

617. Prayer, A Child's

I WISH we did believe in prayer: I am afraid most of us do not. People will say, "What a wonderful thing it is that God hears George Müller's prayers!" But is it not a sad thing that we should think it wonderful for God to hear prayer? We are come to a pretty pass certainly when we think it wonderful that God is true! Much better faith was that of a little boy in one of the schools at Edinburgh, who had attended the prayer-meetings, and at last said to his teacher who conducted the prayer-meeting, "Teacher, I wish my sister could be got to read the Bible; she never reads it." "Why, Johnny, should your sister read the Bible?" "Because if she once could read it, I am sure it would do her good, and she would be converted and be saved?" "Do you think so, Johnny?" "Yes, I do, sir, and I wish the next time there's a prayer-meeting you would ask the people to pray for my sister, that she may begin to read the Bible." "Well, well, it shall be done, John." So the teacher gave out that a little boy was very anxious that prayers should be offered that his sister might begin to read the Bible. John was observed to get up and go out. The teacher thought it very unkind of the boy to disturb the people in a crowded room and go out like that, and so the next day when the lad came, he said, "John, I thought that was very rude of you to get up in the prayer-meeting and go out. You ought not to have done it." "Oh! sir," said the boy, I did not mean to be rude, but I thought I should just like to go home and see my sister read her Bible for the first time." That is how we ought to believe, and wait with expectation to see the answer to prayer. The girl was reading the Bible when the boy went home. God had been pleased to hear the prayer; and if we could but trust God after that fashion we should often see similar things accomplished.

Spurgeon, C. H. Flashes of Thought. London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1874. Print.

In concluding his biography of George Müller, Pierson states that there were three qualities that stand out as conspicuous in Müller's life. What are those three qualities?

What does Pierson mean when he states, "*Truth is the corner-stone of all excellence, for without it nothing else is true, genuine, or real*"?

Where did Müller go to find truth?

How does Pierson's identification of this quality in Müller's life relate to the structure of Donald Whitney's book, *Spiritual Disciplines of the Christian Life*?

Why is Müller's commitment to the truth essential in our evaluation of his life and ministry?

What does Pierson mean when he says, "*Many a falsehood is not an intentional lie, but an undesigned inaccuracy*"? Do you agree?

How does Pierson define the second quality, faith?

Pierson identifies Müller's main mission as flowing out of these first two qualities of truth and faith. What is that mission?

How does Pierson define the third quality, love?

How did this quality relate to Müller's mission as stated above? What are some examples?

Loyalty to truth, the obedience of faith, the sacrifice of love—these form the threefold key that unlocks to us all the closed chambers of that life, and these will, in another sense, unlock any other life to the entrance of God, and present to Him an open door into all departments of one's being. George Müller had no monopoly of holy living and holy serving. He followed his Lord, both in self-surrender to the will of God and in self-sacrifice for the welfare of man, and herein lay his whole secret.

Pierson, Arthur T. George Müller of Bristol. London: James Nisbet & Co., Limited, 1899. Print.

How does the above quote relate to our ongoing study of discipleship?

What did Müller mean when he said that “*There was a day when I died, utterly died*”?

Why is it important for us to “*utterly die*”?

How did such utter death and commitment to truth, faith, and love affect Müller’s relationship to other aspects of humanity such as humor?

Why is it important to note, not only the godlike qualities, such as those listed above, but to also note the human frailties and infirmities experienced by saints such as Elijah and Müller?

Pierson boldly asserts that, “*God meant that George Müller, wherever his work was witnessed or his story is read, should be a standing rebuke, to the **practical impotence of the average disciple.***” What is meant by the “*practical impotence of the average disciple*”?

Why does the life of Müller form a standing rebuke against such a disciple?

According to Pierson, powerlessness is always a result of what?

Pierson brings his work on the life of George Müller by calling attention to seven additional qualities demonstrated in the life of Müller. What are those seven qualities?

How do these relate to the first three qualities Pierson began this chapter with?

Taking this list of seven and the first list of three qualities, which do you find present in your own life?

What hinders you from developing these qualities?

What practical steps can you take to make progress in these areas?

How might we encourage one another to greater faithfulness in exemplifying these qualities?

THE END
