

# The Eye of Faith

By Ron Rhodes

It was a Wednesday afternoon. Shrouded in a dense fog, a large steamer edged slowly forward off the coast of Newfoundland, its foghorn crying out somber notes of warning. The captain, nearing exhaustion from lack of sleep, was startled by a gentle tap on his shoulder. He fumed and found himself face to face with an old man in his late seventies.

The old man said, "Captain, I have come to tell you that I must be in Quebec on Saturday afternoon."

The captain pondered for a moment, and then snorted, "Impossible!"

"Very well," the old man responded, "if your ship can't take me, God will find some other means to take me. I have never broken an engagement in 57 years."

Lifting his weary hands in a gesture of despair, the captain replied, "I would help if I could—but I am helpless."

Undaunted, the old man suggested, "Let's go down to the chart room and pray." The captain raised his eyebrows in utter disbelief, looking at the old man as if he had just escaped from a lunatic asylum.

"Do you know how dense the fog is?" the captain demanded.

The old man responded, "No. My eye is not on the thickness of the fog but on the living God who controls every circumstance of my life."

Against his better judgment, the captain accompanied the old man to the chart room and knelt with him in prayer. With simple words a child might use, the old man prayed, "O Lord, if it is consistent with Thy will, please remove this fog in five minutes. Thou knowest the engagement Thou didst make for me in Quebec on Saturday. I believe it is Thy will."

The captain, a nominal Christian at best, thought it wise to humor the old man and recite a short prayer. But before he was able to utter a single word, he felt a tap on his shoulder. The old man requested, "Don't pray, because you do not believe. And as I

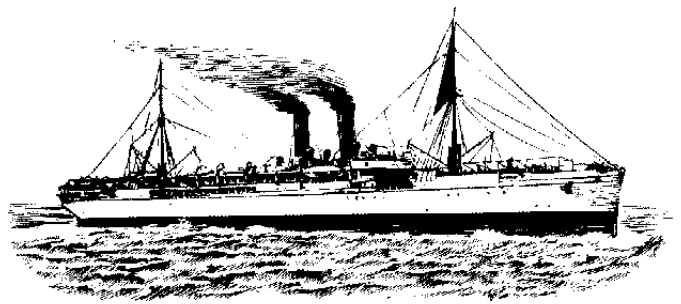
believe God has already answered, there is no need for you to pray." The captain's mouth dropped open.

Then the old man explained, "Captain, I have known the Lord for 57 years and there has never been a single day that I have failed to gain an audience with the King. Get up, captain, and open the door, and you will find the fog is gone." The captain did as he was requested, and was astonished to find that the fog had indeed disappeared.

The captain later testified that this encounter with the aged George Mueller completely revolutionized his Christian life. He had seen with his own eyes that Mueller's God was the true and living God of the Bible. He had seen incredible power flow from a frail old man—a power rooted in simple childlike faith in God.

The late Pastor Ray Stedman once delivered a sermon in which he said, "Faith has an apparent ridiculousness about it. You are not acting by faith if you are doing what everyone around you is doing. Faith always appears to defy the circumstances. It constitutes a risk and a venture."

That is the kind of faith George Mueller demonstrated decade after decade in his long and fruitful life. During the final year of his earthly sojourn, he wrote that his faith had been increasing over the years little by little, but he emphatically insisted that there was nothing unique about him or his faith. He believed that a life of trust was open to virtually all of God's children if only they would endure when trials came, instead of giving up.



George Mueller (1805–1895)

One of the early members of the Brethren, he founded five orphans' homes in Bristol, England, with shelter for 2,000 children. During his lifetime he cared for almost 10,000 orphans and received \$1.5 million [multi-millions of today's dollars] by faith alone. Before his death he estimated he had received 50,000 specific answers to prayer.