

Strengthened by Faith

by Hudson Taylor

Hudson Taylor's story illustrates the power of faith in overcoming even the most difficult circumstances and trusting God for provision.

Scripture: Psalm 37:5, Isaiah 40:31, Matthew 21:22, John 14:13-14, Romans 10:17, 2 Corinthians 5:7, Ephesians 3:20, Philippians 4:19, Hebrews 11:1, James 1:5

Topics: "Faith", "Divine Provision"

Description

Hudson Taylor shares his experience of being strengthened by faith during a period of illness and uncertainty. After receiving advice from his doctor to rest, he chose to rely solely on God's provision rather than revealing his needs to others. Through prayer and faith, he felt led to walk to the shipping office, where he received unexpected financial support and encouragement. Taylor's journey not only restored his physical strength but also provided an opportunity to witness to a skeptical surgeon about the power of faith. He concludes with gratitude for God's providence and the hope that his testimony may have impacted the surgeon's life.

Transcript

One day the doctor coming in found me on the sofa, and was surprised to learn that with assistance I had walked downstairs. "Now," he said, "the best thing you can do is to get off to the country as soon as you feel equal to the journey. You must rusticate until you have recovered a fair amount of health and strength, for if you begin your work too soon the consequences may still be serious." When he had left, as I lay very exhausted on the sofa, I just told the Lord all about it, and that I was refraining from making my circumstances known to those who would delight to meet my need, in order that my faith might be strengthened by receiving help from Himself in answer to prayer alone. What was I do to? And I waited for His answer.

It seemed to me as if He were directing my mind to the conclusion to go again to the shipping office, and inquire about the wages I had been unable to draw. I reminded the Lord that I could not afford to take a conveyance, and that it did not seem at all likely that I should succeed in getting the money, and asked whether this impulse was not a mere clutching at a straw, some mental process of my own, rather than His guidance and teaching. After prayer, however, and renewed waiting upon God, I was confirmed in my belief that He Himself was teaching me to go to the office.

The next question was, "How am I to go?" I had had to seek help in coming downstairs, and the place was at least two miles away. The assurance was brought vividly home to me that whatever I asked of God in the name of Christ would be done, that the Father might be glorified in the Son; that what I had to do was to seek strength for the long walk, to receive it by faith, and to set out upon it. Unhesitatingly I told the Lord that I was quite willing to take the walk if He would give me the strength. I asked in the name of Christ that the strength might be immediately given; and sending the servant up to my room for my hat and stick, I set out, not to attempt to walk, but to walk to Cheapside.

Although undoubtedly strengthened by faith, I never took so much interest in shop windows as I did upon that journey. At every second or third step I was glad to lean a little against the plate glass, and take time to examine the contents of the windows before passing on. It needed a special effort of faith when I got to the bottom of Farringdon Street to attempt the toilsome ascent of Snow Hill: there was no Holborn Viaduct in those days, and it had to be done. God did wonderfully help me, and in due time I reached Cheapside, turned into the by-street in which the office was found, and sat down much exhausted on the steps leading to the first floor, which was my destination. I felt my position to be a little peculiar -- sitting there on the steps, so evidently spent -- and the gentlemen who rushed up and downstairs looked at me with an inquiring gaze. After a little rest, however, and a further season of prayer, I succeeded in climbing the staircase, and to my comfort found in the office the clerk with whom I had hitherto dealt in the matter. Seeing me looking pale and exhausted, he kindly inquired as to my health, and I told him that I had had a serious illness, and was ordered to the country, but thought it well to call first, and make further inquiry, lest there should have been any mistake about the mate having run off to the gold diggings. "Oh," he said, "I am so glad you have come, for it turns out that it was an able seaman of the same name that ran away. The mate is still on board; the ship has just reached Gravesend, and will be up very soon. I shall be glad to give you the half-pay up to date, for doubtless it will reach his wife more safely through you. We all know what temptations beset the men when they arrive at home after a voyage."

Before, however, giving me the sum of money, he insisted upon my coming inside and sharing his lunch. I felt it was the Lord indeed who was providing for me, and accepted his offer with thankfulness. When I was refreshed and rested, he gave me a sheet of paper to write a few lines to the wife, telling her of the circumstances. On my way back I procured in Cheapside a money order for the balance due to her, and posted it; and returning home again, felt myself now quite justified in taking an omnibus as far as it would serve me.

Very much better the next morning, after seeing to some little matters that I had to settle, I made my way to the surgery of the doctor who had attended me, feeling that, although my uncle was prepared to pay the bill, it was right for me, now that I had some money in hand, to ask for the account myself. The kind surgeon refused to allow me, as a medical student, to pay anything for his attendance; but he had supplied me with quinine, which he allowed me to pay for to the extent of eight shillings. When that was settled, I saw that the sum left was just sufficient to take me home; and to my mind the whole thing seemed a wonderful interposition of God on my behalf.

I knew that the surgeon was skeptical, and told him that I should very much like to speak to him freely, if I might do so without offence; that I felt that under God I owed my life to his kind care, and wished very earnestly that he himself might become a partaker of the same precious faith that I possessed. So I told him my reason for being in London, and about my circumstances, and why I had declined the help of both my father and the officers of the Society in connection with which it was probable that I should go to China. I told him of the recent providential dealings of God with me, and how apparently hopeless my position

had been the day before, when he had ordered me to go to the country, unless I would reveal my need, which I had determined not to do. I described to him the mental exercises I had gone through; but when I added that I had actually got up from the sofa and walked to Cheapside, he looked at me incredulously, and said, "Impossible! Why, I left you lying there more like a ghost than a man." And I had to assure him again and again that, strengthened by faith, the walk had really been taken. I told him also what money was left to me, and what payments there had been to make, and showed him that just sufficient remained to take me home to Yorkshire, providing for needful refreshment by the way and the omnibus journey at the end.

My kind friend was completely broken down, and said with tears in his eyes, "I would give all the world for a faith like yours." I, on the other hand, had the joy of telling him that it was to be obtained without money and without price. We never met again. When I came back to town, restored to health and strength, I found that he had had a stroke, and left for the country; and I subsequently learned that he never rallied. I was able to gain no information as to his state of mind when taken away; but I have always felt very thankful that I had the opportunity and embraced it, of bearing that testimony for God. I cannot but entertain the hope that the Master Himself was speaking to him through His dealings with me, and that I shall meet him again in the Better Land. It would be no small joy to be welcomed by him, when my own service is over.

The next day found me in my dear parents' home. My joy in the Lord's help and deliverance was so great that I was unable to keep it to myself, and before my return to London my dear mother knew the secret of my life for some time past. I need scarcely say that when I went up again to town I was not allowed to live -- as, indeed, I was not fit to live -- on the same economical lines as before my illness. I needed more now, and the Lord did provide.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/hudson-taylor/strengthened-by-faith/>

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