

From the book *Answers To Prayer* by George Müller

APPENDIX A

FIVE CONDITIONS OF PREVAILING PRAYER

Entire dependence upon the merits and mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only ground of any claim for blessing. (See John xiv. 13, 14; xv. 16, etc.)

2.--Separation from all known sin. If we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us, for it would be sanctioning sin. (Psalm lxvi. 18.)

3.--Faith in God's word of promise as confirmed by His oath. Not to believe Him is to make Him both a liar and a perjurer. (Hebrews xi. 6; vi. 13-20.)

4.--Asking in accordance with His will. Our motives must be godly: we must not seek any gift of God to consume it upon our lusts. (1 John v. 14; James iv. 3.)

5.--Importunity in supplication. There must be waiting on God and waiting for God, as the husbandman has long patience to wait for the harvest. (James v. 7; Luke xviii. 1-8.)

APPENDIX B

THE CAREFUL AND CONSECUTIVE READING OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Concerning this subject Mr. Müller says: "I fell into the snare, into which so many young believers fall, the reading of religious books in preference to the Scriptures. I could no longer read French and German novels, as I had formerly done, to feed my carnal mind; but still I did not put into the room of those books the best of all books. I read tracts, missionary papers, sermons, and biographies of godly persons. The last kind of books I found more profitable than others, and had they been well selected, or had I not read too much of such writings, or had any of them tended particularly to endear the Scriptures to me, they might have done me much good.--I never had been at any time in my life in the habit of reading the Holy Scriptures. When under fifteen years of age, I occasionally read a little of them at school; afterwards God's precious book was entirely laid aside, so that I never read one single chapter of it, as far as I remember, till it pleased God to begin a work of grace in my heart. Now the Scriptural way of reasoning would have been: God himself has condescended to become an author, and I am ignorant

about that precious book, which His Holy Spirit has caused to be written through the instrumentality of His servants, and it contains that which I ought to know, and the knowledge of which will lead me to true happiness; therefore I ought to read again and again this most precious book, this book of books, most earnestly, most prayerfully, and with much meditation; and in this practice I ought to continue all the days of my life. For I was aware, though I read it but little, that I knew scarcely anything of it. But instead of acting thus, and being led by my ignorance of the word of God to study it more, my difficulty in understanding it, and the little enjoyment I had in it, made me careless of reading it (for much prayerful reading of the Word, gives not merely more knowledge, but increases the delight we have in reading it); and thus, like many believers, I practically preferred, for the first four years of my divine life, the works of uninspired men to the oracles of the living God. The consequence was, that I remained a babe, both in knowledge and grace. In knowledge I say; for all true knowledge must be derived, by the Spirit, from the Word. And as I neglected the Word, I was for nearly four years so ignorant, that I did not clearly know even the fundamental points of our holy faith. And this lack of knowledge most sadly kept me back from walking steadily in the ways of God. For it is the truth that makes us free, (John viii. 31, 32,) by delivering us from the slavery of the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life. The Word proves it. The experience of the saints proves it; and also my own experience most decidedly proves it. For when it pleased the Lord in Aug. 1829, to bring me really to the Scriptures, my life and walk became very different. And though even since that I have very much fallen short of what I might and ought to be, yet, by the grace of God, I have been enabled to live much nearer to Him than before.

"If any believers read this, who practically prefer other books to the Holy Scriptures, and who enjoy the writings of men much more than the word of God, may they be warned by my loss. I shall consider this book to have been the means of doing much good, should it please the Lord, through its instrumentality, to lead some of His people no longer to neglect the Holy Scriptures, but to give them that preference, which they have hitherto bestowed on the writings of men. My dislike to increase the number of books would have been sufficient to deter me from writing these pages, had I not been convinced, that this is the only way in which the brethren at large may be benefited through my mistakes and errors, and been influenced by the hope, that in answer to my prayers, the reading of my experience may be the means of leading them to value the Scriptures more highly, and to make them the rule of all their actions. * * *

"If anyone should ask me, how he may read the Scriptures most profitably, I would advise him, that:

"I.--Above all he should seek to have it settled in his own mind, that God alone, by His Spirit, can teach him, and that therefore, as God will be enquired of for blessings, it becomes him to seek God's blessing previous to reading, and also whilst reading.

"II.--He should have it, moreover, settled in his mind, that, although the Holy Spirit is the best and sufficient teacher, yet that this teacher does not always teach immediately when we desire it, and that, therefore, we may have to entreat Him again and again for the explanation of certain passages; but that He will surely teach us at last, if indeed we are seeking for light prayerfully, patiently, and with a view to the glory of God.

"III.--It is of immense importance for the understanding of the word of God, to read it in course, so that we may read every day a portion of the Old and a portion of the New Testament, going on where we previously left off. This is important--1, Because it throws light upon the connection; and a different course, according to which one habitually selects particular chapters, will make it utterly impossible ever to understand much of the Scriptures. 2, Whilst we are in the body, we need a change even in spiritual things; and this change the Lord has graciously provided in the great variety which is to be found in His word. 3, It tends to the glory of God; for the leaving out some chapters here and there, is practically saying, that certain portions are better than others: or, that there are certain parts of revealed truth unprofitable or unnecessary. 4, It may keep us, by the blessing of God, from erroneous views, as in reading thus regularly through the Scriptures we are led to see the meaning of the whole, and also kept from laying too much stress upon certain favourite views. 5, The Scriptures contain the whole revealed will of God, and therefore we ought to seek to read from time to time through the whole of that revealed will. There are many believers, I fear, in our day, who have not read even once through the whole of the Scriptures; and yet in a few months, by reading only a few chapters every day they might accomplish it.

"IV.--It is also of the greatest importance to meditate on what we read, so that perhaps a small portion of that which we have read, or, if we have time, the whole may be meditated upon in the course of the day. Or a small portion of a book, or an epistle, or a gospel, through which we go regularly for meditation, may be considered every day, without, however, suffering oneself to be brought into bondage by this plan.

"Learned commentaries I have found to store the head, with many notions and often also with the truth of God; but when the Spirit teaches, through the instrumentality of prayer and meditation, the heart is affected. The former kind of knowledge generally puffs up, and is often renounced, when another commentary gives a different opinion, and often also is found good for nothing, when it is to be carried out into practice. The latter kind of knowledge generally humbles, gives joy, leads as nearer to God, and is not easily reasoned away; and having been obtained from God, and thus having entered into the heart, and become our own, is also generally carried out."

APPENDIX C

PROVING THE ACCEPTABLE WILL OF GOD

It is very instructive and helpful to see the way in which Mr. Müller proved the acceptable will of the Lord, when exercised in heart about the enlargement of the Orphan work, so that not only 300 but 1000 Orphans might be provided for.

"Dec. 11, 1850.--The especial burden of my prayer therefore is, that God would be pleased to teach me His will. My mind has also been especially pondering, how I could know His will satisfactorily concerning this particular. Sure I am, that I shall be taught. I therefore desire patiently to wait for the Lord's time, when He shall be pleased to shine on my path concerning this point.

"Dec. 26.--Fifteen days have elapsed since I wrote the preceding paragraph. Every day since then I have continued to pray about this matter, and that with a goodly measure of earnestness, by the help of God. There has passed scarcely an hour during these days, in which, whilst awake, this matter has not been more or less before me. But all without even a shadow of excitement. I converse with no one about it. Hitherto have I not even done so with my dear wife. From this I refrain still, and deal with God alone about the matter, in order that no outward influence, and no outward excitement may keep me from attaining unto a clear discovery of His will. I have the fullest and most peaceful assurance, that He will clearly show me His will. This evening I have had again an especial solemn season for prayer, to seek to know the will of God. But whilst I continue to entreat and beseech the Lord, that He would not allow me to be deluded in this business, I may say I have scarcely any doubt remaining on my mind as to what will be the issue, even that I should go forward in this matter.

"As this, however, is one of the most momentous steps that I have ever taken, I judge that I cannot go about this matter with too much caution, prayerfulness, and deliberation. I am in no hurry about it. I could wait for years, by God's grace, were this His will, before even taking one single step towards this thing, or even speaking to anyone about it; and, on the other hand, I would set to work to-morrow, were the Lord to bid me do so. This calmness of mind, this having no will of my own in the matter, this only wishing to please my Heavenly Father in it, this only seeking His and not my honour in it; this state of heart, I say, is the fullest assurance to me that my heart is not under a fleshly excitement, and that, if I am helped thus to go on, I shall know the will of God to the full. But, while I write thus, I cannot but add at the same time, that I do crave the honour and the glorious privilege to be more and more used by the Lord. I have served Satan much in my younger years, and I desire now with all my might to serve God, during the remaining days of my earthly pilgrimage. I am forty-five years and three months old. Every day decreases the number of days that I have to stay on earth. I therefore desire with all my might to work. There are vast multitudes of Orphans to be provided for. * * *

"I desire that thus it may be more abundantly manifest that God is still the hearer and answerer of prayer, and that He is the living God now, as He ever was and ever will be, when He shall, simply in answer to prayer, have condescended to provide me with a house for 700 Orphans, and with means to support them. This last consideration is the most important point in my mind. The Lord's honour is the principal point with me in this whole matter; and just because that is the case, if He would be more glorified by my not going forward in this business, I should, by His grace, be perfectly content to give up all thoughts about another Orphan-House. Surely, in such a state of mind, obtained by the Holy Spirit, Thou, O my Heavenly Father, will not suffer Thy child to be mistaken, much less to be deluded! By the help of God I shall continue further, day by day, to wait upon Him in prayer concerning this thing, till He shall bid me act.

"Jan. 2, 1851.--A week ago I wrote the preceding paragraph. During this week I have still been helped, day by day, and more than once every day, to seek the guidance of the Lord about another Orphan-House. The burden of my prayer has still been, that He, in His great mercy, would keep me from making a mistake. During the last week the Book of Proverbs has come, in the course of my Scripture reading, and my heart has been refreshed, in reference to this subject, by the following passages: 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.' Prov. iii. 5, 6. By the grace of God I do acknowledge the Lord in my ways, and in this thing in particular; I

have therefore the comfortable assurance that He will direct my paths concerning this part of my service, as to whether I shall be occupied in it or not. Further: 'The integrity of the upright shall preserve them; but the perverseness of fools shall destroy them.' Prov. xi. 3. By the grace of God I am upright in this business. My honest purpose is to get glory to God. Therefore I expect to be guided aright. Further: 'Commit thy works unto the Lord and thy thoughts shall be established.' Prov. xvi. 3. I do commit my works unto the Lord, and therefore expect that my thoughts will be established.--My heart is more and more coming to a calm, quiet, and settled assurance, that the Lord will condescend to use me yet further in the Orphan Work. Here, Lord, is Thy servant!"

Mr. Müller wrote down eight reasons against and eight reasons for establishing another Orphan-House for Seven Hundred Orphans.

The following is his last reason for so doing:

"I am peaceful and happy, spiritually, in the prospect of enlarging the work as on former occasions when I had to do so. This weighs particularly with me as a reason for going forward. After all the calm, quiet, prayerful consideration of the subject for about eight weeks, I am peaceful and happy, spiritually, in the purpose of enlarging the field. This, after all the heart searching which I have had, and the daily prayer to be kept from delusion and mistake in this thing, and the betaking myself to the Word of God, would not be the case, I judge, had not the Lord purposed to condescend to use me more than ever in this service.

"I, therefore, on the ground of the objections answered, and these eight reasons FOR enlarging the work, come to the conclusion that it is the will of the blessed God, that His poor and most unworthy servant should yet more extensively serve Him in this work, which he is quite willing to do."

"May 24.--From the time that I began to write down the exercises of my mind on Dec. 5th, 1850, till this day, ninety-two more Orphans have been applied for, and seventy-eight were already waiting for admission before. But this number increases rapidly as the work becomes more and more known.

"On the ground of what has been recorded above, I purpose to go forward in this service, and to seek to build, to the praise and honour of the living God, another Orphan-House, large enough to accommodate seven hundred Orphans."