



**GEORGE MUELLER 1805-1898**

George Mueller is known as a man of extraordinary faith and prayer because he operated the Bristol Orphanage in England housing up to two thousand children with virtually no money in the bank.

What's for breakfast? That's a common question in many homes and no different in an orphanage. But the answer, as it came from George Mueller taking his morning walk in Bristol in 1870, was always very simple. He trusted God would supply all the needs of the children in the orphanage that he and his wife Mary watched over. Although there were no funds in their account and no food in the cupboards, Mueller would pray, as he walked, for God to meet His promises for these children's needs. On this particular morning he met a friend who stepped forward and asked him to accept some money for the orphanage. With a simple thank-you, George Mueller purchased breakfast for those in his charge, giving thanks to God for again keeping His promises to be "a Father to the fatherless" (Psalm 68:5) and meeting their needs so perfectly.

Mueller was a rebellious youth, but God brought him to salvation in 1825 as he attended the University of Halle. His life was changed from that of self-centered pleasure seeking, to that of viewing himself as a tool in the hands of the Master Workman. In 1829 Mueller left Prussia to travel to London desiring to train as a missionary to the Jews. However, God's plan led him instead to become a pastor to a Brethren congregation in Bristol, England. As he read the biography of A. H. Francke, the founder of an orphan house in Halle, Mueller began to expand his ministry to work among the poor. He started this work by establishing Sunday Schools to educate those who could not afford such an opportunity. But seeing the need among the poor, George Mueller and his wife believed they should open an orphanage.

As in everything he did, Mueller allowed no debt or "patronage from the world" to run this orphanage. He wanted to trust the Lord and bring every need to Him in prayer. It was this unshakable faith in God's providing hand which made the Bristol orphanages so unique. The orphanage never accumulated a surplus of funds, but daily relied on the Lord for their provisions.

At age seventy, George Mueller turned over the management of the orphanages to his son-in-law and began a series of world-wide missionary tours. From 1875 to 1892 he travelled over 250,000 miles and addressed three million people in forty-two countries. He died in Bristol at age 93. Though much money passed through his hands he did not accumulate wealth for himself. His life demonstrated what can be accomplished through the combination of tender compassion for the hungry and homeless children, unshakeable faith in God and practical action to meet needs.