here without taking me back." Halfway to the wharf, Mr. Philips sent someone with a letter. The letter read, "Though someone else has assumed the responsibility for your traveling expenses, I feel that I should have a share in your work here. Would it be possible for me, an aged brother, to have such a share? Please be good enough to accept this small sum for this purpose." After reading the letter, I felt I should accept the money, and I did. It was not only sufficient for my return expenses to Foochow, but also for printing one issue of *The Present Testimony*.

Upon my return to Foochow, the wife of the co-worker who received the five dollars said to me, "I have the feeling that when you left you did not have enough money yourself. Why did you suddenly give five dollars to my husband?" I then asked her what had occurred in connection with the five dollars, and she replied, "We had only one dollar left in the house on Wednesday, and that had been spent by Friday. On Friday we prayed all day. Afterwards my husband felt that he should go for a walk, and then he met you, and you gave him five dollars. The five dollars lasted us through five days; then God provided for us from another source." At this point she continued with tears, "If you had not given us the five dollars on that day, we would have suffered hunger. It does not matter that we suffer hunger, but what about God's promise?" Her testimony filled me with joy. The Lord had worked through me to supply their need with the five dollars. The Word of the Lord is indeed faithful: "Give, and it will be given to you."

This is the lesson I have learned in my life. I have now experienced that the less money I have in my hand, the more God will give. This is a difficult path to follow. Many people may feel that they are able to live the life of faith; but when the trial comes, they are in fear. Unless you can believe in the real and living God, I do not advise you to take this path. I can bear testimony today that God is the One who gives. To be sustained by means of ravens as Elijah was at his time is still possible today. I am going to mention something to you which you may find difficult to believe. It has been my experience that God's supply arrives when I have spent my last dollar.

I have had fourteen years of experience. In each experience God wanted to get the glory for Himself. God has supplied all my needs and has not failed me once. Those who used to give do not do so now. There is a constant change of offerers; one lot of people replaces another. All this does not matter, for God in the highest is a living God. He never changes! I say this today for your benefit. I must say this that you may go straight forward in the path of living a life of faith. There are ten to twenty more cases like these that I have already related to you...

Looking to God for Sustenance for the Publication Work

Some people would never enter a meeting place to listen to the gospel. For this reason, in 1922 I began printing gospel tracts. The gospel must be delivered to them. After writing the tracts, I began praying and asking for provision for the printing and distribution expenses. God said to me, "If you wish Me to

answer your prayer, you must first rid yourself of all hindrances."

On the following Sunday, I preached on the theme, "Removal of All Hindrances." At that very time many people were criticizing the wife of one of my co-workers, who was a sister among us. After the meeting she stood at the door. When I entered the meeting to deliver the message, I looked at her and inwardly criticized her, considering others' criticism of her to be true. When I left the meeting hall after delivering the message, I greeted her. Later, when I again supplicated God for printing expenses, saying that I had removed all hindrances, God said to me, "What is the message which you have delivered? You have criticized that sister; that is a hindrance to prayer, a hindrance which you ought to deal with. You must go to her and confess your guilt." I replied, "It is not necessary to confess to others sins that are in the mind." God answered, "Yes, that is right, but your condition is different."

Afterward, when I considered confessing to her and came face to face with the issue, I hesitated five times. Even though I wished to do it, I was concerned that she, who had always greatly admired me, would then despise me. I said to God, "If you order me to do anything else, I will do it, but I am unwilling to confess to her." I continued to ask God for the printing expenses, but He would not listen to my reasoning. Rather, He insisted on my confessing. The sixth time, through the Lord's grace, I confessed to her. With tears we both confessed our faults and then forgave each other. We were filled with joy and thereafter loved each other all the more in the Lord.

Shortly after this, the postman delivered a letter containing fifteen U.S. dollars. The letter read, "I like to distribute gospel tracts and feel constrained to assist you in the matter of printing gospel tracts. Please accept my gift." As soon as all hindrances were removed, God answered my prayer. Thank the Lord! This was my first experience of God's answering my prayer in the matter of printing. We were then handing out more than a thousand tracts daily. Two or three million copies were printed and distributed annually to supply the churches in various places. In the few years after the publication work was begun, God always answered my prayers and supplied all our needs.

The Lord also wanted me to publish the magazine *The Present Testimony* and to give it out free of charge. At that time all spiritual periodicals throughout China were for sale; only what I published was free. The editing room where I wrote the manuscripts was a small cubicle. When the manuscripts were completed, they were sent to the press. When there were no funds available,

I would pray to God for His provision for printing. When I considered what I was doing, I laughed because the manuscripts were being sent to the press without the necessary funds.

As long as I live, I will never forget the time when I had no sooner finished laughing than there was a knock at the door. Upon opening the door, I saw a middle-aged woman who constantly came to the meetings, but to whom my heart was unusually cool. She was wealthy, but she loved money and treated a dime as a dollar. I wondered how she could possibly be the one who would give money for printing the magazine. Then I asked her why she had come. She replied, "About an hour ago I began feeling inwardly uneasy. When I prayed to God, He told me that I am not like a Christian, for I have never done well in the matter of offering, and that I love money too much. I asked Him what He wanted me to do, and He said, 'You should offer some money for the use of My work.' " Then she took out thirty silver dollars and placed them on the table, saying, "Spend it on whatever you feel the need is."

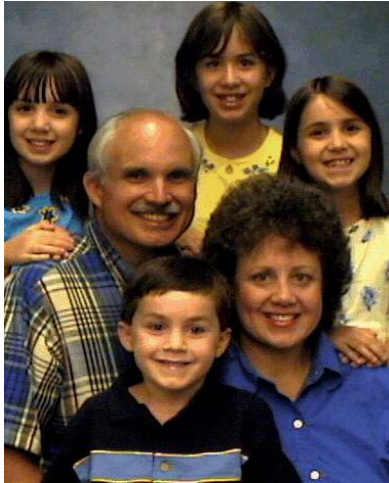
As I looked at the table, I saw two things, the manuscripts and the money. I thanked the Lord without thanking her. She left, and I went immediately to the printers to negotiate the printing. The money she had given was sufficient to print fourteen hundred copies of the magazine. Others gave money for the packing expenses and postage. Now about seven thousand copies of each issue are being printed. All the finances required are provided by God at the right time and in the way I have been relating. I have never solicited contributions from anyone. At times people have even begged me to accept money. In all of these matters I have been looking solely to Him...

In his *Narration of the Past*, given on December 4, 1932, he gave more personal testimonies concerning living by faith:

After we had been holding meetings for about a month, some young brothers among us felt that we should have a proper place to meet in the future. But since we were short of money, it was beyond our means to do so. I went to school to talk the matter over with several brothers, that is, with brothers Faithful Luk, Simon Meek, and Wang Tze, and we agreed that we should continue our work among the students. Then for the first time I rented some premises, a place owned by a family named Ho, all the members of which had been saved. They agreed to rent the place to me for a monthly amount of only nine dollars. I then prayed with several brothers, asking God to supply the three months' rent which was needed in advance before we could move in.

Every Saturday I went to Ma-Kiang, Fukien, to listen to Miss Margaret Barber's preaching. This time when I saw her, she said, "Here is twenty-seven dollars, which a friend asked me to give you for your work." This sum was exactly sufficient for three months' rent at nine dollars per month—not too much and not too little. On my return, without hesitation, I paid the three months' rent in advance. Later, we prayed again, and the Lord provided again...

Jose Alvarez Family



Jose Alvarez, his wife Mary, and their children live in Pena Blanca, New Mexico. God has been using them in ministry to the Native American Indian people in the United States. More recently Jose and Mary have been traveling to Africa to conduct ministry seminars on kingdom living, and on the role of apostles and prophets in laying a foundation for the church. They have a website where approximately 100 teachings are made freely available. There are also precious testimonies of the hospitality they have been met with in Africa, and the humble and loving care they have received from many of our brothers and sisters in Christ there.

The following testimony was obtained from the website of Jose Alvarez. Jose and Mary Alvarez are the authors of it.

The Alvarez Family Testimony

In 1992 our family of six lived a very comfortable and blessed existence. We owned a "paid off", cherry wood furnished, condominium in Miami, Florida. Jose had a successful career with the second largest Hispanic television network in the world, and our finances were virtually secured due to family wealth.

Our cars were paid in full, our credit cards were always at a zero balance, and we had many wonderful Christian friends. It seems like the "perfect American dream"?

Mary and I, however, were incredibly frustrated. Christianity as we knew it,

had become ritualistic, disappointing, and boring. For many years we had run off in a tizzy to Sunday church to hear what seemed to be the same messages. There was the uneventful, weekly cell group and the occasional "guilt driven" outreach to the lost. All of this within an "anxiety driven" city that had a deaf ear and little time for the things of God.

"Lord", Mary and I would cry in desperation, "Is this what Christianity is all about"? "God, where is the book of Acts, where are the miracles"?

The Lord answered us in His usual uncanny style. "If you want to live in the supernatural you must trust and give in the supernatural." Through a series of events and confirmations that transpired over a number of months, the Lord challenged us with two scriptures.

"When Jesus heard this, He said to him, "One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come follow Me." " Luke 18:23

"And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life." Matthew 19:29

The Lord Jesus asked us to give away, our home, and embark with Him on a journey of faith. After hundreds of hours of prayer, Mary and I felt prompted to telephone Christian friends of ours who also had four children (they now have seven), and offer them the condominium. In a "tear filled" meeting we told them that the condo would become theirs when the Lord would bring to us this "hundredfold return" on our giving.

Months later, the Lord hit us with a bombshell that left us numb and broken. "Giving the condo away, conditional upon money coming in, is not faith. You haven't given away anything, Jose." We knew that money or no money, God was asking us to legally give away our home and move out. Jose would shake and tremble in "his closet" as he prayed about what the Lord was requiring of them.

We went to our pastor with whom we had been in continuous dialogue about the situation with the home. We will never forget how God spoke through him. With simple words of wisdom he told us: "Whatever is in your hearts to do, do."

Days later we went with our friends to a lawyer and executed a "Quit Claim Deed", legally giving away the condo, and the furniture to them and agreeing on a date on which we would vacate.

The dreaded day came and the Lord had brought nothing. We only had credit cards and were forced to use them, very much against our will. The fifty eight boxes of personal belongings were placed in storage. We loaded our van with the six of us and nine duffle bags and were sent out by our church. As Abraham did, we went out without knowing where we were going.

Jesus first led us to the great revival in Pensacola, Florida, at the Brownsville Assembly of God. There, we met some precious folks from Tuscaloosa, Alabama who invited us to visit with them at their church where another revival was taking place. We remember the preacher, getting up right into our faces, screaming and prophesying "give it away, give it all away!"

During Jose's prayer time in the motel, God spoke to him two words, "New Mexico." We felt that this was the Lord's final destination and continued to travel west on I-20.

In Longview, Texas, while Jose was in prayer, the Lord narrowed down His vocabulary to one word, "pueblo." To us, pueblo means a little town. We took out the atlas of New Mexico and were floored to find almost twenty places that had the name pueblo within it. Later on, we were to find out, that these were the nineteen Pueblo Indian Nations of New Mexico. The Lord prompted us to go to Santo Domingo Pueblo which sits smack between Albuquerque and Santa Fe on I-25.

On May 3, 1997, we drove into Albuquerque and the next day went up north to Santo Domingo Pueblo, having no idea what we would encounter. A little dusty and empty village, filled with adobe homes, met us. When we got out of our van, our eyes spotted a precious little Native American lady selling jewelry. As we greeted her, a lightning bolt from the heavens shot up and down through our souls and our eyes were marvelously opened. A supernatural heavenly love for Native Americans pierced our hearts, and in one split second we knew that we, as white people, were called to serve them in the gospel. It was "love at first sight!" We can honestly tell you that until that very moment Mary and Jose had never had an inkling of a burden for Native American people!

We were to find out from this tiny lady that "white people" cannot live in the pueblos. As a matter of fact, some of the Pueblo Nations have a 'sundown law' in which all white people must vacate from the village at the setting of the sun. She pointed out to us Pena Blanca a town of 500 people, set between two Pueblo nations, where "white people" could live.

We had booked a motel in Albuquerque for a one week stay. Every day we would travel back and forth from there to Pena Blanca in an attempt to find a vacancy in residence, but nothing opened up to us. The credit cards were quickly being depleted and we only had ten dollars cash in our pockets. The day before the motel reservation was completed, an efficiency opened up. We packed our van and checked out of the motel as Jose grumbled under his breath to the Lord, "you know that we only have ten dollars, we will look like fools trying to rent something!" The Lord told Jose, "be quiet and move on!"

We were shown a clean and unfurnished efficiency by the landlady whom would later become a precious friend. We knew that the Lord wanted us to take it, but were at a loss of what to do. Stammering and stuttering, Jose and Mary huddled together as the landlady looked on. Knowing nothing of our financial dilemma she interjected, "you can move in today and pay me next week."

That night, we settled into our new one bedroom residence that had a shadeless lamp, a torn up sofa, and Wal-Mart blankets as its furniture.

The next day being Sunday, we went to visit a church in Santa Fe whose pastor and congregation we had met the week before at a restaurant. Picking us out in a crowd of five hundred, the pastor asked us to come forward and share the testimony of how the Lord brought us from Miami, Florida, to New Mexico. As we sat down after our speech he said, "The Lord just told me to take up an offering for these folks." This pastor knew nothing of our finances. Over seven hundred dollars came in and we were able to pay for our first month of rent and deposit.

A week later, through the hands of a few Christians that live in Pena Blanca, our efficiency was completely furnished down to a TV set, kitchenware, and furniture. Once again, we had never asked.

We must now tell you about four notable miracles that the Lord performed while we all slept together those two years in the living room of the efficiency.

This first one we lovingly call "the one diaper miracle." We had four dollars in our pockets, and our son Timmy was still in diapers at that time. We had one diaper left for him, the credit cards were maxed out, there was no food, the rent payment was two weeks behind, and the auto insurance was to be cancelled the next day. Jose was down on his knees in the tiny storage room which had been made into his office. His prayer was, "Lord, remember that Timmy has one diaper left." Mary, meanwhile, had gone out to get bread, peanut butter and jelly, as well as check the mail. Jose was still on his knees when she burst through the front door waiving a check for \$ 10,000.00! One of her aunts had sadly, and very unexpectedly, passed away. Her nephews and nieces had been designated as inheritors of her will. All credit cards were immediately paid off, as well the auto insurance and two months worth of rent!

On another occasion we had totally ran out of money and food. Mary woke up with a confident feeling that the Lord would provide lunch even though we only possessed flour and oil, just as the little widow in the Biblical narrative of Elijah the prophet. Having cooked unsavory pancakes, she stepped out through the front door to feed our dogs. Lo and behold, the grass was littered with unopened cans of food, a huge can of peanut butter, and a bag of beans. All of them were slobbered over with the dogs' saliva. It was an Elijah raven miracle. This time, however, the ravens were the dogs. They had brought us the food!

A third miracle had to do with dirty laundry! Our efficiency had no washing machine or dryer. Mary would take the laundry to Cochiti Pueblo, where the Lord gave her a chance to build relationships with our pueblo neighbors. Once again, we had no money and nineteen loads of laundry filling up the bedroom. Precious friends of ours from Santo Domingo pueblo, have two little girls which on numerous occasions they would drop off to play with our kids. This time they insisted on giving us twenty dollars for baby sitting. We came to realize that this was the Lord providing us with laundry money.

Grabbing our nineteen bags we went to church that Sunday, planning to afterwards go and do the laundry. During the service, Jose felt prompted to get the family and leave from church. As we walked out the front door, a parishioner that we had never met, beckoned to our oldest daughter with his finger and said, "come here little girl." Jose, as any father would do, froze in his tracks, shocked at what could be going on. Alexandria, slowly walked back to this man. He proceeded to pull out twenty dollars and gave it to her. The

laundry and detergent cost \$37.00! This man had been a sent angel of the Lord.

Our beloved parents do not share or understand all of our views concerning Christianity. They had been hurt by what the Lord called us to do. We are happy to report that God has fully restored all of our relationships. Mary's parents in 1998 gave each of their three children a substantial amount of money. In their eyes, they felt that we could not be trusted with money because we would give it away. They chose to set up a trust fund for us. We cannot touch the money, but the funds are available to us. Through the trust, we purchased a brand new five bedroom, three bathroom manufactured home that is almost twice the size of what we gave away. We also have purchased over an acre of land, of which we had none in Miami. Likewise, the trust purchased a brand new van. It always pays the insurance on the home, van, the property taxes, and the repairs on the van and home. Though nothing legally belongs to us, the fact is that we cannot take anything with us when we go to meet the Lord and be with Him. God told us that our one time act of forsaking all, has guaranteed us a life time provision of finances from His hands. My friends, we cannot out give the Lord!

In conclusion, we would like to share the following. The American church needs to know that the Lord Jesus performs, and is ready to perform great miracles within it. What happened to us seems the account of some foreign missionary. All of this occurred in the U.S.A. within the last five years. We, the American church, don't see this because we are stuck in the gospel of complacency, comfort, prosperity, and blessings, instead of simple devotion and obedience to the Lord Jesus.

Part of our commission was to come head on against the gods of money and comfort by doing the opposite and giving all away. Our testimony, which is simply one amongst numerous others, is one of encouragement and exhortation to the church of Jesus Christ. In many western countries such as ours, the church has become more of a system and less of a church. When the Lord gave to Moses the pattern of the Ark of the Covenant which symbolizes His presence, there was a pot of manna within it, which speaks of God's provision. Except on the Sabbath, on which the house of Israel was commanded to gather manna for two days, on every other day, any quota of manna that exceeded the daily amount allotted by the Lord rotted away. In Matthew chapter ten, and the apostolic commission, these men of God were sent out without a provision of gold or silver. In part, this is why they saw the

power of God. The church must turn around from the carnal doctrine of prosperity and comfort, to the one of whole hearted and uncompromising obedience to the Lord. There, we shall see the unfailing pot of manna and the power of signs and wonders as we learn to lean upon nothing else but the voice of the Lord.

The honor and privilege that God has given us in enjoying numerous relationships with Christians and non Christians from the Pueblo, Lakota, Navajo, and Apache Nations, to name a few, as white people, is without expression. In the last six hundred years, in the name of Jesus Christ, much injustice and hurt has been done to the Native American. These people have welcomed and loved our family. We have had Bible studies where our family were the only white faces.

We will never forget when the Lord allowed us to preach in a church in Ganado, Arizona, in the heart of the Navajo Nation. As Jose waited to be called up, the Lord broke him by showing him the preciousness, dignity, and beauty of each person in that congregation. He told Jose, "you must ask these people to forgive you, all white people, and your ancestors, for all the harm that you caused to them. Jose, got up with tears in his eyes and asked for forgiveness. The service stopped, numerous people from their seats replied, "we forgive you brother and sister." Two hundred people crowded around us. We embraced with them. We wept, they wept. A hand made bolo tie and a necklace were placed around our necks.

Our two years living in one room allowed us to identify with the Navajo people who live in circular one bedroom hogans. Our experience with forsaking all allowed us to identify with believers in the Pueblo Nations, who on occasions, have all property confiscated from them, and are expelled from living within the pueblo upon their profession of faith in Jesus Christ. One is not fit to minister to a group of people until he or she has been able to identify with them at least on some points.

We have been shocked at the amazing imbalance of finances between Native and non Native ministries within the USA. We have had the honor of serving two of the foremost Christian Native American leaders alive today. Both of these people are used internationally, around the world; one of them with key government leaders.

Until very recently, these ministers did not have a secretary or even an office

space of their own! They have no salaries. One of the two, finances her ministry from savings that she had when she was Grand Chief over two Native nations.

We realize that there is a void of knowledge in the United States concerning Native ministries because there are no funds for these ministries to go public through media channels. I guess, our little part is to inform and also to invite you, our beloved non Native brothers and sisters to Native American missions which are white unto the harvest, even as we speak. There is a mighty revival being birthed in the Navajo Nation at this moment.

God bless you all,

The Alvarez family

Boris Sorokovsky



The following is a remarkable excerpt from the testimony of Boris Sorokovsky. Boris' family was from the Ukraine, from the area around Kiev. He shares how God led the Christians in the Ukraine to flee their homes before the Communists began a severe persecution in 1933 that resulted in the deaths of six million Ukrainians. Those who heeded the voice of the Spirit were delivered.

This testimony is very appropriate for this hour in America, for the Spirit is once more speaking to His people, and those who hear and obey will be delivered, while those who do not listen, and do not obey will suffer those things that the Spirit is testifying are coming swiftly. What follows is written by Boris Sorokovsky.

EVENTS IN RUSSIA

The revolution took place in Russia in 1917 and Russia was in for 70 years of great darkness, of atheism and the authorities fighting against God. So the Lord, in His mercy and His providence, decided to send help to Russia and put up a standard there and bring the Light of the Gospel into Russia.

The Lord sent one man from the U.S.A., filled with the Holy Ghost. He sent him to Russia. He was a Russian man, and he came into Russia and started to preach the apostolic message; the message of salvation; the message of sanctification; the message of holiness; the message of dying unto sin; the message of repentance; and the message of also entering into the blessing of the Lord - into the outpouring of the Holy Ghost and the miracles of God's power which are able to be performed when God's people seek His Face.

Russian people were very simple people at that time. The majority of them were farmers. There was hardly any education. The message preached was believed and so a revival broke out in Russia. It spread like a wildfire through many villages, many towns.

Within the first seven or eight years from 1923, when God sent that man into Russia, revival took over the whole of the Ukraine and all of Russia; as far as the Ural mountains which are the mountains running north and south, dividing the Russian mainland from Siberia.

So the Lord was doing mighty things and He was establishing a church there; a living church which was going away from the orthodox church. The orthodox church, as you may be aware, worships idols and icons, crosses and all those types of things.

There were many people, thousands and thousands of people, coming to the Lord through the simple message and the power of the Holy Ghost like in the days of the apostles...

My mother was a living witness of the revival that took place. She was in it herself and she's still alive and she's still in Canada with us. She related many mighty things that the Lord did for His glory in Russia. Saving hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people in Russia.

The Lord would pick out men by the Holy Ghost. He would tell them to fast and pray. The Lord would tell them the name of a village, the name of a street, and the name of a person where they should go. The Lord knew who was prepared in that village. The brethren would go there and find the man in the house. He was ready and prepared by the Lord to receive the message. They would start singing. They would start preaching the message and before you knew it, the whole village gathered by the prompting of the Holy Ghost.

They were not eloquent people. They were not people with mighty speech. They were just simple farmers carrying the message and the power of the Holy Ghost, like the simple fishermen in the days of Christ. They were preaching the Gospel, not in their own might, but in the might of the Holy Ghost.

The whole village would gather and before you knew it, most of the village had come to the Lord. They'd be drinking vodka. They'd be worshipping idols and then they'd become repentant. Then they become empowered of the Holy Ghost and miracles would begin to take place all over.

My mother was relating to me that all the miracles that happened in the days of the apostles and throughout the Old Testament, were repeated in Russia. People saw mighty wonders of God including the resurrection of the dead. The Lord was proving Himself a Mighty God, a Living God, even today in this last generation, a generation of unbelievers, a generation of darkness. So this was a direct working of the Lord in Russia.

My mother was sharing that while the revival spread right through the land, the people were really blessed. At that time they did not have many Bibles, because there was no printing press to take care of the needs of the Word of the Lord in Russia. Some Bibles were brought in from the west, from France and from England. There were some Bibles printed in England in the 18th century - but those Bibles were very few and far between.

The Lord taught them by the Holy Ghost, by direct revelation, by visions, by angels, and by the word of prophecy. The Lord taught them without Bibles the principles of holy living, and separation from the world. The Lord taught them the commandment of washing the saints feet so that the Russian revival church practiced the washing of feet. The ladies covered their heads. The Lord taught them that it is the sign, the visible sign of headship in the house, and for the angels that sign must be.

Many other things the Lord taught specifically by the Holy Ghost because people didn't have Bibles. Then, of course, when the brethren had the opportunity to check with a Bible, it was right in the Word. The work of the Holy Spirit was one because the Word and the Spirit is one and it cannot work otherwise. If anybody claims revelation, but it is not there in the Word of God; if they are contrary to it, then we should check and beware...

About 1928, the Lord had started to speak throughout all those home groups

throughout Russia about the things to come in the future. The Lord said by the Holy Ghost, "My children there will be a great starvation coming to this land. And after that there will be a great bloodshed and much suffering in this country. My children, whosoever will believe my voice and obey Me, I'll lead you out into another country and I want to deliver you and save you from the great sufferings which are coming upon this land."

That was the voice of the Lord coming independently throughout the whole Russian area. Many, many people have heard the same message about the days to come. That message came through and of course at that time people were still living very freely, even though it was during communist regime.

It took communists about 16 years to get in power and in strength. From 1917 to about 1933, they left the people very untouched and there was freedom and relative freedom of movement and preaching of the Gospel. There was not much persecution at that time. They really clamped down from '33 and on. Then it was a ruthless time of persecution and trouble for Russia. Before that time there was relative freedom for the Gospel there. People lived very freely. They had their own houses. They had their own cattle. Mostly they were farmers so they had their own farms. They were quite well off. But there was a cost!

The Lord was speaking that He wanted to deliver them from future suffering. So the Lord saved, set a condition, "whosoever believeth My voice and obeys Me, I'll lead them out."

It's not enough to be saved. It's not enough to be, empowered by the Holy Ghost. It's not enough to have miracles. That's all nice and well and it's in the Scriptures and it must be part of the church's life. Yes! It's for the New Testament believers. There will come a time when people have to pay the cost of obedience. Forsaking all for the sake of fulfilling the Lord's will and leave whatever, and go wherever the Lord will lead.

Out of those thousands and thousands of Christians who were used by God in Russia to proclaim the Gospel and to spread the message of the Living God, just a few hundred believed.

The Lord said to them, "My children pray and seek my face and I'll direct you."

Eventually around 1930, probably by 1931, the Lord's message came, "My

people, time to move out." First of all the Lord will always speak in advance. As you read the Word of God, just like in the Old Testament, you read it in New that the Lord will always warn His people in advance. He will tell them of the things to come, because Christ promised...

Around 1931, there was a call of God, "My people, get ready to move out." There were only a few hundred people who were praying and seeking the Lord. "Lord, when do you want us to lead out." "Lord where do you want us to go?" They were praying and fasting because when the Lord warns you there is time to seek the Lord's face. If He warns you of future things to come, of any danger, then that's the time to really fast and pray and seek the will of the Lord for His further instruction.

So they were praying and the Lord said, "My children now this is the next city where you need to go." Being farmers in Russia with horse and buggies, there were no cars or trucks at that time. Russia, even now, is still very backward in way of machinery on the farms.

Anyhow, at that time it was just horse and buggies and there was one central railroad through Russia. The Lord spoke to these farmers who had never traveled more than a hundred kilometers in their lifetime, only to next village, on horse and buggy.

To these farmers the Lord said that He will move them out into another country. That was in central Ukraine, in the area of Kiev, and a little bit south. The Lord told some groups from that area, who were praying and fasting, to move to the next city south. When they came to that city, the Lord told them to move on to another city. He would give the name of the city. He was moving them from city to city, telling them names and addresses like in the days of old. We read that in Old Testament, and we read that in New.

How did the Lord direct those three men to look for Peter? How did they know where to go? They were told the location. They were told the name of a person, where to look for him, and they came right to that house. How did they know? Only by God's direct intervention and by God's direct revelation.

That's the kind of God we believe and that's the kind of God that was working in Russia and in China and He's still alive and well in Canada and America. If anybody is willing to believe the Word of God and have that Living faith because Christ said, "Have faith in God" (Mark 11:22). The Russian Bible says

"Have faith of God..."

Anyhow, the people were moving from town to town, by direct instructions from the Lord, telling them where they should go. Like in the days of old, they knew the place to go. Eventually they came to the border of China and there was a test.

If you will remember, in the days of Israel as they were being led out from Egypt, the Lord told them when to start out and move. The Lord told them where to stop. They camped and stayed until the Lord told them to move.

So then a time came for this group of about two or three hundred families who were moving south. They came to the border of Russia and China. There was a stopping place by the border of Russia and China and the people were praying all the time.

Every day they were in prayer and saying, "Lord, what's next?" "Lord what do we have to do now?"

And the Lord said, "My children, just wait and be patient and I'll tell you when to move."

In the meantime they had to feed their children. They had left their cattle. They had left their horses. They had left their land. Everything was left behind.

This was a small group from the whole of Russia; those who decided to pay the price of obedience and leave everything behind. Now wasn't this required of the apostles? Leave everything and follow me." Compare Luke 14:33.

Now is that not the price that Christ requires of Christians even today? If anyone will not forsake of all what he has, he is not worthy to be my disciple." Luke 14:33 Wouldn't that commandment apply to us all even in this modern generation of the twentieth century?

Well, they left everything, and here they had to feed children and these Russian families were with many children. So what did they have to do?

They went searching for work here and there. They went into the orchards. They dug channels for irrigation and different things. Doing anything possible and everything trying to get a piece of bread.

There was a problem of accommodation. There has always been a problem of accommodation in Russia, even now. They had to live someplace. So what did they do? They went a little outside the town and dug little caves into the sides of the mountain. The whole group lived in those caves for quite a length of time, praying and seeking the face of the Lord. "Lord what is next?" That was their dwelling place.

I wonder how many bedrooms they had? Did they have a flushing toilet? - I'm not sure, I didn't ask my mother! Now, did they have running water in the caves when they dug them? Did they have a separate bed and privacy and a locked door? I'm not sure what they had there, but each family lived in a cave, in a hole in the mountain. But praise God, that was a group which was willing to follow the Lord at any cost.

Early in the morning, 5 o'clock in the morning, one brother would come and he'd start to sing a psalm. The Russian people sing lots of psalms. They have been put to a tune. He started out with his big voice to sing a song, a psalm, and then everybody woke up, washed their faces and came out. They start worshiping the Lord right there on the grass. Right in front of their own caves and praising God and ascending their prayers to the Lord and seeking for His guidance, for His direction and for His protection.

Before long, the murmuring started in the camp. Following the Lord is not all carpets and roses. If we read the Bible sincerely, check how the men of old lived. Take a look at how the prophets Elijah, Isaiah, Micah, lived. What luxury did they have? Did they live a luxurious life? Did they live a comfortable life? Did they live a rich life? Consider how many bedrooms Elijah had for his own accommodation, or any of the prophets of old? What about the apostles?

These people were seeking the face of the Lord but still the murmurings started in the camp. They said, "We left our cattle, and we left our milk cows there. There's no milk for children here. Lord what do we do?"

And the people started to complain and murmur. Wives started to complain to their husbands. "Now what? What is this? We are stuck here. There is no going ahead. We don't hear any more instructions from God and Lord told us He would deliver us into a new country. Here we are, still in Russia and we are in such poverty Lord."

People started to complain and then quite a few of them decided to go back to

their lands. It was 1931, 1932. Everything was peaceful, there was plenty, and so they said, "we will go back. This must not have been of the Lord." Even though the Lord had moved them supernaturally from city to city. They never had maps to move. There were no geographical maps in those days! So how would they have known what city to go to next, but they were brought to the border of another country! They knew it was of the Lord.

Another uprising started and they began to murmur and complain and quite a big group decided to go back to their cattle, to their farming, their milk cows, the warm houses, and to a degree of comfort, even though their houses couldn't compare to America or Canada today. But still, it was relatively comfortable.

So they were longing, in a sense, after the Egyptian days, like in days of Israelites. Did they not say, "let's get rid of Moses, let us put ourselves in new leaders, and let's go back to Egypt. We had things there differently, we had onion, we had garlic there, we had good things there and now here we will die in the wilderness." Numbers 14:1-4 Paraphrased.

Isn't that the same spirit of unbelief, and the same spirit of murmuring that can be among people of God today? That was the case here.

Following the Lord and His direction and His guidance is not always carpet and roses.

Then during one of the prayers the Lord said, "My children, just be patient and humble yourselves and pray. I'm going to lead you to another country, and I'm going to save you from great trouble and great suffering. Just trust me. But if anybody returns, their children will be taken away from them, and their husbands will go to Siberia," The Lord said that right there on the border of China. "Also some of the mothers will eat the flesh of their babies if you return."

In spite of that warning the majority returned. There were only about forty families left by the border; faithful to stay, to pray and fast and trust the Lord. Of course they were not starving. Yes! They had a piece of bread, but it was not very comfortable to live in the cave. It wasn't very comfortable to depend from day to day upon the Lord, because they had no secure jobs like you have. So, there was no security at all. The only security was in the Lord. They decided to trust, but the rest returned to Russia.

Later on, about a year and half (two years) 1933 came with a big crush on Russia. It was the year of the taking away of old properties, confiscating all belongings, houses, land, horse-carts, horses. Everything went to the government. The food was taken away from the farmers in order to force them onto the collective farms, in order to bring them into the collective government farms. Those who did not want to go, died by way of starvation. Their families did as well. The husbands were taken to Siberia as enemies of the people. So in 1933, 6 million Ukrainians alone died by artificial starvation. Among them were quite a few Christians.

The Word of the Lord was fulfilled and came to pass right to the dot. All those Christian brethren who returned in 1933 were taken to Siberia like God said. Their children were taken away from them and went to the government schools.

When the starvation was happening, some relatives who came to China later on, told them that some of the mothers, being believers, ate the flesh of their babies in the Ukraine because of their disobedience.

So they may say, "How can a God of grace be such a cruel God?" It has nothing to do with cruelty of God. It was sheer disobedience. Just read about the Israelites in Bible. Now, were they not commanded to obey the Lord? Were they not commanded to follow the Lord's commandments and be a holy nation; an obedient nation? But the Lord said, "If you will not, then my blessing will be taken away from you". Don't we read in the Bible that the Israelite mothers, the people of the God, the holy nation, the separate people which God elected unto Himself, ate their children? Yes! They ate them. That was nothing to do with God intending or wanting them to eat their Babies. No! It was the spirit of unbelief. It was the work of the enemy which troubled the people of God. They were not watching and praying enough to stand in the faith and obediently trust in the Lord.

All that came to pass. There was great trouble and many thousands and thousands of brethren went to Siberia. There was great, great trouble from 1933 on in Russia.

In the meantime, a couple of months after the other group went back to Russia, the little group that was left by the border heard the voice of the Lord say, "My children, get ready to move into another country."

So when they were fasting and praying, the Lord divided those forty families into four groups. He named the heads of the families. He said, "My son, you and you and you." The Lord, by the Holy Spirit, named the heads of the families that He divided into groups. "You will be leaving on such and such day at midnight. I'll lead you out into another country."

And so, the Lord, in His divine providence, took them across the border into China. It was only a miracle of God. Only He could lead them across, because they had never traveled that far in their lifetime. They never had guides because they could not reveal their intent. At that time there was already much surveillance in the villages, so they were being watched.

They said, "Lord, we have the government here too in this village where we live; in this city. They're watching us. How can we move, Lord?" And Lord said, "My children, don't worry. I'll lead you out." The Lord told them to leave at midnight.

They were praying from evening right to midnight. When midnight came, they were in prayer seeking the Lord saying, "If you told us, help us, and lead us out." My mother related this to me. For that particular group, at midnight, the Lord raised a great storm. It was such a great storm. There was a very big wind with a big commotion and noise. Even the dogs on the streets didn't bark. Everybody went into hiding. It was a big storm.

Then the Lord said, "My children, it's time to move out." They left in the darkness of the night; at midnight. There was no KGB watching the streets or walking in surveillance. There was nobody on the streets. The streets were empty.

They left from the outskirts of that town, and they went quietly into the darkness. The Lord was leading them through the night. Because it was very close to the border, they soon came to the border. The Lord led them through by the wild paths in the bush.

The Lord was telling them to turn right, turn left, but they didn't know where to go, except that the Lord supernaturally led them. Turning them left and turning them right, group by group, they all went into China.

Yes! But also in spite of God working; in spite of God's miracles; in spite of the Presence of the Lord, there was always an element of man's flesh entering in,

trying to disobey and do its own will.

Other groups went through safely without a coincidence. My mother related this about one group. They were being led by the Lord. He was instructing them and the moon was shining, but it was still quite dark. The path they were on was quite wide, and worn. They were on the passage that the Lord had directed them to. All of a sudden the Lord said them, "Turn to the right my children". This was just a little path going into the bush to the right, so they stopped there. A couple of the brethren said, "Well, why should we go to the right? This is a very big path, and it's very easy to walk for our children. We have children. We have our kettles here with water. If we go through the bush we'll be scratching ourselves and we will be doing this and that. It'll be very hard to walk for us and mothers with their children." And so they started reasoning. They said, "No, let's go straight." After that, of course, there was no more voice of the Lord. So they went straight. Do you think they disobeyed? They just walked straight!

Anyway, they were the ones that were to lead. Not very long after this they came into a wet area and they came into a very big swamp. Those two brethren who had taken over the leadership, and had rejected the leadership of the Lord, the divine leadership of the Lord, happened to fall into the swamp. As they started sinking in the mud, they cried, "Lord help us." People had to take off their shirts and quickly make a rope and throw it to them so that they could save them from certain death. That's what it means to disobey the Lord; when you want to do things your own way, and not the Lord's way.

When they came to the shore, they were all soaking wet. The people started to weep and cry bitterly. "Lord forgive us. We disobeyed Your voice, Lord. We wanted to go on the easier path. Lord forgive us, Lord." They were repenting and praying for a couple of hours and there was no voice of God. Eventually, as they were really broken down and really crying before the Lord, the Lord spoke to them in a very stern rebuke.

He told them, "Never, never disobey the commandments of the Lord when He wants to lead you to safety." So the Lord forgave them and the Lord told them to go back to the point that they had to turn. This time they had to turn left. When they turned left at that little, wild path, it led around that big swamp and they went all around that big area. They went around in a circle, but they were all on a dry ground. When they came to the other side, there were animals coming to drink at that swamp.

Once again they were on a big road. The Lord knew to lead them around the swamp, but the people wanted to go straight. So that's just an instance of how it is with the Lord when people want to disobey His word.

Finally they came to China, and of course there were many miracles on the way as they were being led. I will just relate a few of them and proceed on.

Each group was led on a different path and in different ways. One group, as it crossed into China, came into a little wilderness area which was completely desolate with just sand and nothing else. It was a literal wilderness with sand and no growth and no vegetation. They came to that wilderness and they had to walk through.

The Lord said, "Just walk through. Go straight." So they were walking with children on foot. The children were crying. The heat of the sun was burning, and the water in their kettles ran out. They were walking for quite a long time. They were crying, "Lord, we are exhausted. We are thirsty, Lord. Our children are crying. Lord, what we are to do?" The brethren called the group to prayer. They knelt down as the Lord had taught them to.

Our people were taught to pray kneeling down or standing. Never sitting up or lying down. That is to show that God is a Mighty God, King of kings. He's worthy of us bowing down.

They bowed down before the Lord and they started to cry, "Lord, what do we do, Lord? We'll die in this wilderness, Lord, if You do not help us." Then the Lord told them, through the Holy Ghost, "My children, go so many steps to the right and dig."

So they obeyed the Lord. The brethren obeyed the Lord. They went to the right as Lord directed, so many steps, and they started digging. They didn't hardly dig any, about a foot or so as my mother related, and the water came gushing out. They were praising the Lord and they were drinking and then they laid back on the sand, and they drank again. Everybody quenched their thirst. They filled their teapots, and they were glorifying and praising the Lord's Name, that He is even able to supply water in the wilderness where there was no water. So, only the Lord knew where the water was.

So praise be to His name because the Living God, the God of the prophets of the days of old, the God of the apostles is the same still Living God today, in

this twentieth century.

All those groups came safely into China and the Lord led them into the same little town where they started to gather again. They were praising God there and then slowly they established themselves.

The land was very rich in China. They came into a mountain area which was an isolated area. There wasn't much population there, but it had very rich soil, so they started to farm and the Lord blessed them mightily.

Quite soon they built very simple houses - mostly mud houses with dirt floor, earthen walls and with some poles for the roof, covered with straw. These were very simple dwellings. But in those dwellings the people gathered for prayers daily. They were mighty prayers. Our people believed in prayers. Prayer was the secret of the apostolic success. As I read in my old fashioned Russian Bible the apostles were in the Word and prayer daily...

My wife and I were born in China. We grew up there. When the time came that I came to the Lord in China I was at those prayer meetings. Those were mighty prayers when the young people would gather with older brethren, with grandmothers and grandfathers in a room, in a simple hut. Heaven came down and the Holy Spirit came down and talked to the young people, to rebuke them, comfort them, and reveal secrets of the heart. The Lord would bless and miracles would take place in those prayer times, because God loves the praises of His people and their prayers.

We experienced revival in China because the Lord started to send this simple group of forty families. He started to send them into different villages. There were quite a few Slavic villages, because many Russians and Ukrainians had run away from Russia just before the revolution and the big wars of 1914 and 1915...

There were many other movements of the Lord. He moved His people from Russia, but I'll just share one, just one incidence and we'll go on to the Word of God and so we can conclude and share a message.

There was one brother who was living across the Ural mountains, probably about 1500 kilometers away from Kiev, which is central Ukraine. His village was towards the east. He went ministering to the people there in his village. This man was a man of prayer. The Lord was with him and the Lord was

teaching him.

The time was coming that there would be a great crush coming on Russia with confiscation, killing and shooting, and finally, exile in Siberia. There were different rumors that there'll eventually be a control on Russia.

So this brother was praying to the Lord, "You know what these people are talking about here. There are rumors that we'll be persecuted and killed in Russia. So Lord, help us, and protect us. Lord save us." On one of the nights while he was praying, the Lord said to him, (his name was Ivan which means John in English) "My son Ivan, I'll lead you into the country of China." In our language China is Kitai. And the Lord said to him, "Get ready for the journey." Then the Lord gave him a night to leave. "On such and such a night at dusk, you are going to leave this village." And Lord told him what to do.

He was a quite well off brother, because he had eight cows and two pure-breed horses. To have eight cows in Russia, in those days, made quite a good farm, because you would have chickens and different things. That was quite a good farming operation.

The Lord said, "Leave your house. Leave your cattle. Leave your pure-breed horses. Leave everything. Put your milk cow onto the horse cart. Harness her and put her onto the horse cart. Take a couple of bags of millet grain and some other food and leave this village at dusk, in the darkness. Leave on such and such a road." The Lord told him to take a side road out of the village, and the Lord gave him the name of the next village where he should go.

So this brother was puzzled, as he had good transportation and his horses were good. But because he was a man of prayer and man of obedience, he decided to obey the Lord. And so, when the night came, he harnessed his cow. The Lord even told him the name of the cow - such and such name of the cow. He harnessed his cow to the horse-cart. He put the lights in the house. He fed his cattle. Fed his horses. Then he put his children and wife on the horse-cart and was quietly leaving the village.

As they were passing through the village, the people of the village saw someone traveling at dusk. They were saying, "Oh no! We have another gypsy coming to our village." Gypsies were traveling through all of Russia. They were stealing. They were doing witchcraft. They were doing all kinds of things, and begging. That's how they lived in Russia. They never worked in Russia. There

were many, many gypsies traveling through Russia for many centuries. So the people thought that gypsies were traveling on the cow. It was a common sight that they traveled on the cow.

Now why was this? Why did the Lord do this? Because at that time there was very strict control. People could not move in and out of the villages because Russia was already gathering control on all the people. What did they do in Russia; this lowly prepared population? Each neighbor was told to spy on his next door neighbor and report what that neighbor says, what that neighbor does and where that neighbor goes. So each neighbor spies on the other and reports to the government, to the KGB, without knowing that the next door neighbor was also spying on them! They did that in secrecy and were offered some reward.

People were doing that so movement was checked very closely. So if this brother would have gone on horses, it would have been of immediate notice that he was leaving the village. Nobody was allowed to move from town or from village without permission from the authorities.

We experienced that same thing in China in the communist game. You had to have four stamps on a piece of paper, the reasons for where you go and for how long you go, before you can leave town, for only 10 kilometers out, sometimes. It was the same type of control in China that we experienced, so we know what we are talking about. It was the same condition in Russia.

So then, this brother left quietly. He was taken for a gypsy. The Lord sent him on a side road. Then what happened at midnight on the same night?

Right after midnight the KGB came to take this brother to Siberia because he was proclaimed as an enemy of the people. He was a rich man supposedly, and so his property would have been confiscated that night, and he would have been taken to Siberia and gotten rid of, because they killed many people and some they needed for labor. These they took to Siberia.

Many rich people were just simply shot - taken outside of the village and shot with a machine gun or whatever. They killed many millions of people in Russia, from 1933 on.

So anyhow, this brother left, and when they came to pick him up, there was no man and no family. Just disappeared! They didn't know what to do. Now what

happened? The horses were there. Everything was there. Lights on in the house, but no man, and no family. They were amazed! So they waited for morning. They saw tracks leaving the gate and they saw the direction in which he left. They harnessed his horses and they made a big chase along that main road. Of course they were chasing for a long time, but with no result, because the Lord had sent him on a side road.

That man was traveling to the village which the Lord sent him to. The Lord promised that man that He will take him to Kitai, which is China. But of course he hardly had any education. He had no beautiful road maps like people here have. He had no signs of so many kilometers to such and such a town. He had nothing! So he had to totally depend upon the Lord. All he knew was the name of the next village. He was praying all the time. They prayed at night as it was summer time.

They were traveling on the cow. They pastured the cow, and they milked the cow. They used the milk to make porridge from the millet and feed the children. They praised God. If they traveled on horses, they couldn't have milked horses. But they milked the cow.

So the Lord uses the simple, the uneducated, the most unwise of this world to confound the wise and the prudent. The Lord put the KGB to shame by simply letting this man out to security and safety in China on the cow.

When he came to that next village, which wasn't very far, he prayed with his family. "Lord, Lord is this Kitai?" The Lord says, "My son Ivan, this is not Kitai yet. I'll take you to Kitai"

The Lord tells him the next village, and he just moved on. The Lord tells him the next address and so on. Then he has to ask people, "Where is it that village? Where is the road?" He has no map. Russia had no maps in those days, so he would ask people, "Where is that village?" and they'd point him to the road and so he happened to be moving south without knowing where he went.

Like Abraham, did he know the address? Did Abraham know where he went? My Bible says Abraham left his country and he didn't know where he went.

So, this brother was just traveling on and before he knew it, it was the end of summer. It took him all summer to travel from the middle of Russia to the

border of China. And here is a disappointment.

He came close to the border, by the direction of the Lord. The Russian border, at that time, was already heavily guarded by German shepherd dogs and constant checking of the guard on horses. So it was already the iron curtain at that time. It was really controlled because the KGB did not want their people to leave. It was very strictly checked.

When they saw this strange sight, a man with a family traveling in direction of China, naturally it was a very suspicious sight. So they caught him. They confiscated his cow. They took his cart away and they made him a prisoner.

They caught some other people also who were appearing very suspicious to them. They made them cut dry grass along the border for hay for their horses. So this brother was weeping at prayer at night. "Lord what is this? You told me you will lead me to safety Lord. You'll lead me to Kitai and here I am. I lost my house, Lord. I lost everything there. I left as you told me, Lord. Here now I lost my cow, Lord. I lost my horse-cart. I have nothing left Lord! What is going on?"

And Lord was comforting him saying, "My son, cheer up and don't worry, I'll take you yet to Kitai. Just trust me. I'll take you to Kitai yet."

He was a prisoner! So they put this family and the families right by the border in the tents as a temporary dwelling place and the men were made to work with scythes, cutting the dry hay. He was working and he was praying. His personal relative told me this story in details. I forgot most of it.

Then one day, all of a sudden, fire breaks out on the grass site. A big fire broke out and then the wind was starting to blow. The dry hay started to burn very quickly. It moved towards the tents but it was quite a little distance yet. The border guards started to panic and they started to run for their life giving different orders and stuff.

The people dropped their scythes and they ran to their tents for their families. They wanted to run for safety and the wind was increasing with force. It was moving very fast on them and the fire was coming at them. The grass was burning and everybody started to run for their life with their children.

So this brother grabbed his wife and children and they were running away

from the fire. As they were running they were crying, "Lord, what is this?" They just ran and ran. Eventually they were exhausted. They ran for a long time for safety. When they had run far enough away from the fire, they came to safety. They were totally exhausted and lost their strength to run.

They fell down on the grass and they started to weep and this man was on his knees and going, "Lord, here is my family running and we, Lord, are in such a desperate need Lord. What is this Lord? What is this happening to me? Lord, where am I?" And Lord said to him, "My son, this is Kitai!" He came to China. So the Lord deported him from prison into China by a fire.

This man and his wife started to praise the Lord. They rejoiced and thanked the Lord and the Lord then told them where to go. So they went and they found that group which had already arrived. Those four groups that came to the very same town. They joined it and praised the Lord for His guidance and protection.

So these simple people who believed and trusted the Lord and His leadership never saw the starvation in the Ukraine. They never saw the persecution and the trials. They never saw their children being taken away. They never saw Siberia and all those things which happened to Russia.

It was a drastic, terrible time in Russia from 1933 on. Many millions of people died. The Lord saved them from the great war and the second world war which took twenty million people from Russia and the Ukraine. That's a big number. Six million died in the Ukraine from starvation in 1933.

Whatever the Lord promised them, everything came to pass. He delivered them from their country, from starvation and from those troubles which the Lord promised, even from the war.

[End Excerpt]

The complete testimony of Boris Sorokovsky can be found at the following link:

<http://www.heart4god.ws/id474.htm>

Rees Howells



Rees Howells in Later Years

The following testimony comes from the book *Rees Howells - Intercessor*, by Norman Grubb. I value the testimony of this book greatly, for it brings out the understanding that the power of the Holy Spirit is released when He finds a man or woman who will surrender everything to God. This, of course, was the testimony of Christ, but it is rarely taught in the church today.

Luke 14:33

So then, any of you who does not forsake (renounce, surrender claim to, give up, say good-bye to) all that he has cannot be My disciple.
[Amplified Bible]

Yahshua then proceeds to declare that those who have not given themselves and all they possess to Him have become as salt that has lost its savor. Such salt is good for nothing, and the implication is that so too are those who confess His name but do not accept the full cost of discipleship.

Early in his Christian walk the Lord sent Rees Howells to a small town that was full of drunkards and had no church or witness for Christ. He made it plain to Rees how He would reach out to these people and show them the life of Christ by his example. Following is an excerpt from the book.

A Village Untouched by the Revival

The Spirit made it plain to Mr. Howells that he was to “live out the Bible” to

the people. As their clothes were different from his, he was to dress more plainly so as to attract no attention to himself...

“If you are the first sufferer, don’t have a thing these people can’t have,” the Lord said to him. Nearly everyone in the village was in need, and the Spirit reminded him of the Sermon on the Mount: “Give to him that asketh thee.” “Whoever is in need has a claim on you,” He said. “You have given Me all you have, and I tell you that it is all for the people, and they have as much right to it as you have.”

The greatest break came when the Lord laid hold of the ringleader among the drunkards. For a long time Mr. Howells prayed for him and asked for a chance to get at him. This man could see the love of God expressed toward others, but he had not yet experienced it himself. The opportunity came.

There was some trouble outside the village. This man was involved and it was to be a court case. The Lord then said to Rees Howells, “Now is your chance. Offer to settle the case for him.” So he called at the man’s home and asked him, “Would you be relieved if this case could be settled out of court? If the other people are willing to accept compensation, would you like me to pay it for you?”

The man was speechless. “He was every inch a man,” observed Mr. Howells. “Mere words could never reach him, but when he saw the love of God like that, he was touched on a vital spot and broke down. He confessed that he had been to blame, and started to come to the meetings, and his love for one could be felt...”

Mr. Howells was earning his weekly wage at the colliery and also had some other savings, but at this rate he saw that his money would soon be finished. It was then that the Spirit showed him both a commandment and a promise. To the rich young man the Savior had given a command, “Sell all that thou hast and distribute unto the poor... and come, follow Me.” And to those who did so follow He had promised, “There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or lands, for my sake and the gospel’s, but that he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time.”

Rees saw that if he gave one pound, the Savior said he was to get one hundred. Could this be true? If it was, he would surely look forward to the day when he would come to his extremity. But was it true? That was what captured his

imagination - not the fact of being without money, but the possibility of it being replaced through the promises. Could that exchange really take place and he get an hundredfold?

The day came when he reached his last pound. The Holy Spirit then told him, "Cut the ropes and take the promises." It was a direct call to step out on God. But it is always easier to talk of such things than to actually do them. It had been much easier to give 100 pounds out of plenty than to part with this last 1 pound and come to the end of his savings - for the first time in fifteen years.

"Oh, how the devil pitied me and brought such arguments!" he said. "He told me it would be a step in the dark and that if there was a convention or anything of that kind, I wouldn't be able to go unless I had 1 pound laid by. But the Holy Ghost showed me that if God wanted me to go anywhere, He would surely provide the means. The danger was on the other side: for if a person has money, he can go without consulting God, like Jonah, who could afford to pay his passage to run away from Him! The fact is, we can never really be bondservants until God does control our means."

So Rees took the plunge and learned the blessed truth that his extremity was God's opportunity. His eyes were opened to the fact that he had a claim on God for what he could not supply himself. Just as surely as the Spirit had told him that the people of the village had a claim on his money to meet their needs, so now he saw that he had a claim on God's resources to meet his.

[Joseph's note: People of God, do you see the truth of what is stated here? If we willingly follow the Lord and lay all we have at God's disposal, He will also lay all He has at our disposal. If He can use us to meet the needs of others around us, then He too will be available to meet all our needs. Truly those who sow sparingly will reap sparingly, but those who give all to the Father to be used according to His will, these will find that all the resources of heaven are opened unto them.

For the past ten years I have lived by this principle. If God should show me that I was to give my money to another, then I would do so. Even if I had been saving the money for a future bill, and it would leave me short to give it away, I have found that it is the will of the Father that I give. In turn, when my need is at hand, He will be the guarantor of it.

Truly there is a blessedness in operating from the Father's wallet. His

resources are always sufficient. But see how the church has distorted things in this hour. They seek to lay claim to God's abundance, but they would spend according to their own soul. One must be fully submitted to the leadership of the Spirit of Christ, then whenever we ask anything "according to His will" we will have our petition.]

The first week his need was for 2 pounds, and he was able to tell the Lord in his prayer that he would not have come to Him if he had it himself.

"I was only asking the Lord to do what I would have done if I had the money; and it was for His work. It came, and what joy I had in finding that I had finished with the limited resources of man and had begun on the unlimited resources of God! The promises of God had replaced money in the bank and became equal to current coin to me. I no longer had to carry my treasure with me wherever I went because I knew where the Treasury was, and how to reach it!"

Break...

Called Out From Wage Earning

It is hard to realize that throughout these three years of intense conflict and many triumphs of the Spirit, Rees Howells was working daily at one of the hardest jobs a man can do - down the mine, cutting coal. His was no sheltered, monastic life, but a walk of the Spirit right in the world, though never of it...

But now there came a further call, which was to loosen him yet more from his old moorings. Rees was out on his favorite Black Mountain, where the silent spaces were so often the gate of heaven to him, and the Lord spoke to him. "For seven hours a day you are earning two shillings an hour," He said, "but you need not work for an earthly master any longer. Would you like to come out and give those seven hours a day to work for Me?"

Rees was standing on a small wooden bridge across a little stream, and the Lord asked him, "Will you give your word to Me that you won't look to another person to keep you? If so, put up your hand and repeat, 'I shall not take from a thread to a shoe latchet from any person, unless the Lord tells me.'"

Just as Abraham made that stand when he refused the spoils of war that were justly his, lest men should say his prosperity came from natural sources, so

God was asking His servant to take the same stand for the rest of His life. On that bridge he raised his hand and made a solemn vow, adding, "I do believe You are able to keep me better than that mining company."

It was no mean (small) stand of faith, because Mr. Howells had long since ceased that active ministry in the mission and among fellow Christians which might have led people to give to him...

The Lord then gave him a month's holiday, which he could spend in worshipping the Beloved of his heart. Each day was spent on the mountain where he never saw the face of man. They were not days of intercession or carrying burdens, but of living fellowship, lost in the presence of God. He often spoke of that month as one of the most precious of his life.

He started the month with one penny, and the Lord did not add anything to it; so as he climbed the mountain the first few days, the devil kept saying each morning, "You haven't had an answer to prayer yet." Then one morning, when he was passing through the iron gate, where he left houses and fields behind, the Lord said, "The moment you shut this gate behind you, don't allow the devil to speak to you again. You will not need a penny until the day you pay your mother." (The Lord had directed Rees to pay his mother for the meals he was eating.)

"So I gave the devil one hit," Rees said, "and told him that I wasn't going to pray a single prayer for money until the end of the month. I never doubted that the people I was working for would pay me on Saturdays, so why should I doubt God? I didn't pray a single prayer again, but I lived to worship my heavenly Bridegroom."

On the last day of the month, about midday, the Lord told him to descend the mountain and go home; and as soon as he arrived, his father came in for lunch. The final test on his new call to a life of faith had come. "The manager says he has kept your job open, and you can take it again if you want to," his father informed him.

"What a foolish man! Why did he do that?" Rees exclaimed. "But if you don't mean to earn a living again," continued his father, "who is going to keep you?" "Don't you agree that if I am working for God, He can keep me as that last earthly master kept me?" asked Rees.

“But can you name one other person who lives this life?” his father asked. “George Muller,” Rees answered. “But he is dead. Must you call the dead back to help you?” was the quick reply. “Well,” Rees answered, “Don’t you believe the words of the Savior, ‘Take neither purse nor scrip... the laborer is worthy of his hire?’” That quotation seemed to convince his father, who merely added, “I was only bringing you that message.”

While he was speaking, the postman arrived with a letter for Rees. It was from Mr. Gosset, offering him a position in the London City Mission, and saying that he would have a salary of 100 pounds a year. He added the words, “Those who preach the gospel should live of the gospel,” and underlined them. Rees could see his father’s countenance changing. He was plainly thinking, “How fortunate he is; everything turns out in his favor.” “You see that?” he said to Rees. “Those who preach the gospel should live of the gospel!” “Certainly,” Rees answered, “and those who preach faith should live by faith!” The victory was won, his father broke out laughing, and within half an hour the Lord sent the deliverance he needed. It was a good beginning to forty years of praying and abundantly proving the Lord’s prayer, “Give us this day our daily bread.”

Break...

Some time later Rees Howells was married and was directed to go to Africa as a missionary. Following is where the narrative picks up.

Standing in the Queue

About a week before they sailed, they received money from the mission to pay their expenses to London, but they needed some things for their outfitting, and once again the rule was applied - first need, first claim.

“There is always a tendency to keep money, so as to get out of God’s testings,” said Mr. Howells, “and we tried our best to do it this time! Anyway, we had to spend the money, and all the people of the place thought we were well supplied. So we were, up to that week, and we thought money would be sure to come the day before we were to leave for London; but the last post came and no money, and our train was leaving before the post the next morning...”

“We felt sure it would come on the station platform, but no, the time came for the train to leave. What were we to do? There was only one thing possible. We still had ten shillings, and we must go as far as we could with it; then our

extremity would be God's opportunity. We had to change trains at Llanelly Station, about twenty miles from our home, and wait there a couple hours; so without letting anyone know, we only booked as far as that."

"There were many people at our home station wishing us all the good things, but what we needed was money to go to London! Many also came as far as Llanelly, singing all the way. The thought that came to me was, 'I'd sing better if I had the money!'"

"We went out to breakfast with some friends at Llanelly, and then walked back to the station still not delivered; and now the time for the train had come. The Spirit spoke to me and said, 'If you had money, what would you do?' 'Take my place in the queue at the booking office,' I said. 'Well, are you not preaching that My promises are equal to current coin? You had better take your place in the queue.' So there was nothing I could do except obey."

"There were about a dozen people before me. There they were passing by the booking office one by one. The devil kept telling me, 'Now you only have a few people in front of you, and when your turn comes, you will have to walk through. You have preached about Moses with the Red Sea in front and the Egyptians behind, but now you are the one who is shut in.' 'Yes, shut in,' I answered, 'but like Moses, I'll be gloriously led out!'"

"When there were only two people before me, a man stepped out of the crowd and said, 'I'm sorry I can't wait any longer, but I must open my shop.' He said good-bye and put thirty shillings in my hand! It was most glorious, and only a foretaste of what the Lord would do in Africa, if we would obey. After I had the tickets, the people who came with us to the train began to give gifts to us, but the Lord had held them back until we had been tested. We were singing all the way to London!"

On their arrival, Mr. Head asked them to breakfast the next morning. He then told them he had 50 pounds for them, but he didn't post it. "Thank God you didn't," said Mr. Howells, adding to himself, "I wouldn't have been without the test in the queue for anything."

They had all their outfit except three things: a watch, a fountain pen, and a raincoat each. They had never mentioned these things to anyone, but at breakfast Mr. Head asked, "What kind of watches have you?" and told them that his son, Alfred, wanted to give them a watch each. He then asked, "Have

you prepared for the rainy seasons in Africa? Have you got good raincoats?" When they said they hadn't, he told them to go and get one each, and wrote down an address on a card, saying that they were to get them at his expense. After writing the address, he asked, "Have you seen this kind of fountain pen?" "No," they replied. "You must take one each with you," he said. The three things they had named to the Lord, he named to them!

Mr Head asked them to come to breakfast the following morning again and take prayers. He suggested that Mr. Howells should tell the servants a little of his experiences of faith. "You used to live a life of faith some time ago, didn't you?" he asked. "Yes, and quite recently too," answered Mr. Howells, and told them about standing in the queue. Mr. Head could hardly breathe, waiting to hear how they got out of it. "I have never heard anything like it," he exclaimed. But Mr. Howells told them he hadn't finished yet, and that what had happened at Corrie Lodge the previous day in that very room was better still, and he told them the story of the watches, raincoats, and fountain pens. "I prefer this to 1,000 pounds," said Mr. Head, "to know that the Lord can guide me like this in my giving."

So they left England July 10, 1915, after a glorious victory, knowing that the One who had called them into this life was able to deliver in all circumstances.

Note: There is much more that is excellent in the book *Rees Howells - Intercessor*, by Norman Grubb. I highly recommend it to all.

Bill Britton



Bill and Nadine Britton

Bill Britton was one of the first modern day pioneers of the faith whose writings I was blessed to encounter. Although I never met this brother, his teachings challenged me at a time when the Spirit of Christ was opening my eyes to discoveries in the word of God that are seldom taught upon in the churches.

I remember the first encounter I ever had with one of Bill Britton's writings. I was in a small Southern Baptist church in the 1980s when the pastor read a short writing of Bill's from the pulpit. The writing was called *The Harness of the Lord*. I was very moved by the vision that was described in the writing and its interpretation. It can be read online at the Heart4God website.

<http://www.heart4god.ws/id330.htm>

After hearing this, I began to encounter other teachings by this man, and later, when the Internet was widely available, I began to search out various teachings that he had posted. There have been a couple of his teachings that I have not found agreement with, but the majority of what I came across has tremendously blessed me. They are filled with spiritual insight, and Bill Britton's writings both challenged and inspired me, leading me to many new discoveries in my own spiritual walk. His writings are some of the few that I felt comfortable enough with to create a section of them on my own website:

<http://www.heart4god.ws/id108.htm>

About six years ago I found myself walking in a place that seemed very strange and unusual to most of my brothers and sisters in Christ. The Lord had led me out some years earlier from my place of employment as a computer professional, and I found myself ministering through writing. Many trials and tests came my way, as I was looking to the Father to supply all the needs of my family.

During a particularly difficult season of testing a brother in Christ sent me a copy of Bill Britton's autobiography which is titled *Prophet on Wheels*. I found encouragement to sustain me in the midst of my trials as I read the accounts of Bill Britton's own experiences. Our lives were very similar in some ways. We had both received a call from God to teach the saints of God truths that they rarely considered. Our audiences were often those "outside the camp" of mainstream denominationalism. Bill too was led to quit his job selling insurance while he still had young children, and was led to look to the Father for all the needs of his family. He too struggled, yet God sustained him.

The following account from *Prophet on Wheels* that encouraged me mightily.

After a year with the insurance company, Daddy (Bill Britton) had been promoted to State Trainer. He trained all the new agents that were hired in Kansas. He would teach the men about insurance and then take them with him to show them how to sell. The company decided to enlarge its territory into Oklahoma. Daddy was selected as the man to travel over the state and hire new agents. So along with the manager of the new Oklahoma District, we mover to Oklahoma.

At a fellowship meeting in Wichita, Brother C.L. Moore had prophesied to Daddy that God was changing his ministry, and named the ministry in which God was going to use him. This had been spoken over him just a few months previously by two other preachers, but it was still hard for Daddy to receive. However, he respected Brother Moore as a prophet, and opened his heart for this new work to come to pass. Oklahoma was a preparation time for this new ministry to begin to develop.

Daddy's job carried him all over the state during the week. It was a good job. He put ads in the newspapers and held interviews in the employment agency of the city he was working in that day. He was instructed to drive a nice car, stay in the best hotels, eat the finest meals in the best restaurants, leave large tips and give the company the appearance of prosperity. They would pay the

bill. He had a nice salary and an expense account.

It was during this time that God began to anoint him to write. He took his typewriter along, and in the afternoons and evenings in the hotel he would write about the truths God was revealing. "THE PATTERN SON" book came from the messages written during this time. The prophecy given to him in Memphis in 1950 was coming to pass.

We didn't like the big city, nor the public schools there. So we found a little house we could buy in Carney, a village about 50 miles northeast of Oklahoma City. It was a small, five room house with three acres of land. There was no water in the house and no bathroom. We had an "outhouse" in the back, and we carried water from a neighbor until we were able to have a well dug. Mother called it her "five rooms and a path..."

Mother and Daddy had decided that they wanted another baby. But there was one big problem. Daddy's job in Oklahoma had been completed, and they had promoted him to district manager of Southeast Kansas. He was driving to Kansas every Monday morning, and we didn't see him until Saturday. With Mother pregnant, the work and pressure at home was too much for her. God gave Daddy a choice... his radio and writing ministry, or his job. Daddy had earned the Bronze award, the Silver Award, and the Gold award for selling, and there was a good future with the company. But he resigned. We were now back to living by faith. The bills kept coming in, but there were no weekly checks to pay them. Daddy was getting a little exasperated with God, and with our situation.

It was right at this time when the bills were piling up that Daddy got a phone call from the Division office of the insurance company in Omaha. Al Davis, the Division Manager, said: "Bill, I'm going to make you a good offer, and I want you to think about it before you give me an answer. If you will come back with the company, I'll give you the job as State Manager of either Kansas or Nebraska, whichever you want. You can pick any city you want to live in, and I'll pay all of your moving expenses. Think about this, because this is a really good opportunity." And it was. It was a good company, and the job was one that men worked for many years to attain, provided that they were qualified. Daddy replied: "Mr. Davis, I'll have to pray about it, and then I'll let you know." Mr. Davis was a Catholic. He knew how to be a success in business, but he didn't know about praying whether or not to accept a job offer.

Daddy finally called a family counsel. He explained to all of us how this job would make it possible for Mother to have a nice home, plenty of money to spend, and bicycles and other toys for the children. But it would take all his time, and he would have to stop his ministry of preaching, writing, and radio. "Well, what do you say?" he asked. Becky pointed a finger toward the ceiling and said, "What does He say?" Daddy stammered around in embarrassment that he hadn't yet talked to God, that he wanted their opinion first. But it was obvious that we all knew Daddy couldn't quit the ministry at any price. So he wrote Mr. Davis a letter, saying that he could not take the job.

However, the finances were not coming in to meet the needs. Daddy would walk around on our three acres, look up at the stars in the clear Oklahoma sky and say: "Lord, I know you own the cattle on a thousand hills. I know you have treasures untold. I know you have millionaires who can hear Your voice and will give as you instruct them. I have no doubt as to your ability to meet our needs. But my question is: why aren't you? We lost our nice car, and it looks like we may lose our little home, and I want to know why...? He got no answer. One night in a meeting in the City, he was reading chapter three of Hebrews about Israel becoming embittered at God during the 40 years in the wilderness. God spoke: "Son, that is where you are. You are getting bitter against Me." "Oh no, Lord," Daddy protested, "I'm Your child, I wouldn't get bitter at You." "Oh yes, but you are" the Lord replied. "You are going through a wilderness just like Israel did. They knew I could do better than bread and water. They knew I could feed them with quail if I wanted to. They saw My power, and they knew I was able to take them into the Promised Land in a few days. But I gave them bread and water for forty years, and they became bitter. They could not understand My ways. You know that I can meet all your needs, but I am not doing it. And you are becoming bitter, just like Israel." Right there in his seat, Daddy made an altar. "Lord, if You forgive me, I promise I'll never complain again, regardless of my circumstances. If they take everything I own, I'll be no worse off than when You found me. I'll take my wife and children by the hand, and we'll just walk down that old country road singing Your praises."

There was forgiveness and deliverance. And from that hour the spirit of poverty was broken. God began to meet the needs. One day, with a house payment due and no food, Daddy just put the matter in God's hands and went squirrel hunting with the boys. When he got home Mother handed him a letter that had arrived that morning. It was from Stanley H. Frodsham,

and it had a check in it for \$150.00, a fortune at the time. The letter started off with the Scripture: "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour!" (Judges 6:12) What's this? He must have sent the check to the wrong man! There was Daddy's name on the check. And from Stanley Frodsham. Talk about a mighty man of God! It was a sign from God. As with Gideon, things began to happen.

Some time later, after God had led Bill Britton and his family to Springfield, Missouri, they had the following experience.

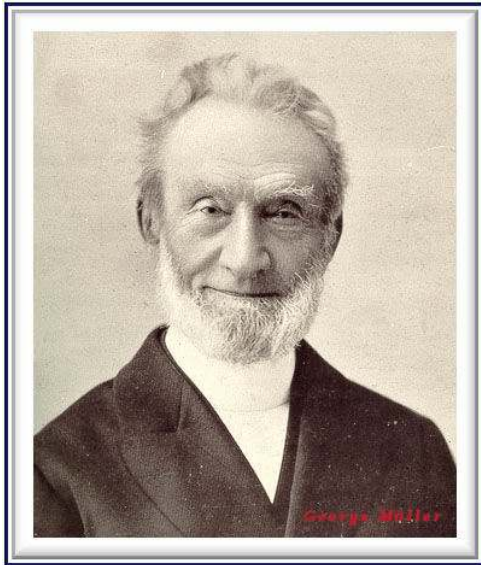
One of the ways God confirmed His presence was in providing for our needs by miracle after miracle. The Plymouth was a fascinating example. God had been providing furniture for the big house, but our old car would hardly run. It was an Oldsmobile, a large family car, but it had a bad motor. Many times it would not start, and sometimes Daddy would go to the post office and not be able to get it started to return home. He was in a travail of prayer, but was sure God would somehow meet the need. One night a visiting preacher talked Daddy into going to a used car lot to see a car. It was a 1956 Plymouth, and good enough to get around town to run errands. Without even looking at our old car, the dealer gave Daddy a price for a trade-in. Daddy agreed to buy it, and shook hands on the deal. So they came home to get the Oldsmobile and finalize the deal. But when they went back to the car dealer, he announced that he would have to have another \$25.00 more. As much as we needed another car, \$25 did not look like an obstacle at all. But Daddy heard God speaking to him: "This deal is not from Me. You shook hands on the sale, so I am giving you a way out. Since he has changed the deal, you are not obligated. Do not buy the car." So he came home without the Plymouth. He could not understand why God had said "No."

The next morning, just before lunch, Daddy had a phone call from California. It was Brother Bert Reed in Costa Mesa. He said, "Brother Bill, God told me sometime back that there was a car for you in Springfield. My brother-in-law has just arrived from Chicago with his wife. He is going to work for me, and I am trying to get him out of debt. He had two cars, and he left one of them in Springfield with his father. I have paid off what he owes on it, and I am sending the title to you. It's your car, so go out to the house and get it. His father is expecting you." We went to get the car... and guess what... it was a 1956 Plymouth, and better than the one he had almost bought the night before. Daddy advertised the Oldsmobile for sale, and a man came to see it. It was just what he was looking for to give his wife. Daddy warned him that

it had a bad motor. "Oh, that's okay," he said "I am a mechanic, and it won't cost me much to fix it up. It's just what I want." So we had a good car, plus \$150 from the sale of the Olds, instead of being in debt \$700 for the Plymouth. God is gracious, and it is always good to listen to His still, small voice. His way is best.

There are many more accounts of trials and triumphs recorded in the book on Bill Britton's life.

George Mueller



The name George Muller is familiar to many Christians who have heard of his work in providing for thousands of orphans in England during the 1800s. His was a remarkable life. He was born in Prussia in 1805, what would now be called Germany. The Prussian people were known for certain characteristics that some have attributed to the region's success and influence.

Many people believe that some specific "Prussian virtues" were part of the reasons for the rise of their country, for instance: perfect organization, discipline, sacrifice, rule of law, obedience to authority, reliability, tolerance, honesty, frugality, punctuality, modesty, and diligence.

[Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prussia>]

These traits describe George Muller's life and ministry throughout his adult life, but they were far from him as a youth. He was not raised in a Christian home, though his father chose for him to pursue a career as a clergyman. This had nothing to do with any religious belief, or devotion. It was merely a career decision to provide a good living and security for his father in his old age.

Before he was ten years old George Muller was stealing money from his father. As he entered his teen years he was drinking regularly, reading novels, and living an immoral life. His dishonesty led to his being jailed at the age of 16 for a brief period, having run up bills at expensive hotels that he could not pay. His father paid off his bills and beat him severely upon his return home. He was then sent off to study for the university and to prepare for a job among the

clergy.

As a student of divinity, George Muller continued a profligate lifestyle. He stole money from friends, and lied constantly to cover his tracks and to keep his father satisfied. In 1825 he attended a Bible Study with a friend from the university, and it was there that God began a work of grace in his heart. In his autobiography, George Muller describes this time.

Now my life became very different, though not so that all sins were 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. I read the Scriptures, prayed often, loved the brethren, went to church with the right motives, and stood on the side of Christ, though laughed at by my fellow students...

About Easter, 1826, I saw a devoted young brother, named Hermann Ball, a learned man, and of wealthy parents, who, constrained by the love of Christ, preferred laboring in Poland among the Jews as a missionary to having a comfortable living near his relations. His example made a deep impression on me. The Lord smiled on me, and I was, for the first time in my life, able fully and unreservedly to give up myself to Him.

At this time, George Muller understood that his life was to be lived for the glory of God, and that he could not give himself to the pursuit of worldly position, material security and social success. He considered that God might have him also walk away from the familial ties to his well-to-do family and labor in some foreign land as a missionary. He was fully willing to give himself to such a course, and he felt he must declare this to his father. He writes:

My father was greatly displeased, and particularly reproached me, saying that he had expended so much money on my education, in hope that he might comfortably spend his last days with me in a parsonage, and that now he saw these prospects come to nothing. He was angry, and told me he would no longer consider me as his son. But the Lord gave me grace to remain steadfast. He then entreated me, and wept before me; yet even this by far harder trial the Lord enabled me to bear. After I had left my father, though I (needed) more money than at any previous period of my life, as I had to remain two more years at the university, I determined never to take any more from him; for it seemed to me wrong, so far as I remember, to suffer

myself to be supported by him, when he had no prospect that I should become what he would wish me to be, namely, a clergyman with a good living. This resolution I was enabled to keep.

There comes a time in the life of all those who would be true disciples of Christ, when they must face the cost of following Him wherever He might lead them. The plans of the Lord are quite often not the plans that our parents, brothers and sisters, wife, or children would choose for us. For this reason, Christ exhorted all who would truly be His disciples to consider carefully the cost.

Luke 14:25-27

Now great multitudes were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life (psuche - soul), he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."

I have found that most Christians make but small progress in a life of faith and in conformity to Christ until after they are brought to count the cost of surrendering all to Christ and accepting it. It is at this point that the Spirit begins to lead a person down paths that they would not have chosen for themselves, but which result in much spiritual growth. As one continues down in this life of surrender it will eventually lead to much fruitfulness.

There is very little fruit among Christians today, very little evidence of conformity to Christ, because there is such an absence of surrender. Christians today largely believe that being a disciple does not require the same radical commitment observed among the early saints of Scripture.

This surrender of our will to God very often results in hardship and trials and sorrow to those who take God's will to be their own. Yet the very things we consider hardships and distresses are the experiences Yahweh uses to lead us forth into a life of faith and obedience that will one day bear much fruit. So it was with George Muller. His willingness to surrender the direction of his life to God brought immediate rejection from his earthly father. His previous means of support was cut-off, but this was exactly what was needed in order to begin to teach this son of God to begin looking to his heavenly Father for all things.

The Lord directed George Muller to look to him for his support while he was at the university. As he was cast over onto the provision of his heavenly Father for the first time, he writes:

Shortly after this had occurred, several American gentlemen, three of whom were professors in American colleges, came to Halle for literary purposes, and as they did not understand German, I was recommended by Dr. Tholuck to teach them. These gentlemen, some of whom were believers, paid so handsomely for the instruction I gave them, and for the lectures of certain professors which I wrote out for them, that I had enough and to spare. Thus did the Lord richly make up to me the little which I had relinquished for His sake. "O fear the Lord, ye His saints; for there is no (lack) to those who fear Him."

From this small beginning of faith, George Muller was to grow in faith and reliance upon God until he was trusting Him for the provision of more than 2,000 orphans at a time, supporting over a hundred missionaries in part or in whole, and printing and distributing hundreds of thousands of Bibles and millions of tracts annually.

All of this was done without making any public pleas for funds. Mr. Muller had no television or radio program where he would make pleas for support. He had no advertising campaigns. He had no campaigns for capital projects. He did not work through worldly solicitations to have the needs of all of these heavy burdens met. Rather, he learned to take all his needs to God the Father. Having maintained a good conscience in only taking on those labors that he was assured the Spirit of Christ was directing him to, he was able to look to Christ to meet every need.

The year 1835 found Mr. Muller residing in England. He was ministering much through preaching at local churches. He had a few years earlier begun The Scriptural Knowledge Institute, which was a work aimed at the printing and distribution of Bibles and tracts, and the instruction of young people in a large number of Sunday schools which he supported. It was in this same year that he began to consider the work that was to bring him renown, even as it encouraged millions of Christians to place a much greater trust in God while encouraging them to come before Him confidently in prayer. This work was to be among the orphans of England. Mr. Muller described the reason for entering into this work in the following way.

I therefore judged myself bound to be the servant of the church of Christ on the particular point on which I had obtained mercy; namely, in being able to take God by His word, and to rely upon it.

For the previous ten years Mr. Muller had been looking to the Lord for all of his provision, and those of a growing ministry, and he had Found Yahweh faithful. Now he desired to stir up the body of Christ to walk in the same grace that he had received. He continues:

All of these exercises of my soul, which resulted from the fact that so many believers with whom I became acquainted were harassed and distressed in mind, or brought guilt on their consciences on account of not trusting in the Lord, were used by God to awaken in my heart the desire of setting before the church at large, and before the world, a proof that He has not changed in the least; and this seemed best done by the establishing of an orphan house. It needed to be something which could be seen, even by the naked eye. Now, if I, a poor man, simply by prayer and by faith, obtained, without asking any individual, the means for establishing and carrying on an orphan house, there would be something which, with the Lord's blessing, might be instrumental in strengthening the faith of the children of God, besides being a testimony to the unconverted of the reality of the things of God.

This then was the primary reason for establishing the orphan house. I certainly did from my heart desire to be used of God to benefit the bodies of poor children bereaved of both parents, and seek in other respects, with the help of God, to do them good for this life. I also particularly longed to be used of God in getting the dear orphans trained up in the fear of God; but still, the first and primary object of the work was, and still is, that God might be magnified by the fact that the orphans under my care are provided with all they need, only by prayer and faith, without any one being asked by me or my fellow-laborers, whereby it may be seen that God is FAITHFUL STILL, and HEARS PRAYER STILL.

I think it is very needful to declare here that this is not some work that George Muller arrived at through the counsel of his own soul. As stated in his own words, he believed that God had led him to consider this work by placing before him so many souls who were walking in guilt due to their failure to trust in God. Nor did George Muller enter into this work hastily. His memoirs reveal that he patiently waited before the Father in every decision made concerning his labors. I have been much impressed with his testimony in this

regard, and have shared it with a number of people over the years. In 1880 he preached a sermon where he shared the following:

Had it been left to us to make promises concerning prayer, I do not know that you or I could have done any more than say, "Ask, and ye shall receive." Yet, while the promise is so full, so deep, so broad, so precious in every way, we have here, as becomes us with other parts of the word of God, to compare Scripture with Scripture, because in other parts additions are made, or conditions are given, which, if we neglect, will hinder our getting the full benefit of prayer.

George Muller went on to detail a number of conditions that were attached to the simple "Ask, and ye shall receive." First, *our petitions must be according to the will of God* as is revealed in I John 5:14.

I John 5:14

And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, *if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.*

Mr. Muller shared in his autobiographical work that he would discipline his soul until it entered into a state of rest whenever he was considering some work of God, or the expansion of some work. He said he would not trust himself to discern the voice and will of God until he was assured in his soul that he would be equally as content to hear God say "No" to a matter as he would be to hear God say "Yes." At the very beginning of this work, on November 28, 1835, he wrote the following in his daily journal.

I have been, every day this week, very much in prayer concerning the orphan house, chiefly entreating the Lord to take away every thought concerning it out of my mind if the matter be not of Him; and have also repeatedly examined my heart concerning my motives in the matter. But I have been more and more confirmed that it is of God.

George Muller did begin the orphan house soon afterwards, and God kept the work small for the first ten years. During the period from 1835 until 1845 he had never built an orphan house. The houses needed to keep the children were rented quarters. As many as 100 orphans and their care-givers resided together in a few houses that were all close in proximity in Bristol, England.

The record of these ten years is most enlightening for those who desire to

understand the ways of God. During this period of time there were daily struggles for provision. It seemed that God rarely ever gave Mr. Muller and his fellow laborers anything beyond that day's provision. This led to great trials, and constant seasons of intense prayer that God might not fail them.

I have read these accounts a number of times, and the monotony of the struggle day after day is very evident in the journal entries of Mr. Muller. Yet, he was not dismayed. Indeed, he considered the daily struggle to be a very normal experience for all who would follow the Lord in obedience and faith. The countless trials also led to countless acts of divine deliverance. The timing of the Lord's provision was always such that never once in all those years did the orphans ever miss a meal. Yet day after day the laborers faith was tried. Summing up the year 1838, Mr. Muller wrote:

Should it be supposed... by anyone in reading the details of our trials of faith during the year... that we have been disappointed in our expectations, or discouraged in the work, my answer is... such days were expected from the commencement... Our desire is not that we may be without trials of faith, but that the Lord graciously be pleased to support us in the trial.

As I have considered these matters, and being acquainted with the testimonies of many other saints both contemporary and from previous times, and having walked with the Lord down very similar paths, I have observed that it is very common for Yahweh to lead His people to trust Him for their *daily* bread.

When Yahweh led the Israelites through the wilderness, He said He would provide manna from heaven each day. He instructed the Israelites to only gather what they would eat that day, trusting that He would be faithful to provide for them again the next day. Those who were fearful and did not trust gathered more than one day's supply, but it became rancid and bred worms.

When Christ taught His disciples how to pray, He uttered the words, "Give us this day, our daily bread." All those who will follow God by faith will be led to experience this daily dependence upon God. I can testify that it can be a very uncomfortable place for a man to walk, especially when he has others looking to him for their provision. Yet, God is faithful, and He would have us to rest in the confidence of that fact. There is a place of peace that all may enter into concerning Yahweh's faithfulness. He will keep us daily facing need, He will try us repeatedly over a prolonged period of time, until we learn the lesson of trust and resting in Him.

Once a year George Muller would publish an account of God's faithfulness. He would include testimonies of the daily struggles they faced, the prayers that were uttered, and the specific answers that were received. In this way he was able to strengthen and encourage the faith of millions of Christians worldwide.

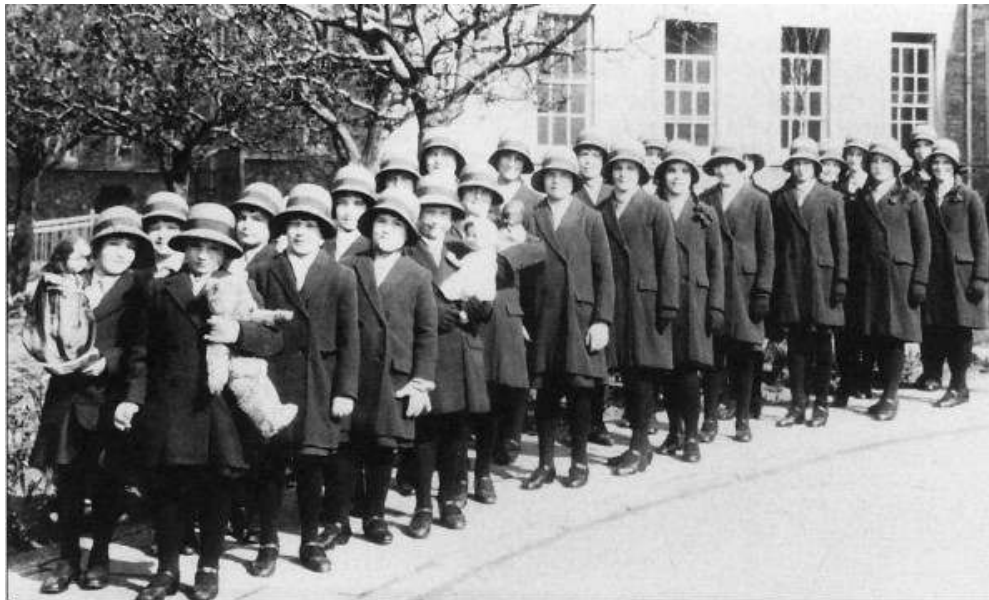
Beginning in 1845 Mr. Muller was led of the Spirit to build orphan houses, as the number being admitted was increasing and it was causing some discontent among the neighbors where they were living. Forty years after the start of the orphan ministry the Lord had provided the means for a number of large homes to be built that would eventually hold as many as 2,000 orphans. The needs continually increased as the work expanded, and God continued to meet every need.



Number 3 Orphan House on Ashley Down, Bristol England.



The boys who were old enough were given exercise by working in the gardens during the growing seasons.



A group of girls from the girl's orphan house.

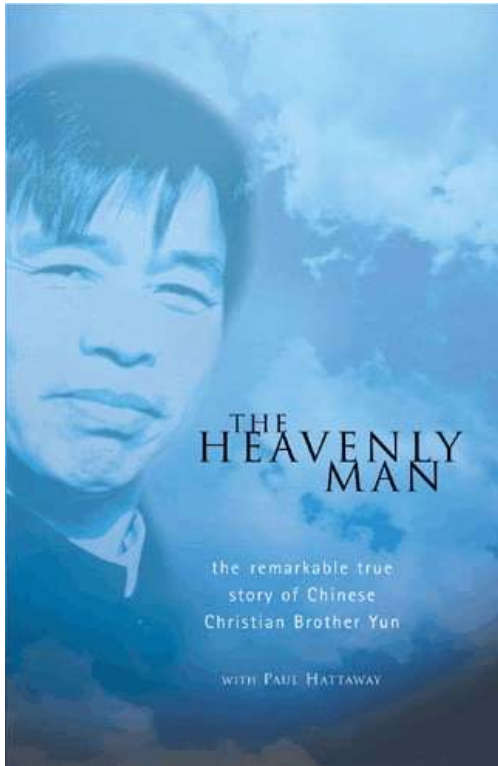
One of the reasons I am posting this series at this hour is to encourage the saints of God to trust in the faithfulness of Yahweh in coming days. I believe that great poverty will come upon many lands. Grocery stores will be emptied. Famine will cover many lands that have only known prosperity for generations. There will be many who will be displaced from their homes, and the Spirit even testifies that many saints will be led to flee.

People can only carry a meager amount of provisions with them, even as that nation of Israelites who fled from Egypt could only carry a few days worth of food. The time will come when all will need to begin looking to Yahweh for their daily bread.

Many of the years that George Muller was caring for orphans were difficult years economically in England. Despite this, God never let the orphans go hungry, or lack warmth in the winter, or fail to have a roof over their heads. If He provided for thousands of orphans because one man was inspired to trust in Him, what will Yahweh do for His people in days ahead? The Spirit bears witness that the coming days will be filled with tales of miraculous provision and deliverance. God's people will do exploits, and those who have faith in Him will be recompensed for their belief.

Brother Yun - The Heavenly Man

The following testimonies are taken from the book *The Heavenly Man*, which is the story of the life of Brother Yun, a Chinese Christian and minister. The book relates many ways in which the Chinese Christians have suffered under the Communist government since 1949. It also contains accounts of tremendous miracles.



Brother Yun was born in the late 1950s. He became a Christian at the age of 16 when his father was miraculously healed of cancer. During that time it was forbidden for any Chinese to read anything other than Mao's *Little Red Book*. There were severe penalties for having a Bible, yet at this young age Yun began to hunger greatly to read a Bible.

His mother, observing this great desire in her son, took him one day to visit an old man in another village who was formerly a pastor. She believed he might still have a Bible. Upon arriving there the man was afraid to show them his Bible for he had already spent more than twenty years in prison because of his faith. He told Yun that the Bible was a heavenly book, so he must pray that the God

of heaven would give him one.

When Yun returned home he placed a large stone next to his bed. He used it to kneel upon while praying. Every night for 30 days he prayed and asked God to let him see a Bible. At the end of this time he had still not seen a Bible, so he returned alone to the old man's house. He told him he had been praying as he instructed him, but he still did not have a Bible. He begged the man again to please let him see his Bible.

The old man could see he was very serious about wanting a Bible, so he told him that if he truly desired one that he should fast and pray and that God would hear him. For the next 100 days Brother Yun ate nothing in the morning or at noon, and took only a small bowl of rice for supper. He prayed every night that he might see a Bible. His parents began worrying about him

because of his constant fasting and prayers. They thought he might be losing his mind.

After 100 days of fasting and prayer, Brother Yun had a vision. He describes it this way.

In the vision I was walking up a steep hill, trying to push a heavy cart in front of me. I was heading toward a village where I intended to beg for food for my family. I was struggling greatly, because in my vision I was hungry and weakened by constant fasting. The old cart was about to roll back and fall on me.

I then saw three men walking down the hill in the opposite direction. A kind old man, who had a very long beard, was pulling a large cart full of fresh bread. Two other men were walking on each side of the cart. When the old man saw me he felt great pity and showed me compassion. He asked, "Are you hungry?" I replied, "Yes, I have nothing to eat. I'm on my way to get food for my family."

I wept because my family was extremely poor. Because of my father's sickness we'd sold everything valuable to buy medicine. We had little to eat, and for years we had been forced to beg for food from friends and neighbors. When the old man asked me if I was hungry, I couldn't help but cry. I'd never felt such genuine love and compassion from anyone before.

In the vision the old man took a red bag of bread from his trolley and asked his two servants to give it to me. He said, "You must eat it immediately."

I opened the wrapping and saw there was a bun of fresh bread inside. When I put the bun in my mouth, it instantly turned into a Bible! Immediately, in my vision, I knelt down with my Bible and cried out to the Lord in thanksgiving, "Lord, your name is worthy to be praised! You didn't despise my prayer. You allowed me to receive this Bible. I want to serve you the rest of my life."

I woke up and started searching the house for the Bible. The rest of my family was asleep. The vision had been so real to me that when I realized it had only been a dream I was deeply anguished and I wept loudly. My parents rushed to my room to see what had happened. They thought I had gone crazy because of all my fasting and praying. I told them about my vision, but the

more I shared, the crazier they thought I was! Mother said, "The day hasn't dawned yet and no one has come to our house. The door is firmly locked."

My father held me tightly. With tears in his eyes he cried to God, "Dear Lord, have mercy on my son. Please don't let him lose his mind. Please give my son a Bible!"

My mother, father and I knelt down and wept together, arm in arm.

Suddenly I heard a faint knock at the door. A very gentle voice called my name. I rushed over and asked through the locked door, "Are you bringing the bread to me?" The gentle voice replied, "Yes, we have a feast of bread to give you." I immediately recognized the voice as the same one I had heard in the vision.

I quickly opened the door and there standing before me were the same two servants I had seen in the vision. One man held a red bag in his hand. My heart raced as I opened the bag and held in my hands my very own Bible!

The two men quickly departed into the still darkness.

I clutched my new Bible to my heart and fell down on my knees outside the door. I thanked God again and again! I promised Jesus from that moment on I would devour the Word like a hungry child.

The old man in the dream represented God. He saw in this young Chinese Christian an intense hunger for some spiritual food to eat. He was therefore pleased to give him what he desperately longed for.

Brother Yun goes on to share how he found out the identity of the two men some time later. An evangelist in a town far away had a vision three months earlier in which he saw Yun, his house and village. In the vision the evangelist knew he was to give Yun a Bible he kept buried in a can in the ground. Although he had seen the vision clearly, he did not act on it until three months later when he spoke to the two men, told them of the vision, and asked them to deliver the Bible.

This account is remarkable for a number of reasons. As one contrasts the desire of this young Chinese boy to read a Bible, the apathy of "Christians" in Western nations who have ready access to the Scriptures is very apparent.

Many Western believers have Bibles throughout their homes, but they will easily go a hundred days without ever picking one up and reading it. There is no hunger to read the divine message Yahweh has sent to His people. The Scriptures are treated as something common, and the attention shown to them reveals that the words of God are not treasured as they ought to be. The people of God are sated as they gorge themselves on things that appeal to the soul and the flesh. They spend their time before the television, listening to music, reading novels, and all manner of other foods that do not help them spiritually. All the while they lack a true hunger for the Word of God.

The attitude manifested by Brother Yun at this tender age should be the normal response of all who come to Christ and then discover that God has caused a book of tremendous spiritual wisdom and revelation to be written for the instruction of His people. It should be normal to find Christians of all ages pouring over the Scriptures to glean some insight into the Kingdom of God.

Brother Yun would later marry a Chinese woman who also came to Christ in her teen years. Deling relates how she would walk long distances, often in the dark and through dangerous areas, alone as a teenage girl in order to attend meetings of believers. Her hunger for fellowship and spiritual teaching was similar in this aspect to that of the man who would one day be her husband. She relates the following experience in her own words.

At the age of 18 I committed my life to Jesus Christ.

The very first night as a believer I was taken to my first house church meeting. The Public Security Bureau came and we all had to escape on foot through the darkness. This was my very first introduction to what it would be like following the Lord!...

Two other young women came to the Lord at the same time as me. We attended meetings together. These were in different parts of the district so we often had to walk more than an hour to get there. After the meetings I often had to walk home by myself. This was quite dangerous because it was so dark and there were evil men and wild dogs out late at night.

God worked a great miracle to protect and help me in those early days. Many nights as I walked home I could see a light about ten meters ahead of me on the path, as if someone was carrying a lamp, showing me the way I needed to take. In the pitch dark I often lost my way, but then I'd see the

light, like a small star, showing me the way to get back on the right path. The light wasn't constant; it just appeared whenever I was heading in the wrong direction.

Because of many experiences like this, my faith grew quickly.

Even as Communist China has their Public Security Bureau, America now has their Department of Homeland Security agency. The names of these government groups sound benevolent, but they are not. Detention camps were one of the first things to be established by the 111th Congress. These Federal Emergency Management Agency camps, which fall under the auspices of the Department of Homeland Security, will one day soon be revealed to be used to inter all those who are viewed as enemies of the state.

It did not take long for the Chinese government to declare that Christians were enemies of the state once the Communists came to power and the Public Security Bureau was formed. Likewise, it will not be long before Christians in Western nations are declared to be enemies of the state for resisting the policies and beliefs of an increasingly authoritarian and anti-Christ regime. The Scriptures foretell of a day at the end of this age when men and women will not even be able to buy or sell without embracing the Beast system.

I am persuaded that it will not be long before those who are true disciples of Christ will need to rely upon God to guide and protect them even as the Chinese believers have done for many years. They will find that those agencies that bear names promising Security and Protection will actually prove to be the ones which seek to take from Christians these very things.

There are many remarkable manifestations of the power of God, and of the cost of following Christ, in the book *The Heavenly Man*. I want to share one more experience of Brother Yun, as I believe it has great application for those believers in America and Western nations in approaching days.

Many who read this blog are aware that the Lord directed me this past Spring to spend a couple months traveling across America, meeting with small groups of believers. Before leaving, the Spirit of Christ had used a sister in the Lord to prophesy that I would be sent out with the message of Acts 14:22, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."

Today, as I was reading this book on the life of Brother Yun, I encountered this

Scripture again. I believe the Spirit is testifying that the same types of experiences that Brother Yun and the Chinese Christians experienced are coming to America.

Brother Yun, while still a young man, was led of the Lord to travel to a province to the West of where he lived. Before leaving to go to this province the local believers had a time of worship and prayer as they prepared to send them forth. Brother Yun shares the following:

Before we left for Shaanxi that evening we asked God to prepare the hearts of the people to receive His word. While praying, I suddenly saw a terrible vision that shook my soul. The others told me I startled them when I shouted out, "Hallelujah, Jesus' blood has overcome you!"

Everyone stopped praying and asked me what the matter was. With sweat on my brow I told them, "I saw a terrible evil vision. A black, heinous creature came after me. It had a horrible twisted face. It pressed me down on the ground and sat on my stomach so I couldn't get up. With one of its hands it grabbed my throat and started choking me. With its other hand it grabbed some steel pliers and tried to shut my mouth with them. I could hardly breathe. Then I saw a great strong angel fly towards me. With all my strength I poked my fingers into the eyes of the evil creature. It fell to the ground, and I was carried away to safety by the angel. I shouted, "Hallelujah! Jesus' blood has overcome you!"

After telling what I'd seen, we prayed and shared the Lord's Supper together. We committed ourselves to the care of the Lord...

Brother Yun then tells how he and two sisters in Christ traveled to this Western province to share the word of the Lord with the churches there. Brother Yun was empowered to speak the first day about the history of the cross throughout church history. On the second day, about one in the afternoon, he lost his voice. He then asked one of the sisters to speak while he went to a room to rest. He continues:

When I lay down I meditated on the message I had shared that morning.

Suddenly, I heard a loud noise. Several PSB officers kicked down the door to my room. They grabbed me and held me down on the bed. One officer lay on me, pinning me down with his weight. With one hand he held me by the

throat. With his other hand he reached into his pocket and pulled out his ID card. He shouted, "I come from the Public Security Bureau. Where do you come from?"

Immediately I remembered the vision I had seen of the dark monster.

Two other PSB officers took a rope and tightly bound my arms behind my back, as well as binding the rope around my chest, back, and waist. One of the officers noticed a red wooden cross attached to the wall...

They tore the cross from the wall and tied it to my back with the ropes. Then they started to kick me furiously. Blows rained down upon my arms, legs, chest and ribs...

For the first time I literally had the honor of literally bearing the cross of Christ on my body. They triumphantly marched me off, bloodied and bruised, to Shangnan township...

When the townspeople saw me bound with rope and that I was carrying a big red cross, a story began to circulate that "Jesus from Henan" had come. Many people crowded around to witness this remarkable sight.

As I was paraded through the streets, a police car drove slowly in front. Through a loudspeaker they proclaimed, "This man came from Henan to preach Jesus. He has seriously disrupted the peace. He has confused the people. Today the Public Security Bureau has captured him. We will punish him severely."

I was made to kneel down in the dirt while the officers punched me in the chest and face and repeatedly kicked me from behind with their heavy boots. My face was covered with blood. The pain was unbearable and I nearly lost consciousness as I lay on the ground.

They lifted me up and made me stagger down another street. They were determined to make an example of me to as many people as possible.

I lifted my head up and caught glimpses of people in the crowd. Some pitied me and wept. When I saw this it really strengthened my faith. When I had the chance, I softly told one woman, "Please don't feel sorry for me. You should weep for the lost souls of our nation."

When the onlookers heard my voice they cried even more loudly. I was paraded through the streets for half a day. When night fell they took me into a big courtyard inside the police station.

They didn't loosen my ropes, but they did take the wooden cross off my back. They locked me inside a large interrogation room. I noticed the door was made of iron and the windows had iron bars on them.

Some evil-faced officers came in. They questioned me with great gravity in their voices...

I felt that God wanted me to pretend I was crazy, like David had done in the Bible. I lay down on the ground and acted insane. I rolled my eyes back in their sockets and spat like a madman. I didn't say a word. The PSB were frightened and were convinced I was crazy.

Many spectators had crowded outside the window and looked in.

One officer went to another room and made a telephone call to Henan, to try and find out who I was from the authorities there. The other interrogators went with him to hear what was said. They left me alone in the room and shut the door. I was still tightly bound by rope so they saw there was no chance I could escape. The onlookers also gave their attention to the telephone call, and crowded outside the window of that room to listen.

At that moment, with everyone's eyes off me, the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart, "The God of Peter is your God." I remembered how the angels had opened the prison gates for Peter to escape. "Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?" Hebrews 11:4.

The rope that bound my back suddenly snapped by itself! I didn't tear the ropes off, but kept them loosely in place. I decided to try to escape, and if caught I would claim I was trying to go to the toilet. With my arms still positioned behind my back, I used my mouth to turn the door handle and I walked out of the room!

At that moment God gave me faith and courage. I reminded myself that the blood of Jesus Christ protected me. I walked through the middle of the onlookers in the courtyard. Nobody stopped me or said anything to me! It was as though God had blinded their eyes and they didn't recognize who I

was.

I walked through the courtyard to the toilet block in the northern part of the compound, about 30 feet away from the interrogation room. As quickly as I could, I pulled off the rope from around my body. My hands, arms and shoulders were still numb from being bound by rope for so long.

Because the front gates had been locked, the only way out of the compound was over an eight-foot-high cement wall. The wall had sharp glass embedded in the top. I stood there for a moment, stared at the wall and prayed, asking the Lord to heal my hands and my body.

I decided to try to leap over the wall. I saw no other choice. I was trapped and at any moment the officers would come and grab me. What happened next is impossible from a human perspective, yet God is my witness that what I am about to tell is the truth.

First, I pulled myself up onto the wall as high as I could manage. I looked over the top and saw the other side was a ten-foot-wide open septic tank.

As I hung grimly on the side of the wall, all of a sudden I felt as if somebody hoisted me up and threw me over! I jumped so far that I even cleared the septic tank! A Scripture came to mind, "With your help I can advance against a troop; with my God I can scale a wall." II Samuel 22:30.

The God of Peter wonderfully helped me leap over the wall and escape. I believe the angel I had seen in my vision helped to lift me up.

Brother Yun then ran for hours until he arrived back at the place where he had been arrested earlier that day. The believers were still meeting, and they were in prayer for him. He wrote:

When they saw me they could scarcely believe their eyes! They were amazed that the Lord had rescued me from the hands of evil men. They changed my wet clothes, bathed my scars, and lovingly wiped the blood from my face and hands.

I encouraged the Shaanxi believers. I prayed for them and placed them in the merciful hands of God. I taught them, "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God." Acts 14:22.

This is a remarkable experience. It is so rich with symbolism. When the PSB officers tied the cross to Brother Yun's back the Father was signifying that here was one who was truly bearing in his body the cross of Christ. Truly the people in Shangnan township did see on their streets that day the "Jesus from Henan." The church in the West has known very little of such sufferings in recent generations, but these things are coming swiftly. Many more will be given the great honor of suffering for the name of Christ.

Yahweh fulfilled the vision of Brother Yun. The beast that sought to silence him was the government agency, and in coming days there will be observed a similar beast seeking to silence saints in the West. Even at this very hour, America has a President who is being used of Satan to set in place all things necessary to bring about a great persecution of the saints of God.

America has a President who rides in an armored limousine that the Secret Service has nicknamed *The Beast*. The day the election results came out announcing that Barack Obama had been chosen by Americans to be their next President, the winning numbers in the Illinois Pick Three Lottery came up 6-6-6. (Illinois is Obama's home state.)

Is God speaking to His people through these things? I am convinced that He is. There is a beast system rapidly being set in place that will lead to the persecution of Christians. This persecution is not far off. It is even now at the door. Yet in the midst of this persecution the people of God who walk faithfully with Him will be given a little help, even as Brother Yun was helped.

Daniel 11:32-34

And by smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and take action. And those who have insight among the people will give understanding to the many; yet they will fall by sword and by flame, by captivity and by plunder, for many days. Now when they fall they will be granted a little help...

The disciples of Christ are the people of the covenant, a covenant sealed in the blood of Christ. Satan is using men of smooth words to turn to godlessness those who act wickedly. Many will suffer in coming days, but let all who do so rejoice. Great is the reward of all who suffer for the name of Christ, and precious in the sight of God is the death of His holy ones.

The Spirit is testifying to God's people that through many tribulations they must enter the kingdom of God. I encourage all God's people to make haste to get themselves ready. Seek the Lord now while He may be found. Begin to place your trust in Him now, and follow Him with a whole heart.

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days.

Maurice Reuben

In a day when it is often hard to find living examples of faith close to home, men and women that we can interact with personally, I have found that the biographies of these lights of God's Kingdom can often provide the encouragement that I very much need. I have been blessed to read quite a number of excellent books on the lives of men and women who have followed God in exceptional ways. Among them is the book *Rees Howells - Intercessor* authored by Norman Grubb.

I believe that such books will be of great value in coming days as Christians turn away from the television and other forms of entertainment and begin looking for that which edifies. We will truly need to be feeding upon those things that build up the spirit of man that we might have the strength to overcome in the midst of difficult days.

In the book *Rees Howells - Intercessor* there is a testimony of a young Jewish man who lived in Pittsburgh in the early 1900s. The man's name was Maurice Reuben, and it was while listening to this man give his testimony that Rees Howells saw his great need of the Savior, and came to understand the cross that all disciples must bear.

This testimony is important as it reveals that there are distinctions among the walk of various Christians. Some have come to confess Christ as Savior, but they have not counted the cost of taking Him as Lord of their lives. Many profess belief in Christ for the forgiveness of sins, but they have not themselves forsaken all and taken up the cross to follow Him. Oftentimes it is those who profess Christ as Savior, but who do not accept the cost of discipleship, who become the greatest persecutors of those who have accepted the cost. This truth is brought out in the following testimony as recorded in the book *Rees Howells - Intercessor*.

Meeting the Risen LORD

Rees had not been long in his new home when he heard that a converted Jew, Maurice Reuben from Pittsburgh, had come to the city for a series of meetings. The first night that he went to hear him, Reuben told the story of his conversion and how the Holy Spirit had revealed Calvary to him. "I had heard preaching on Calvary scores of times before and believed it," said Rees, "but I had never seen Calvary before that night..."

Maurice Reuben told how he belonged to a wealthy family and had the best the world could give him, and how he lived to make money. He was a manager of Solomon and Reuben, one of the largest stores in Pittsburgh. But the life of one of his buyers used to put him under deep conviction, until one day he said to him, "You must have been born happy." "Yes," replied the buyer, "in my second birth. I accepted the Lord Jesus Christ and was born of God. In my first birth I was no happier than you!"

Reuben was so moved by the testimony that he bought a New Testament, and there he was impressed with the fact that all those who followed Jesus were Jews: John the Baptist pointing Him out as the Lamb of God; Peter, James and John, the chief disciples... Then he came to the story of the rich young ruler. It was a dramatic moment - a rich Jew of the twentieth century and under conviction, reading of the Savior's dealings with a rich Jew of the first century! The way that Reuben saw it was that if Jesus had told that young man to sell all to inherit eternal life, how could he, Reuben, inherit the same gift, unless on the same condition? It was his supreme test. It was his supreme test. If he became a disciple, he knew that he stood to lose all. But it was too late to go back; he had seen it, and he must follow. As Reuben said those words, Rees echoed them in his own heart; it was too late also for him to go back.

Reuben faced it fairly and squarely and counted the cost. His wife might leave him, his brother might put him out of the business, and not a single Jew follow him, but he had made up his mind; if he lost everything, he meant to do it.

Then one day on the way to the store, Reuben heard a voice repeating to him the words of John 14:6: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." The truth flashed upon him - he accepted Christ and entered into life at that moment. He then told his brother and others. According to his father's will he was to forfeit every penny of he changed his religion, but his brother offered to give him 70,000 pounds - his share of the business - if he would cross the U.S.A. and retire in Montana. But Reuben replied, "I have had the light in Pittsburgh, and I am going to witness in Pittsburgh."

Late that Saturday night detectives came and took him to the police station. On Monday two doctors visited his cell and asked him about the voice he had heard. "Do they question my sanity?" he thought.

Two hours later warders came from the asylum and took him to a room where

there were twenty-nine mentally deranged people. The bitterness of his position overcame him. He had victory in the lock-up, but this seemed more than he could bear. He fell on his knees by his bed and poured out his heart to the Lord. He did not know how long he was there, but he seemed to lose himself, and a vision of Calvary appeared to him. He witnessed every stage of the crucifixion. He forgot his own sufferings in the sufferings of the Savior, and as he gazed upon the cross, the Master said to him, "And must I bear the cross alone, and all the world go free?" From a broken heart Reuben answered, "No. There's a cross for everyone, and there's a cross for me."

From that hour he was a new man. Instead of complaining at being in the asylum, he began to pray for the other twenty-nine, and to the Savior he said, "Let me suffer for You. Whatever You allow me to go through, I will never complain again."

Two weeks later, Reuben's brother came to see him, and reproached him for his folly in getting himself into such a place. "Why don't you be wise" he said. "Get out of here and go to Montana." "Does that offer still stand? Then it is not a medical condition, but something else that is keeping me here!" said Reuben with all the keenness of his logical mind.

Some Christian friends he was in touch with caused inquiries to be set on foot. In six weeks his release was procured. It became a court case, and the test was on "the voice."

The judge called the doctor and asked why this man had been certified as insane. "Because he heard a voice," said the doctor. "Didn't the apostle Paul hear a voice?" countered the judge, who was a Christian man. "This is a disgrace to the American flag," and he told Reuben to prosecute anyone who had anything to do with it.

"I shall never prosecute anyone," answered Reuben, "but I will do one thing - I will pray for them." He crossed the court and offered his hand to his brother, but he turned his back on him. He went to his wife, but she did the same. But what a victory he had in his own soul!

Maurice rented a small room in Chicago, where he lived alone with the Lord and won many converts, though for two years he hardly had a square meal. A year later his wife came to hear him in a camp meeting and was converted, and for the first time he saw his little boy who had been born after his wife had

left him. She was willing to make her home with him again, if only he would earn a living as other Christians did. His heart went out to his little boy, and this test was even greater than the first. Her request seemed so reasonable, but he knew that the Lord had called him from the world into this life of faith. He pleaded with the Lord, but the only reply he received was “Back to Egypt!”

It was enough, and once more Reuben embraced the cross. He went to see his wife and child off; it was a costly experience; but as the train steamed out of the station it seemed that God poured the joy of heaven into his soul. He literally danced on the platform. He did not see his wife again for another three years. Then, in another camp meeting, she too had a revelation of the cross. As a result of this she testified that, whereas before as a believer she had not been willing to share the sacrificial life of her husband, if it would be for God’s glory she would now be willing to beg her bread from door to door. They were reunited and she became a wonderful co-worker in his ministry.

One thing that had hindered Rees Howells from coming through before was that while people said they were born again, he could not see that their lives were better than his. How then could he be convinced that they had something he had not? But he sometimes said to the Lord, “If I ever see a person who is living the sermon on the mount, I will give in.” Before Reuben came to the end of the story, the Lord said to Rees, “Is this your man?”

What followed in that little Methodist chapel Rees Howells tells in his own words: “As Maurice Reuben brought those sacred scenes before us, I too saw the cross. It seemed as if I spent ages at the Savior’s feet, and I wept and wept. I felt as if He had just died for me. I lost myself. I had been living in the fear of death, and I saw Him taking that death for me. My parents loved me very much and, up to that time, to me there were no people like them, but they never suffered death for me. He did it. His love for me, as compared with theirs, was as high as the heavens above the earth, and He won my love - every bit of it...”

[End Excerpt]

People of God, there are multitudes today who are professing their belief in Christ as the Savior of mankind. There are few who are following in His footsteps, taking up the cross that has been appointed for them. According to Christ’s words, such confessors are not disciples, for to be a disciple one must be led of the Spirit in all things as Christ was. To be a disciple one must accept the suffering appointed to all those who are members of Christ’s body.

Luke 14:26-28

"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."

The cost for Maurice Reuben was very real. He found out in the early 1900s that there is still a cost to following Christ. There is a cost today as well. Will you accept the cost? Must Christ alone suffer while all the world goes free?

Do you have faith to suffer?

Faith to Suffer

<http://www.heart4god.ws/id383.htm>

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days.

Hudson Taylor - Growth of a Soul



Hudson Taylor - At age 21

Hudson Taylor was the founder of the China Inland Mission. He was born in England in 1832 and live to the age of 73, dying in 1905. There exists two biographical books of his life, written by his son Dr. Howard Taylor. Both books are quite lengthy, being over 500 pages each, and they are full of spiritual riches. The books are titled *Hudson Taylor - The Growth of a Soul*, and *Hudson Taylor - The Growth of a Work of God*. Both books can be read online.

<http://www.worldinvisible.com/library/hudsontaylor/hudsontaylorv1/hudsontaylorv1tc.htm>

<http://www.worldinvisible.com/library/hudsontaylor/hudsontaylorv2/hudsontaylorv2tc.htm>

There are such riches in these two volumes that I am going to make two posts from them. At an early age he discerned the call to go to China as a missionary. Hudson Taylor in his teen years worked for his father who was a chemist and druggist. Missionary societies encouraged aspiring missionaries to receive training in the medical field for they often used medical clinics set-up in China as an opportunity to share Christ with the native population.

Hudson Taylor began looking for an opportunity to receive training, and was engaged by Dr. Hardey, a Christian man with a large practice in the city of Hull. Of this period of Hudson Taylor's life we read the following.

Here then in what was called the Surgery Hudson Taylor found himself at home. Mrs. Hardey's supervision had not extended apparently to this branch of the establishment, but the new assistant was equal to the occasion and soon had everything in apple-pie order, after the fashion to which he had been accustomed at home. His knowledge of book-keeping also proved of value to Dr. Hardey, who had much work of that sort on hand and was glad to leave it to so competent a helper. Thus the doctor's relations with the Barnsley lad soon came to be of a cordial character. He was so bright and eager to learn, so willing and good-tempered, that to work with him was a pleasure, and before long the busy doctor found that it was a help to pray with him too. Many were the quiet times, after that, from which the older man came away refreshed and strengthened. Needless to say there was no familiarity or presuming on these relations. The young assistant respected himself and his employer far too much for that. He did his work faithfully, as in the sight of God, and Dr. Hardey showed his appreciation by giving him opportunities for study and by directing his reading as much as possible.

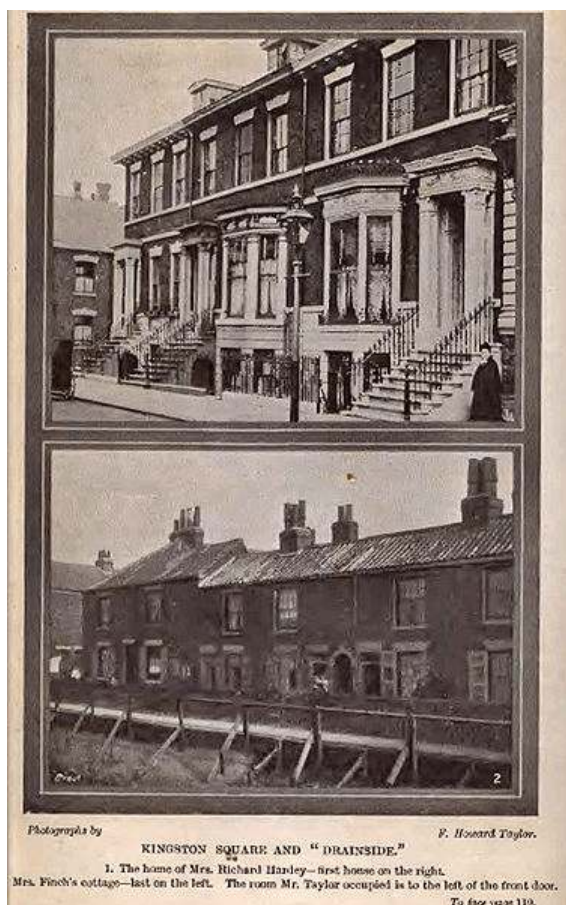
But there were drawbacks to the life at Charlotte Street, of which Hudson Taylor himself was largely unconscious. For one thing it was too comfortable, too easy-going in certain ways, and failed on that account to afford some elements needed in a missionary's training. Quite in another part of Hull amid very different surroundings was a little "prophet's chamber," bare in its furnishings and affording neither companionship nor luxury, where a stronger if a sterner life could be lived, apart with God. Moses at the backside of the wilderness, Joseph in Pharaoh's prison, Paul in the silence of the Arabian desert lived that sort of life, and came out to do great things for men in the power of God. That was the life Hudson Taylor needed and to which he was being led. He did not choose it for himself, at any rate not at first or consciously. The Lord chose it for him, and so ordered circumstances that he was brought to see and to embrace it, finding in self-denial and the daily cross a fellowship with his Master nothing else can yield.

So there came a day, providentially, when the young assistant could no longer be domiciled at Dr. Hardey's. His room was needed for a member of the family, and as the Surgery was not provided with sleeping

accommodation he had to seek quarters elsewhere...

"After much thought and prayer, I was led to leave the comfortable home and pleasant circle in which I resided, and engage a little lodging in the suburbs, a sitting-room and bedroom in one, undertaking to board myself. I was thus enabled to tithe the whole of my income; and while one felt the change a good deal, it was attended with no small blessing. More time was given in my solitude to the study of the Word of God, to visiting the poor and to evangelistic work on Sunday evenings than would otherwise have been the case. Brought into contact in this way with many who were in distress, I soon saw the privilege of still further economizing, and found it possible to give away much more than I had at first intended."

It all reads so simply and naturally that one can hardly imagine any special sacrifice to have been involved. Let us hunt up this "sitting-room and bedroom in one," however, and find out what were in actual fact the surroundings for which he had given up his home on Kingston Square. The change could scarcely have been more complete.



Hardey Residence at top/Drainside in Lower Image

"Drainside," as the neighborhood was termed, could not under any circumstances have been considered inviting. It consisted of a double row of workmen's cottages facing each other across a narrow canal, connecting the country district of Cottingham with the docks and estuary of the Humber. The canal was nothing but a deep ditch into which Drainside people were in the habit of casting their rubbish, to be carried away in part whenever the tide rose high enough. It was separated from the town by desolate spaces of building-land, across which ran a few ill-lighted streets ending in makeshift wooden bridges. The cottages, like peas in a pod, were all the same size and shape down both sides of the long row. They followed the windings of the Drain for half a mile or more, each one having a door and two windows, one above the other. The door opened straight into the kitchen, and a steep stairway led to the room above. A very few were double cottages with a window to right and left of the door and two rooms overhead.

On the city side of the canal, one of these larger dwellings stood at a corner opposite The Founder's Arms, a countrified public-house whose lights were useful as a landmark on dark nights, shining across the mud and water of the Drain. The cottage, known as 30 Cottingham Terrace, was tenanted by the family of a seafaring man, whose visits home were few and far between. Mrs. Finch and her children occupied the kitchen and upper part of the house, and the downstairs room on the left as one entered was let at a rental of three shillings a week. It was too high a charge, seeing the whole house went for little more. But the lodger in whom we are interested did not grudge it, especially when he found how much it meant to the good woman whose remittances from her husband came none too regularly.

Mrs. Finch was a true Christian and delighted to have "the young Doctor" under her roof. She did her best no doubt to make the little chamber clean and comfortable, polishing the fireplace opposite the window and making up the bed in the corner farthest from the door. A plain deal table and a chair or two completed the appointments. The whole room was less than twelve feet square and did not need much furniture. It was on a level with the ground and opened familiarly out of the kitchen. From the window one looked across the narrowest strip of "garden" to the Drain beyond, whose mud banks afforded a playground for the children of the neighborhood.

Whatever it may have been in summer, toward the close of November, when Hudson Taylor made it his home, Drainside must have seemed dreary

enough, and the cottage far from attractive. To add to the discomforts of the situation, he was "boarding himself," which meant that he lived upon next to nothing, bought his meager supplies as he returned from the Surgery, and rarely sat down, with or without a companion, to a proper meal. His walks were solitary across the waste, unlighted region on the outskirts of the town; his evenings solitary beside the little fire in his otherwise cheerless room; and his Sundays were spent alone, but for the morning meeting and long hours of work in his district or among the crowds that frequented the Humber Dock.

And more than this, he was at close quarters with poverty and suffering. Visiting in such neighborhoods he had been accustomed to for a few hours at a time, but this was very different. It belonged to him now in a new way, and outwardly at any rate he belonged to it. He had cast in his lot with those who needed him, and needed all the help and comfort he could bring. This gave new purpose to his life and taught him some of its most precious lessons.

" Having now the twofold object in view," he wrote, " of accustoming myself to endure hardness, and of economizing in order to be able more largely to assist those amongst whom I spent a good deal of time laboring in the Gospel, I soon found that I could live upon very much less than I had previously thought possible. Butter, milk and other luxuries I ceased to use, and found that by living mainly on oatmeal and rice, with occasional variations, a very small sum was sufficient for my needs. In this way I had more than two-thirds of my income available for other purposes, and my experience was that the less I spent on myself and the more I gave to others the fuller of happiness and blessing did my soul become..."

At a very young age, Hudson Taylor had turned his heart away from desiring the material comforts this world affords, and had set his affections on heavenly aspirations. He was acutely aware of his own shortcomings, and would often write to his mother or his sister to ask them to pray for him.

" I feel my need of more holiness," he wrote to his sister early in the New Year, "and conformity to Him who has loved us and washed us in His blood. Love so amazing should indeed cause us to give our bodies and spirits to Him as living sacrifices.... Oh, I wish I were ready! I long to be engaged in the work. Pray for me, that I may be made more useful here and fitted for extended usefulness hereafter." And again a few weeks later:

I almost wish I had a hundred bodies. They should all be devoted to my Savior in the missionary cause. But this is foolishness. I have almost more than I can do to manage one, it is so self-willed, earthly-minded, fleshly. Constantly I am grieving my dear Savior who shed for me His precious blood, forgetting Him who never has relaxed His watchful care and protection over me from the earliest moment of my existence. I am astonished at the littleness of my gratitude and love to Him, and confounded by His long-suffering mercy. Pray for me that I may live more and more to His praise, be more devoted to Him, incessant in labors in His cause, fitted for China, ripened for glory.

The following correspondence to his mother revealed how much Hudson Taylor was choosing to get by on a very meager diet, along with his very humble dwelling place. He could have chosen to eat much better, but it was his delight to save as much of his money as possible to share with the poor people he visited throughout the week.

"I am sorry you make yourself anxious about me," he wrote in January. I think it is because I have begun to wear a larger coat that everybody says, 'How poorly and thin you look!' However, as you want to know everything, I have had a heavy cold... that lasted a week. But since then I have been as well as ever in my life. I eat like a horse, sleep like a top and have the spirits of a lark. I do not know that I have any anxiety save to be more holy and useful...

As to my health, I think I never was so well and hearty in my life. The winds here are extremely searching, but as I always wrap up well I am pretty secure... The cold weather gives me a good appetite, and it would be dear economy to stint myself. So I take as much plain, substantial food as I need, but waste nothing on luxuries...

I have found some brown biscuits which are really as cheap as bread, eighteen pence a stone, and much nicer. For breakfast I have biscuit and herring, which is cheaper than butter (three for a penny, and half a one is enough) with coffee. For dinner I have at present a prune-and-apple pie. Prunes are two or three pence a pound and apples tenpence a peck. I use no sugar, but loaf which I powder, and at fourpence halfpenny a pound I find it is cheaper than the coarser kind. Sometimes I have roast potatoes and tongue, which is as inexpensive as any other meat. For tea I have biscuit and apples. I take no supper, or occasionally a little biscuit and apple... I pickled

a penny red cabbage with three halfpence worth of vinegar, which made me a large jar-full. So you see, at little expense I enjoy many comforts...

What a glimpse is here afforded into his deeper life during that winter at Drainside ! " I cannot tell, I cannot describe how I long to be a missionary, to carry the Glad Tidings to poor, perishing sinners. . . . For this I could give up everything, every idol, however dear . . . I feel as if I could not live if something is not done for China. "

This was no mere emotion, no superficial interest that might give place to considerations of personal advantage.

It was not that he had taken up missionary work as a congenial branch of Christian activity, but that the need of the perishing in heathen lands, the need and longing of the heart of Christ-" them also I must bring "-had gripped him and held him fast...

Yet much as he longed to go, and go at once, there were considerations that held him back.

"To me it was a very grave matter, " he wrote of that winter, "to contemplate going out to China, far from all human aid, there to depend upon the living God alone for protection, supplies, and help of every kind. I felt that one's spiritual muscles required strengthening for such an undertaking. There was no doubt that if faith did not fail, God would not fail. But what if one's faith should prove insufficient? I had not at that time learned that even 'if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful, He cannot deny Himself.' It was consequently a very serious question to my mind, not whether He was faithful, but whether I had strong enough faith to warrant my embarking in the enterprise set before me.

O 'When I got out to China,' I thought to myself, 'I shall have no claim on anyone for anything. My only claim will be on God. How important to learn, before leaving England, to move man through God by prayer alone.'"

He knew that faith was the one power that could remove mountains, conquer every difficulty and accomplish the impossible. But had he the right kind of faith? Could he stand alone in China? Much as he longed to be a missionary, would such faith as he possessed be sufficient to carry him through all that

must be faced? What had it carried him through already, here at home?

He thankfully realized that faith, the faith he longed for, was a "gift of God," and that it might "grow exceedingly." But for growth, exercise was needed, and exercise of faith was obviously impossible apart from trial. Then welcome trial, welcome anything that would increase and strengthen this precious gift, proving to his own heart at any rate that he had faith of the sort that would really stand and grow.

And here it should be remembered that in taking this attitude before the Lord, Hudson Taylor was wholly earnest and sincere. He was bringing "all the tithes into the storehouse," a most important consideration; living a life that made it possible for him to exercise faith to which God could respond in blessing. In a word, there was no hindrance in himself to the answer to his prayers; and experiences followed that have been made an encouragement to thousands the wide world over...

"To learn before leaving England to move man through God by prayer alone," this and nothing less was the object Hudson Taylor had before him now, and it was not long before he came to see a simple, natural way of practicing this lesson.

At Hull my kind employer, always busy, wished me to remind him whenever my salary became due. This I determined not to do directly, but to ask that God would bring the fact to his recollection, and thus encourage me by answering prayer.

At one time as the day drew near for the payment of a quarter's salary I was as usual much in prayer about it. The time arrived, but Dr. Hardey made no allusion to the matter. I continued praying. Days passed on and he did not remember, until at length on settling up my weekly accounts one Saturday night, I found myself possessed of only one remaining coin, a half-crown piece. Still, I had hitherto known no lack, and I continued praying.

That Sunday was a very happy one. As usual my heart was full and brimming over with blessing. After attending Divine Service in the morning, my afternoons and evenings were taken up with Gospel work in the various lodging-houses I was accustomed to visit in the lowest part of the town. At such times it almost seemed to me as if heaven were begun below, and that all that could be looked for was an enlargement of one's capacity for joy, not

a truer filling than I possessed.

After concluding my last service about ten o'clock that night, a poor man asked me to go and pray with his wife, saying that she was dying. I readily agreed, and on the way to his house asked him why he had not sent for the priest, as his accent told me he was an Irishman. He had done so, he said, but the priest refused to come without a payment of eighteen pence which the man did not possess, as the family was starving. Immediately it occurred to my mind that all the money I had in the world was the solitary half-crown, and that it was in one coin; moreover, that while the basin of water-gruel I usually took for supper was awaiting me, and there was sufficient in the house for breakfast in the morning, I certainly had nothing for dinner on the coming day.

Somehow or other there was at once a stoppage in the flow of joy in my heart. But instead of reproving myself I began to reprove the poor man, telling him that it was very wrong to have allowed matters to get into such a state as he described, and that he ought to have applied to the relieving officer. His answer was that he had done so, and was told to come at eleven o'clock the next morning, but that he feared his wife might not live through the night.

"Ah," thought I, "if only I had two shillings and a sixpence instead of this half-crown, how gladly would I give these poor people a shilling!" But to part with the half-crown was far from my thoughts. I little dreamed that the truth of the matter simply was that I could trust God plus one and-sixpence, but was not prepared to trust Him only, without any money at all in my pocket.

My conductor led me into a court, down which I followed him with some degree of nervousness. I had found myself there before, and at my last visit had been roughly handled. My tracts had been torn to pieces and such a warning given me not to come again that I felt more than a little concerned. Still, it was the path of duty and I followed on. Up a miserable flight of stairs into a wretched room he led me; and oh, what a sight there presented itself! Four or five children stood about, their sunken cheeks and temples all telling unmistakably the story--of slow starvation, and lying on a wretched pallet was a poor, exhausted mother, with a tiny infant thirty-six hours old moaning rather than crying at her side, for it too seemed spent and failing.

"Ah!" thought I, "if I had two shillings and a sixpence, instead of

half-a-crown, how gladly should they have one-and-sixpence of it." But still a wretched unbelief prevented me from obeying the impulse to relieve their distress at the cost of all I possessed.

It will scarcely seem strange that I was unable to say much to comfort these poor people. I needed comfort myself. I began to tell them, however, that they must not be cast down; that though their circumstances were very distressing there was a kind and loving Father in heaven. But something within me cried, "You hypocrite! telling these unconverted people about a kind and loving Father in heaven, and not prepared yourself to trust Him without a half-a-crown."

I was nearly choked. How gladly would I have compromised with conscience, if I had had a florin and a sixpence! I would have given the florin thankfully and kept the rest. But I was not yet prepared to trust in God alone, without the sixpence.

To talk was impossible under these circumstances, yet strange to say I thought I should have no difficulty in praying. Prayer was a delightful occupation in those days. Time thus spent never seemed wearisome and I knew no lack of words. I seemed to think that all I should have to do would be to kneel down and pray, and that relief would come to them and to myself together.

"You asked me to come and pray with your wife," I said to the man, "let us pray." And I knelt down.

But no sooner had I opened my lips with "Our Father who art in heaven," than conscience said within, "Dare you mock God? Dare you kneel down and call Him Father with that half-crown in your pocket?"

Such a time of conflict then came upon me as I have never experienced before or since. How I got through that form of prayer I know not, and whether the words uttered were connected or disconnected I cannot tell. But I arose from my knees in great distress of mind.

The poor father turned to me and said, "You see what a terrible state we are in, sir. If you can help us, for God's sake do!"

At that moment the word flashed into my mind, "Give to him that asketh of

thee." And in the word of a King there is power.

I put my hand into my pocket and slowly drawing out the half-crown, gave it to the man, telling him that it might seem a small matter for me to relieve them, seeing that I was comparatively well off, but that in parting with that coin I was giving him my all; what I had been trying to tell them was indeed true - God really was a Father, and might be trusted. The joy all came back in full flood-tide to my heart. I could say anything and feel it then, and the hindrance to blessing was gone - gone, I trust, forever.

Not only was the poor woman's life saved; but my life, as I fully realized, had been saved too. It might have been a wreck - would have been, probably, as a Christian life - had not grace at that time conquered, and the striving of God's Spirit been obeyed.

I well remember how that night, as I went home to my lodgings, my heart was as light as my pocket. The dark, deserted streets resounded with a hymn of praise that I could not restrain. When I took my basin of gruel before retiring, I would not have exchanged it for a prince's feast. I reminded the Lord as I knelt at my bedside of His own Word, "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord"; I asked Him not to let my loan be a long one, or I should have no dinner next day. And with peace within and peace without, I spent a happy, restful night.

Next morning for breakfast my plate of porridge remained, and before it was finished the postman's knock was heard at the door, I was not in the habit of receiving letters on Monday, as my parents and most of my friends refrained from posting on Saturday, so that I was somewhat surprised when the landlady came in holding a letter or packet in her wet hand covered by her apron. I looked at the letter, but could not make out the handwriting. It was either a strange hand or a feigned one, and the postmark was blurred. Where it came from I could not tell. On opening the envelope I found nothing written within ; but inside a sheet of blank paper was folded a pair of kid gloves, from which, as I opened them in astonishment, half-a sovereign fell to the ground.

"Praise the Lord," I exclaimed. "Four hundred percent for twelve hours' investment - that is good interest! How glad the merchants of Hull would be if they could lend their money at such a rate." Then and there I determined that a bank that could not break should have my savings or earnings, as the

case might be--a determination I have not yet learned to regret.

I cannot tell you how often my mind has recurred to this incident, or all the help it has been to me in circumstances of difficulty in afterlife. If we are faithful to God in little things, we shall gain experience and strength that will be helpful to us in the more serious trials of life.

But this was not the end of the story, nor was it the only answer to prayer that was to confirm his faith at this time. For the chief difficulty still remained. Dr. Hardey had not remembered; and though prayer was unremitting, other matters appeared entirely to engross his attention. It would have been so easy to remind him. But what then of the lesson upon the acquirement of which Hudson Taylor felt his future usefulness depended, "to move man through God, by prayer alone."

"This remarkable and gracious deliverance," he continued, "was a great joy to me as well as a strong confirmation of faith. But of course ten shillings however economically used will not go very far, and it was none the less necessary to continue in prayer, asking that the larger supply which was still due might be remembered and paid. All my petitions, however, appeared to remain unanswered, and before a fortnight elapsed I found myself pretty much in the same position that I had occupied on the Sunday night already made so memorable. Meanwhile I continued pleading with God more and more earnestly that He would Himself remind Dr. Hardey that my salary was due.

"Of course it was not the want of money that distressed me. That could have been had at any time for the asking. But the question uppermost in my mind was this: 'Can I go to China? or will my want of faith and power with God prove so serious an obstacle as to preclude my entering upon this much-prized service?'

"As the week drew to a close I felt exceedingly embarrassed. There was not only myself to consider. On Saturday night a payment would be due to my Christian landlady, which I knew she could not well dispense with. Ought I not, for her sake, to speak about the matter of the salary? Yet to do so would be, to myself at any rate, the admission that I was not fitted to undertake a missionary enterprise. I gave nearly the whole of Thursday and Friday, all the time not occupied in my necessary employment, to earnest wrestling with God in prayer. But still on Saturday morning I was in the same position as

before. And now my earnest cry was for guidance as to whether I should still continue to wait the Father's time. As far as I could judge I received the assurance that to wait His time was best, and that God in some way or other would interpose on my behalf. So I waited, my heart being now at rest and the burden gone.

"About five o'clock that Saturday afternoon, when Dr. Hardey had finished writing his prescriptions, his last circuit for the day being taken, he threw himself back in his arm-chair, as he was wont, and began to speak of the things of God. He was a truly Christian man, and many seasons of happy fellowship we had together. I was busily watching, at the time, a pan in which a decoction was boiling that required a good deal of attention. It was indeed fortunate for me that it was so, for without any obvious connection with what had been going on, all at once he said

'By the by, Taylor, is not your salary due again?'

"My emotion may be imagined. I had to swallow two or three times before I could answer. With my eye fixed on the pan and my back to the doctor, I told him as quietly as I could that it was overdue some little time. How thankful I felt at that moment! God surely had heard my prayer and caused him in this time of my great need to remember the salary without any word or suggestion from me. He replied,

"Oh, I am so sorry you did not remind me! You know how busy I am. I wish I had thought of it a little sooner, for only this afternoon I sent all the money I had to the bank. Otherwise I would pay you at once."

"It is impossible to describe the revulsion of feeling caused by this unexpected statement. I knew not what to do. Fortunately for me the pan boiled up and I had a good reason for rushing with it from the room. Glad indeed I was to get away and keep out of sight until after Dr. Hardey had returned to his house, and most thankful that he had not perceived my emotion.

"As soon as he was gone I had to seek my little sanctum and pour out my heart before the Lord for some time before calmness, and more than calmness, thankfulness and joy were restored. I felt that God had His own way, and was not going to fail me. I had sought to know His will early in the day, and as far as I could judge had received guidance to wait patiently. And now God was going to work for me in some other way.

"That evening was spent, as my Saturday evenings usually were, in reading the Word and preparing the subject on which I expected to speak in the various lodging-houses on the morrow. I waited perhaps a little longer than usual. At last about ten o'clock, there being no interruption of any kind, I put on my overcoat and was preparing to leave for home, rather thankful to know that by that time I should have to let myself in with the latchkey, as my landlady retired early. There was certainly no help for that night. But perhaps God would interpose for me by Monday, and I might be able to pay my landlady early in the week the money I would have given her before had it been possible.

"Just as I was about to turn down the gas, I heard the doctor's step in the garden that lay between the dwelling-house and Surgery. He was laughing to himself very heartily, as though greatly amused. Entering the Surgery he asked for the ledger, and told me that, strange to say, one of his richest patients had just come to pay his doctor's bill. Was it not an odd thing to do?

It never struck me that it might have any bearing on my own case, or I might have felt embarrassed. But looking at it simply from the position of an uninterested spectator, I also was highly amused that a man rolling in wealth should come after ten o'clock at night to pay a bill which he could any day have met by a check with the greatest ease. It appeared that somehow or other he could not rest with this on his mind, and had been constrained to come at that unusual hour to discharge his liability.

"The account was duly receipted in the ledger, and Dr. Hardey was about to leave, when suddenly he turned and handing me some of the banknotes just received, said to my surprise and thankfulness

"By the way, Taylor, you might as well take these notes. I have no change, but can give you the balance next week.'

"Again I was left, my feelings undiscovered, to go back to my little closet and praise the Lord with a joyful heart that after all I might go to China. To me this incident was not a trivial one; and to recall it sometimes, in circumstances of great difficulty, in China or elsewhere, has proved no small comfort and strength."

Joseph's Comments: I find this testimony very fitting for the hour in which we live. The Spirit is indicating that an hour is at hand when life as it is now

known in America and many Western nations will be changed forever. Prosperity will be replaced by poverty. Christians will be thrust upon God for their daily provision, for the only alternative will be to embrace the beast system of this fallen world.

Seeing that such things are at hand, would it not prove beneficial NOW for Christians to begin living with much less? I know of some who are even at this time being led to much simpler lives. I personally have been camping in a pop-up trailer for the past two months. For part of this time I have been eating mostly grains; grits, oatmeal, cream of wheat.

It will be difficult for many to adjust when they are suddenly taken from houses filled with creature comforts, partaking of abundant foods, and then they are suddenly dislodged and having to adjust to many hardships. I encourage you to seek the Lord now to understand what He would have you to do.

Just this past week I heard from two different families whom the Lord has suddenly directed to sell their homes and furnishings (and in one case a business of 31 years), to pare down greatly and relocate to a place God has directed them to. Such things are happening frequently as Yahweh prepares His people to walk through the days ahead.

Hudson Taylor - Growth of a Work of God



*Yours faithfully in Christ,
J. Hudson Taylor*

Hudson Taylor in 1893
(Click on picture for larger image)

The quotations in this post on the life of Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission, are taken from the second biographical book written by his son Dr. Howard Taylor. The book is titled *Hudson Taylor - Growth of a Work of God*. It can be read online in its entirety at the following link:

<http://www.worldinvisible.com/library/hudsonTaylor/hudsonTaylorv2/hudsonTaylorv2tc.htm>

Hudson Taylor had spent six years by this time in China ministering. At the end of this period his health, which was never robust, was at such a low state that he had to return to England. He was told by the physicians that he would never be able to return to China again.

Upon arriving back in England he immediately set to work laboring to produce a copy of the Scriptures in a language that the Chinese, and the missionaries, could readily use. He also devoted himself to finishing his medical training. For four years he labored day by day, entering into his journal a brief summary of the days labor. For a man broken in health, he labored

prodigiously.

The burden for lost souls in China never left him, and he continued to seek the Lord that He might raise up laborers for the mission field. Before another year had passed he had been able to arrange for five missionaries to be sent. These missionaries operated differently than most all other mission organizations in that day. They received no regular support. They did not raise large amounts of money before setting forth. They went in faith that the God who had called them would also care for them.

Hudson Taylor began to feel the pressure of this situation. His mind was led to deal with the responsibility of sending men and women to China to evangelize the population. What if support failed? What if there arose some great need among the workers, and there were no resources to send them? Hudson Taylor was confronted by the fear of great suffering and even death resulting in consequence of the missionaries who were going out with so little material support in evidence. We read of his struggle at this time.

"I knew God was speaking," he said of this critical time. "I knew that in answer to prayer evangelists would be given and their support secured, because the Name of Jesus is worthy. But there unbelief came in."

"Suppose the workers are given and go to China: trials will come; their faith may fail; would they not reproach you for bringing them into such a plight? Have you ability to cope with so painful a situation?"

"And the answer was, of course, a decided negative."

"It was just a bringing in of self, through unbelief; the devil getting one to feel that while prayer and faith would bring one into the fix, one would have to get out of it as best one might. And I did not see that the Power that would give the men and the means would be sufficient to keep them also, even in the far interior of China."

"Meanwhile, a million a month were dying in that land, dying without God. This was burned into my very soul. For two or three months the conflict was intense. I scarcely slept night or day more than an hour at a time, and feared I should lose my reason. Yet I did not give in. To no one could I speak freely, not even to my dear wife. She saw, doubtless, that something was going on; but I felt I must refrain as long as possible from laying upon her a burden so

crushing - these souls, and what eternity must mean for every one of them, and what the Gospel might do, would do, for all who believed, if we would take it to them."

The break in the journal at this point is surely significant. Faithfully the record had gone on for two and a quarter years; but now-silence. For seven weeks from the middle of April, lovely weeks of spring, there was no entry. First and only blank in those revealing pages, how much the very silence has to tell us! Yes, he was face to face with the purpose of God at last. Accept it, he dare not; escape it, he could not. And so, as long ago, "there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day."

It was Sunday, June 25, a quiet summer morning by the sea. Worn out and really ill, Hudson Taylor had gone to friends at Brighton, and, unable to bear the sight of rejoicing multitudes in the house of God, had wandered out alone upon the sands left by the receding tide. It was a peaceful scene about him, but inwardly he was in agony of spirit. A decision had to be made and he knew it, for the conflict could no longer be endured.

"Well," the thought came at last, "if God gives us a band of men for inland China, and they go, and all die of starvation even, they will only be taken straight to heaven; and if one heathen soul is saved, would it not be well worthwhile?"

It was a strange way round to faith - that if the worst came to the worst it would still be worthwhile. But something in the service of that morning seems to have come to mind. God-consciousness began to take the place of unbelief, and a new thought possessed him as dawn displaces night.

"Why, if we are obeying the Lord, the responsibility rests with Him, not with us."

This, brought home to his heart in the power of the Spirit, wrought the change once and for all.

"Thou, Lord," he cried with relief that was unutterable, "Thou shalt have all the burden! At Thy bidding, as Thy servant I go forward, leaving results with Thee."

For some time the conviction had been growing that he ought to ask for at

any rate two evangelists for each of the eleven unoccupied provinces, and two for Chinese Tartary and Tibet. Pencil in hand he now opened his Bible, and with the boundless ocean breaking at his feet wrote the simple memorable words: " Prayed for twenty-four willing skillful laborers at Brighton, June 25, 1865. "

"How restfully I turned away from the sands," he said, recalling the deliverance of that hour. "The conflict ended, all was joy and peace. I felt as if I could fly up the hill to Mr. Pearse's house. And how I did sleep that night! My dear wife thought Brighton had done wonders for me, and so it had. "

Such a trial is common among those who answer the call to follow the Spirit wherever He will lead. There is fear to be confronted as one carries the burden for their own self. How will they eat? How will they live? Where will their provision come from? Hudson Taylor had been adequate to such trials for the six years that he was laboring alone in China, but it was an altogether different burden to be seeking for, and sending, others to a foreign land where they too must face the same risks, trials and challenges.

I knew this burden when the Lord directed me to quit my employer in 1999, and to begin a ministry of writing. I had a wife and two young children. I had no savings, and no church to support me. All I had was the leading of the Spirit. Like Hudson Taylor, I judged that I was not adequate for the burdens to be carried, but neither could I deny the Lord and refuse to follow where He was leading.

When we see ourselves as responsible for the care of others, the weight can be crushing. We must enter into that place where we understand that Yahweh will Himself be the surety and care-giver for all those who follow Him. The burden is not ours alone to carry. The burden and responsibility belongs to Him. If He can fail, then our hope is in vain.

Yahweh does not promise any of His sons and daughters that they will not know troubles. He does not say they will not endure times of lack and even hunger. Indeed, He declares that such things will be common.

Philippians 4:11-13

Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned

the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

The path of self-direction seems a much safer road. When one chooses for themselves the offering they will present to God and the life they will live, they are able to bypass many of the trials of faith. Yet such a life is totally unsatisfactory to the Father. He requires that we hate our own life that we might follow Christ. Those who have accepted the cost can also testify that the presence of God becomes much more dear to them than ever before. His mercies are sought for, and encountered every morning. Sufficient unto the day is the trouble thereof, and also the grace bestowed.

The Lord began introducing Hudson Taylor after this trial to people of some means. Hudson Taylor never sought such relations, for his confidence was fully in the Lord and not in the arm of flesh. Nevertheless, as God desired to expand the work of sending forth missionaries to China, He raised up those who would give of their substance, as well as raising up those who would lay down their entire lives in going to the mission fields.

Hudson Taylor relates an account of one meeting where a well-to-do family desired to contribute to the work, but they had already given to others and had nothing on hand at the moment. This family then considered that they could give the quarterly insurance money that was paid for the protection of their substantial gardens and conservatories, looking to the Lord to protect their property during that time.

So warm was the sympathy of the parents that they desired to help the Mission financially, though no appeal had been made for money and no collections taken. All the more, perhaps, for this reason, Mr. Taylor's host and hostess wished to give as a matter of privilege; but their generosity in other directions had left them little in hand for the purpose. After praying over it, however, the thought suggested itself,

“Why not trust the Lord about the conservatories, and contribute the amount almost due for insurance?”

Langley Park possessed extensive greenhouses, and winter storms were apt to be serious near that east coast. But, definitely committing the matter to Him Who controls wind and wave, the check was drawn and the premium paid into the Mission treasury. The sequel Mr. Taylor never heard till long

after, nor indeed that the gift had been made possible in this way. But the Lord knew; and when a few months later a storm of exceptional violence broke over the neighborhood, He did not forget. Much glass was shattered for miles around, but the conservatories at Langley Park entirely escaped.

I have observed the Father's hand of protection in similar ways among those I have lived with. A couple years ago an elderly gentleman opened his home up to me that I might stay with him whenever I was in town. He and his grandson had been reading many of the writings I had written, and I had also shared with them numerous biographical books of saints who had walked in faith.

This gentleman has a very nice piece of property outside of town. He has 24 acres of land, a fishing pond and many trees on the property. It is a very idyllic setting. From time to time people were given permission to fish in his pond, and he even allowed some local churches and the rescue mission from the nearby town to bring groups out to fish.

The thought arose that it might be prudent to take out an insurance policy to protect this man and his property against loss from destruction, or from someone being injured and filing suit against him. As he was considering this the man's grandson suggested to him that this was a test from God to see if He would trust Him or look to man for his security. After careful consideration and prayer the man chose not to purchase the insurance, but to leave the matter in God's hands.

Some months afterwards a tremendous storm came through the area. It was on Mother's Day, and there were numerous tornadoes in the area. There were many trees and buildings damaged. On the road he lived on trees toppled and telephone poles were snapped all along the way. I went out afterwards and saw that the road was closed due to the damage all around, but as I walked across this gentleman's property I did not see any evidence of damage.

II Timothy 1:12

I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.

The many trials that Hudson Taylor faced in earlier days served to lay a foundation upon which his trust in God could rest. As the cares of the ministry increased, he was able to remember the trials he had already been carried

through, looking to God with hope and expectation of continued care, protection and provision. He wrote:

Feeling, on the one hand, the solemn responsibility that rests upon us, and on the other the gracious encouragements that everywhere meet us in the Word of God, we do not hesitate to ask the great Lord of the Harvest to call forth, to thrust forth twenty-four European and twenty-four native evangelists, to plant the standard of the Cross in the eleven unevangelized provinces of China proper and in Chinese Tartary. To those who have never been called to prove the faithfulness of the Covenant-keeping God in supplying, in answer to prayer alone, the every need of His servants, it might seem a hazardous experiment to send twenty-four European evangelists to a distant heathen land, "with only God to look to"; but in one whose privilege it has been through many years to put that God to the test in varied circumstances, at home and abroad, by land and sea, in sickness and health, in dangers, in necessities and at the gates of death, such apprehensions would be wholly inexcusable. "The writer has seen God, in answer to prayer, quell the raging of the storm," Mr. Taylor continued, "alter the direction of the wind and give rain in the midst of prolonged drought. He has seen Him, in answer to prayer, stay the angry passions and murderous intentions of violent men, and bring the machinations of His people's foes to nought. He has seen Him, in answer to prayer, raise the dying from the bed of death, when human aid was vain; has seen Him preserve from the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and from the destruction that wasteth at noon-day. For more than eight years and a half he has proved the faithfulness of God in supplying his own temporal wants and the needs of the work in which he has been engaged..."

Instance after instance is given from Mr. Taylor's experience of direct, unmistakable answers to prayer, and the deduction drawn is that with such a God it is safe and wise to go forward in the pathway of obedience-is indeed the only safe and wise thing to do.

Remarking on the operation of the China Inland Mission and the type of men and women it needed, he wrote:

"That Word had said, 'Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things (food and raiment) shall be added unto you.' If any one did not believe that God spoke the truth, it would be better for him not to go to China to propagate the faith. If he did believe it, surely the promise

sufficed. Again, 'No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.' If any one did not mean to walk uprightly, he had better stay at home; if he did mean to walk uprightly, he had all he needed in the shape of a guarantee fund. God owns all the gold and silver in the world, and the cattle on a thousand hills. We need not be vegetarians."

"We might indeed have had a guarantee fund if we had wished it; but we felt it was unneeded and would do harm. Money wrongly placed, and money given from wrong motives are both to be greatly dreaded. We can afford to have as little as the Lord chooses to give, but we cannot afford to have unconsecrated money, or to have money placed in the wrong position. Far better have no money at all, even to buy food with; for there are plenty of ravens in China, and the Lord could send them again with bread and flesh..."

"Our Father is a very experienced One. He knows very well that His children wake up with a good appetite every morning, and He always provides breakfast for them, and does not send them supperless to bed at night. 'Thy bread shall be given thee, and thy water shall be sure.' He sustained three million Israelites in the wilderness for forty years. We do not expect He will send three million missionaries to China ; but if He did, He would have ample means to sustain them all. Let us see that we keep God before our eyes; that we walk in His ways and seek to please and glorify Him in everything, great and small. Depend upon it, GOD's work done in GOD'S way will never lack GOD's Supplies."

It was men and women of faith, therefore, who were needed for the Inland Mission, prepared to depend on God alone, satisfied with poverty should He deem it best, and confident that His Word cannot be broken.

There is great wisdom in these words, and it is little wonder that the China Inland Mission met with much greater success in leading others to faith in Christ than those missionary organizations that operated along man's principles, seeking to shield themselves from trials and distresses. It is also not surprising that the China Inland Mission found itself accused of recklessness, irresponsibility and folly by those denominational groups that always kept suitable money in reserve, and insurance policies and lines of credit for emergencies. The flesh of man finds it a terrifying thing to be vulnerable before the world. Yet peace is attained by the one who makes God his refuge and looks to the bank of heaven to supply His needs.

One such family who were willing to embrace the life of faith faced their own tests as God brought them to cast all upon Him. We read of their experience in the following words.

In the little town of Attica two other hearts had been learning similar lessons, hearts united in an equally deep bond of love. Circumstances had changed a good deal for Mr. and Mrs. Frost since Mr. Taylor's previous visit, but their home seemed, if anything, more attractive than before. The marriage gift of his father, it had been beautified by the addition of paneled wooden ceilings, to replace the plaster ones which had fallen in the lower rooms, a detail that was to have a good deal to do with the direction of their lives at this time. With every comfort in their surroundings, a large circle of friends and nothing but happiness in their children, there seemed little of earthly good left to desire. But an unseen Hand was stirring up this nest, and Mr. Taylor's second visit found them in the midst of strange experiences.

For their income, which had hitherto been amply sufficient, had suddenly been cut off through the failure of a flourishing business. At his father's express desire, Mr. Frost had given up his own business some years previously, to devote himself entirely to evangelistic work. The father was well able to supply the needs of the family, and rejoiced to have fellowship in this way in his son's service for the Lord: But now, to his sorrow, this was no longer possible. To have gone back into secular employment would have greatly curtailed Mr. Henry W. Frost's usefulness as an evangelist, and would have necessitated his giving up much active participation in the work of the China Inland Mission. This he could not feel to be the will of God, after all the way in which he and Mr. Taylor had been led, and it practically came to be, as he expressed it, a question- "Which father are you really trusting?"

Outside the immediate family no one knew of their position, and both Mr. and Mrs. Frost saw it to be a special opportunity for putting to the test, not their faith only, but the definite promises of God. A few months previously they had determined never, under any circumstances, to go into debt. Amid the apparent comfort of their surroundings, therefore, and with wide margins of credit in the stores of the little town, they found themselves directly dependent upon their Heavenly Father even for daily bread. How searching as well as precious were the experiences through which they were learning more of His infinite faithfulness is a story to itself that we may not enter upon here. Suffice it to say that their joy in God was growing deeper and their desire to be wholly engaged in His service stronger, although they

little anticipated the sacrifice that would be involved.

Great was the encouragement to Mr. Frost, as to Mr. Taylor, of the welcome with which they were received at the Niagara Conference of this summer. The interest in China seemed deeper and the sympathy for the Inland Mission stronger than the previous year. The gifts of 1888 for the support of American workers were largely exceeded, and many new friendships were formed and old ones strengthened...

Mr. Taylor's chief object in coming over being the settlement of the work upon a permanent basis, he gave much time to meetings with the Council and intercourse with its individual members. The number of the latter was increased, and Mr. Sandham finding it necessary, on account of many engagements, to retire from the position he had held, Mr. Frost was invited to assume the sole responsibility as Treasurer and Secretary, making his home in Toronto.

So this was what it had all been leading to! In view of recent experiences, he was himself prepared for a life of faith with regard to temporal supplies; but he knew that Mrs. Frost would feel giving up their lovely home very keenly, on account of the children.

"One day as I was in the parlor, resting," he wrote of this critical time, "my wife, unknown to me, was waiting upon God in her own room for guidance. While thus engaged she was led to open her Bible and to read in the book of Haggai; and she had not read long in this portion of Scripture before she had the light for which she had been so earnestly seeking. A moment later I heard her coming to me across the library and hall. She stepped to my side, and without a word laid her open Bible on my knee, pointing as she did so to the fourth verse of the first chapter of Haggai. I looked at the words indicated and read as follows:

'Is it a time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses and this house lie waste?'

"It was not necessary that my wife should say anything to explain her meaning; the lesson was self-evident. One look in her face showed me that the Lord had won the victory for her, and one look at the ceiling overhead settled the question finally for myself. From that hour, though it was not an easy thing to do, we were united in our desire to give up our home, in order

that we might have part in the building of that spiritual house, the temple of Christ's body, which we knew the Lord was waiting to see completed."

Gladly would Mr. Taylor have made it possible for the step to be taken without financial difficulty; but while he could give them enough for the actual move, there was little over. The contributions at Niagara and in other centers, while amounting to thousands of dollars, were almost all designated for individual missionaries, and could not be drawn upon. About fifty pounds given to Mr. Taylor for his own use he felt free to pass on, but "beyond this" he said quite frankly, "I can promise you nothing. You will have to look to the Lord for supplies, as we do in England and in China."

"I confess," was Mr. Frost's very natural recollection, "that Mr. Taylor's words did not at first suggest an inviting prospect. To move my family and belongings, to take a home in a strange city, to invite a large number of candidates into that home, to supply their needs and our own and to carry on the work of the Mission with little more than two hundred and fifty dollars was certainly not a promising arrangement from an earthly standpoint. But recent experiences had given me to understand that there was a factor in the case not to be left out, and which being reckoned upon altered the proposition. That factor was the Lord Himself. Two hundred and fifty dollars was anything but a large sum with which to begin such an undertaking; but two hundred. and fifty dollars with the Lord was all that we could need. Thus, so far as finances were concerned, I soon felt prepared to accept Mr. Taylor's offer."

There are many in this hour who have been dwelling in their paneled and ceiled houses who are hearing the call to follow Christ into circumstances where they will daily have to look to Yahweh for their provision. There is often nothing than "a still, small voice that guides them." Yet weighing all things, and having waited upon the Father to be sure that they have discerned between the voice of their own soul, and the voice of the Spirit, many are accepting the challenges and finding the Father faithful.

He has not promised us that there would not be sacrifices, or material loss, or even seasons of poverty and hunger. But He will never abandon His people, or forsake them. There is truly a fellowship in joining Christ in His sufferings.

The following excerpt from Rick Joyner's book *The Call* is here presented as a fitting conclusion to this series of writings. It is written as Christ speaking

to His people.

“Those who come to Me now, fighting through all the forces of the world that rebel against Me, come because they have the true love of God. They want to be with Me so much that even when it all seems unreal, even when I seem like a vague dream to them, they will risk all for the hope that the dream is real. That is love. That is the love of the truth. That is the faith that pleases My Father. All will bow the knee when they see My power and glory, but those who bow the knee now when they can only see Me dimly through the eyes of faith are the obedient ones who love Me in Spirit and in truth. These I will soon entrust with the power and the glory of the age to come...”

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days.