

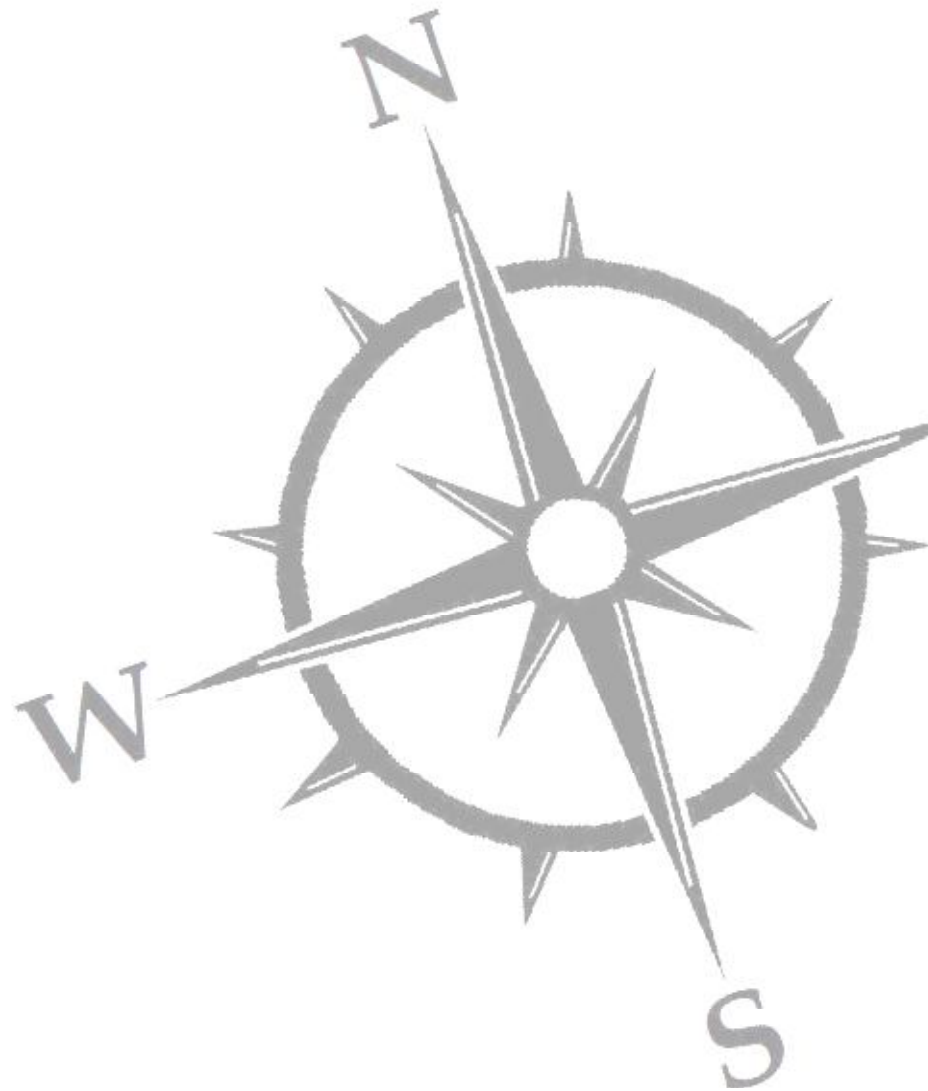
The Life of George Muller

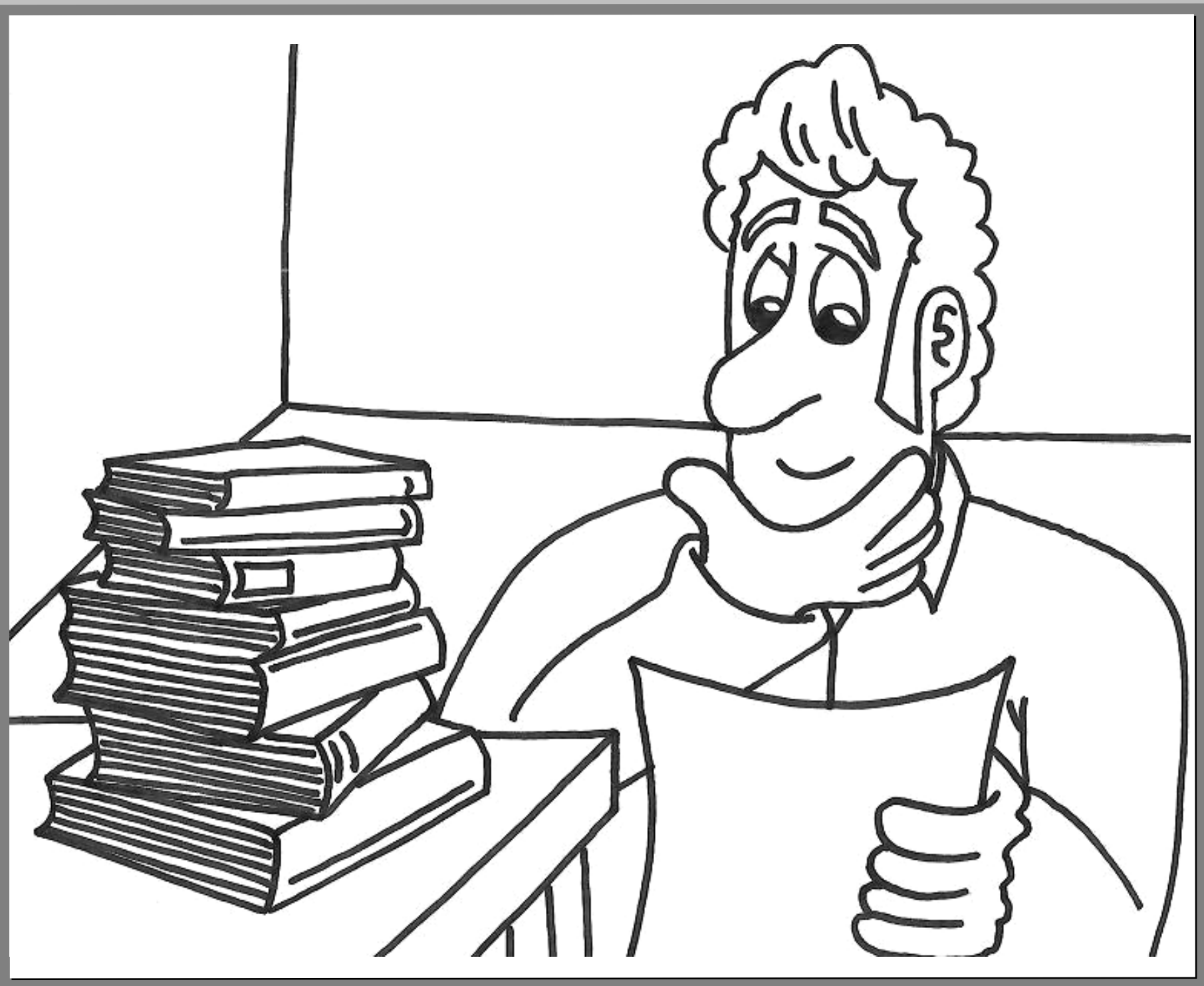
(1805-1898)

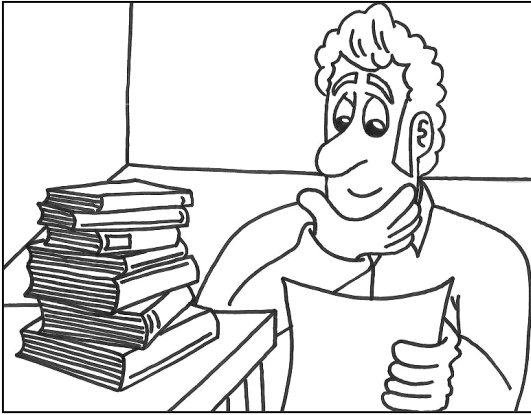
Lesson: 1.8 – Prayer Missionary Spotlight Series

This story reminds us of the importance of prayer. God desires that we bring our requests to Him. There is never a request or situation that is too small or too great for us to tell our Lord. If we want answers on how to live, we should go to the expert and creator of life. George Muller had learned to bring his every need to God and then watch God do amazing things to answer his prayers and help him.

“Pray without ceasing.” - 1 Thessalonians 5:17 -







Who remembers where we left off last week?

(Read the last paragraph from last week's lesson to begin this lesson as a review).

My new book sold very quickly and soon letters began arriving from all over England asking for me to come and speak. But sadly, I wasn't going to be able to go to the churches that had asked me because I wasn't going to be around. You see, I was very sick again. I got terrible headaches. Sometimes the only thing that would help them would be to tie a handkerchief around my head tightly and go lay down for days at a time. My doctors said I had to get out of Bristol immediately. I had tried to go and stay with friends in different parts of England, but it only helped a little.

Finally, in April of 1838, I decided to go back to Prussia for a visit. I decided that I would leave Mary behind to run things as she had been doing for the past year anyhow since I had become ill.

The trip home was rough. When I arrived, I went and visited and encouraged some German missionaries in Berlin. Then I went to visit my father. He and I got along much better now than we ever had back when I was in school. He was very interested in what I was doing and wanted to hear all about how Queen Victoria was doing (since her mother was actually from Prussia). After a month, I returned to Bristol. My time away had done me good. I have never been sick again like I was before I left Bristol.

I was glad I got back when I did because things were getting worse in Bristol. On August 18, 1838, I wrote in my journal that I did not even have one penny for the orphans. We needed money just to buy food. I prayed about it and by the end of the day, a woman sent us a gift of five pounds. She had sold her jewelry. We bought enough food for one day for the orphans, but then two days later we were in the same situation. Again we prayed and received a gift of five pounds. The next day a gift of twelve pounds came. Again and again, we had no money left for food, and we would pray and God would provide it in the nick of time. Many times, I was tempted to take money from somewhere else to help. Once, I got a check in the mail for two hundred and twenty pounds. The man gave the money to the Scriptural Knowledge Institution for Home and Abroad. I knew that all I had to do was ask and the man would gladly let me use it for the orphans, but I did not want to interfere. God had promised to provide for all my needs and I promised myself that I would let Him do that.

One afternoon, I came home to find a

woman in the parlor with Mary. The woman's name was Mrs. Brightman. Mrs. Brightman was a thin woman and her clothes looked too thin and her boots appeared worn down. She talked with Mary and me all afternoon about all that was going on in the orphanages and then all of a sudden stood up and said "Well I have to go now. You'll be wanting to get your dinner on the table. Thank you for your time."

I immediately offered for her to join us for dinner. She said "No, I wouldn't hear of it. I can't impose any longer. Besides I have a train to catch, not that I'll be able to eat anything they serve. And can you get me my shawl, Mrs. Muller? It's the only one I have and I don't want to leave it behind." I was saddened by the things she said.

I walked her to the door and then said "Dear Mrs. Brightman, I see that you are trying hard to follow the Lord. Although my wife and I do not have much, we would like to share what we have with you so that you can at least afford a decent meal on the train."

Mrs. Brightman burst into laughter. Very soon she told me that she had just inherited five hundred pounds. It wasn't that she couldn't afford a meal on the train it was that she had a sensitive stomach and couldn't eat the greasy food they served. And she only owned one shawl because as she said it, she could only wear one at a time so it was silly to have more than one. She told us she had come here to see how much of her inheritance she wanted to give to the orphanage. In the end, she ended up giving us a check for five hundred pounds.





Mary and I had a special time of prayer that night. This money would keep all three orphan houses running for a full year. Time and time again the Lord provided for us.

In 1843, Mary and I decided that we would take another trip back to Prussia. Many people in Prussia had asked me to come and speak. I especially wanted to go back and visit a small group of Baptists in Stuttgart to encourage them to continue trusting the Lord.

There were some problems though. First of all, we would need the money for Mary and me to travel to Prussia. On top of that, we were just about to open up the number four orphan house and I still did not have a matron to run the house. And I did not want to go without having about two hundred pounds in the bank to take care of all the expenses of the orphanages while we were away. Lastly, my book had been translated into German, and I wanted to publish it and bring copies of it to give out while I was in Prussia.

Mary and I prayed about it for a month. This seemed like a lot to ask when we

rarely knew where the money for the next day's food would come from. On July 12, 1843, a man who we did not know sent us seven hundred pounds to be used for four things: Some of it was to be given to the poor Christians in Bristol. Some of it was to be used for the orphanages. Some of it was to be used to publish my book in German, and some of it was to be used to strengthen German Christians. God had answered three of the four problems in one gift. About a week later, we found the perfect person to run the number four orphan house and not long after, Mary and I were ready to go.

We spent six months teaching and working with the German people. My father had died four years earlier, so my wife never had a chance to meet him.

In February, we returned to Bristol. When I got back, there was a letter on the table. The return address said it came from our neighbors in one of the six houses on Wilson Street. "I wonder if maybe they are going to rent us another house so that we can expand again," I thought as I excitedly tore open the letter.

This wasn't the case at all. It was a letter from one of the other residents of Wilson Street. They wanted me and my orphans to go somewhere else. I understood their complaints. All the orphans were very, very noisy, especially when they played in the corner lot. The drains were overflowing because they were being overused by the orphanages. The water barely came out of the faucets, because the orphans used so much water. The writer of the letter was right. Each of the houses was set up for only about 10

people to live in and we had at least 35 people living in each one. Suddenly, I had a thought. "What if we moved to the outskirts of town and put all the orphans under one roof?" I thought.

I decided to do what I always did when I didn't know what to do... I prayed about it. After praying for a while, I felt that God wanted us to move. The next week, I told the congregation about my plans. They loved the idea. Having everyone under one roof would make laundry and cooking easier. Once the building was paid for, they could save a lot of money on rent. And a permanent building like this would be a great example to the people of Bristol of what God could do.

Mary and I began to pray about our new orphanage. In the meantime, I also tried to gather some facts. It would cost us about 10,000 pounds to build our orphanage.

Mary and I spent the next 35 mornings praying for a sign that this was what God wanted us to do. Each day that there was no answer did not discourage me, I was just going to leave it in God's hands. If He wanted the orphanage built, I knew He would show us. Finally, on the 36th day of praying, a check for 1000 pounds arrived. It said it was to be used for the new orphan house. This was the largest amount that we had ever received in one gift. Not long after that, we received another check for fifty pounds. While out of town, my sister-in-law was talking about my book and the new orphanage. One man listening suddenly told my sister-in-law that he was an architect and that he would be happy to design and oversee the building for free.





On January 3, one of the orphan girls stopped me and handed me six pennies. It was a gift from her aunt for her birthday. She told me that she wanted me to have it for our new house. The girl's donation convinced me it was time to start looking for some land to build on.

The problem was that there were a lot of buildings being built in Bristol at that time. The price of land was going up and up. The first piece of land that I looked at was an old armory. I saw that it didn't get much fresh air, and would be damp in the winter and would lead to a lot of sickness.

On the way home, I saw another very nice-looking piece of land. Soon, however, I found out that the man wanted 1000 pounds per acre for it and we needed 6 or 7 acres. Though that was what the land cost, we couldn't afford that high of a cost.

A month passed before another member of the church told me about another piece of land called Ashley Downs. It was only about one mile from Wilson Street, but it was straight up the side of a hill. We reached the top of the hill and turned and gasped. It had a

beautiful view of Bristol down below. "It's perfect Papa!" said Lydia. "We must pray and ask God if it is right for us," I told her.

That night, I went to visit Mr.

Hazelwood, who owned the Ashley Downs property, but he was not in. His butler said to come back the next morning. I prayed that night that Mr. Hazelwood would accept a good price for the land.

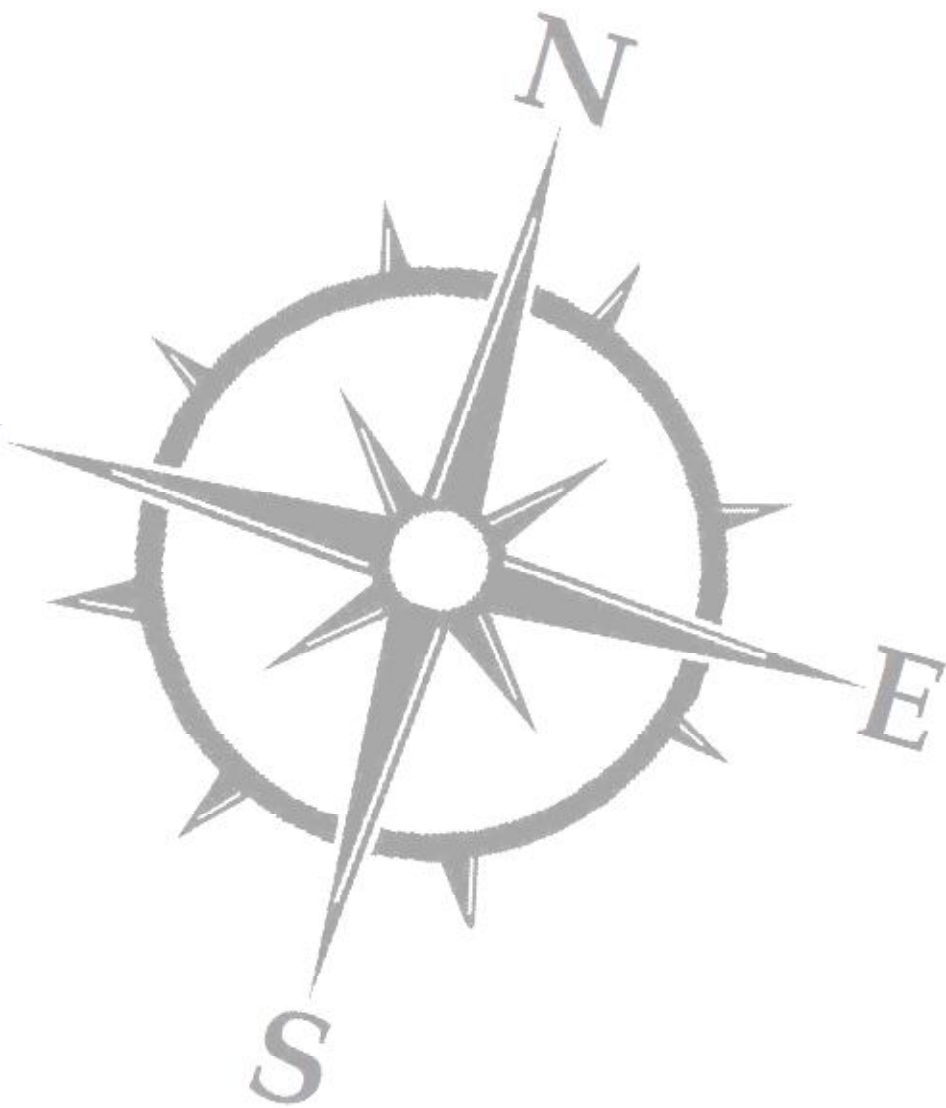
When I went back the next morning, Mr. Hazelwood told me that his butler had told him that I stopped by the night before. Before going to bed, Mr. Hazelwood had decided to charge me two hundred pounds per acre, which was a fair price. He said that he tossed and turned all night until he finally decided to sell me the land at one hundred and twenty pounds per acre.

That meant that we would get all seven acres for eight hundred and forty pounds. That meant that the total amount that we would be paying for 7 acres on Ashley Downs was less than just one acre of land would've cost on that other property.

I went home with a smile on my face. That night, I wrote a letter to the architect and asked if he was still interested in helping us. Everything seemed to be turning out perfectly. Little did I know, there was a disaster waiting just around the corner.

Why do you think is about to happen? To find out come back next time.

*(For additional information, discussion questions, and materials on this lesson please refer to lesson 1.8 on **page 136** in your England Expedition - Leader's Guide).*



References

For further reading or to obtain more information on this portion of the life of this missionary, please consult the following sources from which we obtained our information:

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