

Faith-Building Stories for All Ages

INCREASE *my* FAITH

Maureen Huber

© April 2007 Carlisle Press

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage retrieval system, without written permission of the copyright owner, except for the inclusion of brief quotations for a review.

ISBN 10-digit: 1-933753-04-8

ISBN 13-digit: 9-781933-753041

Text and cover design: Teresa Hochstetler

Cover art: Mahlon Troyer © 2006 Marcus Wengerd Art Collection

Printed by: Carlisle Printing



Carlisle Press
WALNUT CREEK

2673 Twp. Rd. 421
Sugarcreek, OH 44681

Introduction



WE MAKE CHOICES IN life with the chronicles of history in our favor. The things we have learned influence the way we act and feel, the way we speak and decide, and the way we believe. Across the panorama of two thousand years of proof, we gaze backward to the Empty Tomb and judge the matters pertaining to our faith.

Yet our confidence still falters at times as hope dims and determination wavers, and men and women who have known the feel of Everest beneath their feet sink to the abyss of despair and brush close by the very gates of hell. Sometimes the glow of the encounter with the Divine has scarce paled from the face of the worshiper when, behind his back, the tempter glides in softly and feathers away with one shred of doubt the bits of rose-colored dust

he had mistaken for mountain-moving faith.

Mindful, then, of the fragility of the faith we experience this side of Golgotha, we ought to be the more amazed at the commitment shown by the saints of the Old Testament. For they, looking forward through the veil of history yet to be written, steadfastly grounded their faith upon the prophesied truths we have the privilege of viewing as facts.

This confidence they had in God—this faith in the absence of proof—can, if we allow it to, inspire us to set our feet more firmly upon the hills of triumph. Then, in the light of their confidence and the knowledge of their victory, we can with joyous anticipation and holy wonder pray, “Lord, increase my faith!”

—*Maureen Huber*

Contents



Don't Let Him Go!	1
Great-Grandmother's Job	8
No Good for Anything?.....	15
The Living Proof.....	25
Jessica or Lima Beans?.....	37
The Problem with Eric.....	41
Should I Confess?.....	46
All Such Desires	52
Twenty-seven Years.....	58
Walking on Coals	64
A Little Fun	73
Dilemma in Dutch	82
Beyond My Expectations	87
Love Will Make It Possible.....	95
Not Like Uncle Elwood!.....	101
From What I Heard	113
Did Carl Forget?.....	117
Peace on His Terms.....	121
I'd Give up Anything!	131

Don't Let Him Go!



“LET’S CONTINUE TO PRAY for Keith Levitt,” Brother Jonathan suggested as the congregation shared their prayer burdens together on Wednesday evening. “We want him to find salvation again.”

Tears sprang to Rachel Levitt’s eyes at the minister’s words. How faithful the congregation had been in praying for her wayward husband. Three long, lonely years had passed since she last saw him. How often she had wondered in those years what she could have done to prevent him from leaving. How might she have kept him from losing his way with the Lord?

She had sensed during the weeks before he left that he

was not his usual happy self. And she had been especially concerned about the unhealthy contacts he had been making with Joe Burskind. Joe and Keith had been close before Keith had become a Christian, but Rachel knew that now Joe's influence would have the wrong effect on her husband.

Then one morning in July, Keith failed to come for breakfast at his usual time. Nothing could have prepared Rachel for the note that she found on the cream separator when she went to the barn to look for him.

"I'm done keeping up the front," it read. "I'm tired of pretending. It's not working. If I ever find my way out of this mess, I'll come back."

That was all. He hadn't even told her that he loved her.

How clearly she remembered the nausea that washed over her as she sank onto a cream can close to the separator where he had left the message. "Keith. My Keith. Gone—perhaps forever. Please, oh please, Lord, bring my Keith back home!"

In the days and weeks that followed, the shock of his leaving gradually wore away. With five small children plus the farmwork to care for, Rachel was always busy—busy enough that she could not have done more. Again and again she committed herself and the children to God's care, and again and again she besought the Lord to draw her husband to Himself.

"I want to accept this as something You have chosen

to allow for me," she prayed. "I claim Your grace, Lord. Without it, I am nothing. Help me to raise our children to love and serve You."

But the loneliness, the heartache, the agony of knowing that her husband's soul was not safe in Jesus, always remained. Week after week and month after month for three years now she had prayed. Sometimes she was confident that God would answer soon. At other times she almost despaired.

The minister's voice went on to other things now, but Rachel did not hear. "Oh, Lord, You know how I desire to have Keith come home. But even more, I long to be sure that all is well with his soul."

Year after year continued to pass by, and the worn slip of paper with Keith's message grew frayed in Rachel's Bible. It was her last communication from him.

Was he still alive? "Lord, if he is, please draw him to Yourself. Speak to his heart and bring him back, Lord. Please don't let him go!"

Five years passed, then ten, and then fifteen. The children grew up, and one by one they got married. Still Rachel interceded. "Father, if only I could know that his soul is safe. Continue to draw him, Lord. Don't let him go, oh Father. Don't let him go to hell!"

Finally twenty years had come and gone. The children were all married now, and Rachel was enjoying her grandchildren. Whenever one of the children needed help, she would spend some time in that particular home.

Thus it was Rachel who answered when the phone rang one afternoon in her oldest son's home.

"Hello," the voice on the other end replied to her greeting. "This is Donald Reamer. Is Sister Rachel Levitt there, or can you tell me where I can contact her?"

Rachel was puzzled. Donald Reamer. She hardly knew him. He had been in the community as an evangelist once or perhaps twice in the past thirty years. Why would he want to speak to her now?

"This is Rachel," she said hesitantly. "Can I help you?"

"Sister Levitt." The evangelist's voice was gentle. "Perhaps you ought to sit down. I have some very unusual news for you."

Obediently Rachel sat on a nearby chair. "I'm sitting now," she said into the mouthpiece.

"Sister Levitt, I'm calling from New York City. During the past week, I've been holding revival meetings at the _____ Street Mission. They have a register at the back of the building where those who attend are encouraged to sign. Sometimes I look at it after the service.

"On Monday evening this week," he continued, "a man who appeared to be quite ill sat on the back bench in the auditorium. He wept all through the service. I was eager to talk with him, of course. But by the time I reached the back of the building, he had disappeared. I checked the register then, and found Keith Levitt's name."

Tears streamed down Rachel's cheeks as she listened in silence to the voice at the other end of the line.

"Oh, Brother Reamer! Do you think it could be my Keith? There might be another Keith Levitt, you know. New York City is big..." The words trailed off and Rachel mopped at her tears.

"I thought about that too," the evangelist admitted. "And I felt that I had to know. Since he was gone, however, I hardly knew where to begin.

"Yet I felt compelled to find him. I searched the area for two days without success. Then early this morning, while I was praying for guidance in locating him, the Lord reminded me that the man had appeared very ill. So I began to check the hospitals here in the city.

"Sister Levitt, your husband is in _____ Hospital here in New York City. He found the Lord Jesus as his personal Savior a few minutes ago, and now he wants to see you. He's critically ill. Can you come immediately? He keeps asking how soon we think you can be here."

For several moments Rachel fought to gain control of her emotions so that she could speak. "Of course I'll come," she managed to sob at last. "Tell Keith that I'm coming as fast as I can. And tell him I love him and forgive him," she added. "Tell him I've prayed for him every day for the twenty years he's been gone."

"I'll be waiting for you here whenever you arrive," the evangelist said. "I told Keith that I won't leave. He's

in room 407. It's on the fourth floor of the northeast wing."

Rachel replaced the receiver and sank to her knees beside the chair on which she had been sitting. "Thank you, Father," she sobbed aloud. "Thank you that You didn't let him go!"

Rachel rested and prayed by turns throughout the following hours. Her two sons took turns sleeping and driving as they traveled toward the city. As the long hours crept toward morning, the aura of light from New York City appeared on the horizon.

"We'll be there before rush hour," Rachel said to her sons. To herself, she added, "Oh, Lord, if it is Your will, please let Keith live until I've talked to him. You know how desperately I want to tell him myself that I forgive him."

The June dawn was casting long shadows as the weary travelers crawled stiffly from their vehicle. Rachel's heart beat faster as she walked toward the hospital. Was Keith still alive? "May it be according to Your will, Lord," she prayed silently as her oldest son opened the door and stepped back for her to enter. The support of his arm about her brought fresh tears of gratitude as she stepped silently into the elevator.

A few minutes later, they saw Brother Reamer sitting on a chair beside a door that was numbered 407. His Bible was open on his lap.

"Sister Rachel, I'm glad you've arrived," he greeted

her. Rachel could tell by his expression that her husband was still alive.

Brother Reamer opened the door, and Rachel stepped into her husband's hospital room. There were four beds. The evangelist motioned toward the one in the farthest corner.

"Thank you, Father, thank you!" Rachel rejoiced as she moved silently toward it. She brushed her tears aside as she approached the wasted form of the sleeping man.

How cruel the years of sin had been! "But thank you, Father, that You saved his soul!" Trembling, she reached for the wrinkled hand that lay on top of the covers.

"Keith," she whispered softly as tears fell on his cheek. "Keith, Sweetheart, it's Rachel. I'm here."

The man on the bed stirred fretfully, then slowly opened his eyes.

"Rachel!" He caught her hand in a feeble grasp and brought it to his lips. "Rachel, I'm sorry. So sorry! And so very glad you've come."

Two hours later, as Rachel held his hands in hers, Keith drew his final breath.

"Thank you for answering my prayers, Lord," Rachel prayed as she laid the limp hands back onto the cover. "Thank you for saving his soul. Thank you that You didn't let him go!"