

GROWTH OF FAITH
THROUGH
MIRACLES

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SHERIAN EMIGH



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I dedicate this book to my precious family; to my loving husband who worked so patiently with me. I pray that the remembering of God's work in our lives will be a blessing to them. I would also like to thank my daughter, Mendee and daughter-in-law Laurie for helping me to type the book in the very first days.

CONTENTS

Introduction.	ix
1. A New Beginning.	1
2. Believe Without Seeing	8
3. A Special Blessing.	16
4. Learning to Let Go.	23
5. Leap of Faith	33
6. Israel Pilgrimage.	42
7. God Moves Mountains.	50
8. A Time of Glory.	58
9. Allowing God to Work.	65
10. A New Work	71
11. God Knows Best	78
12. Troublesome Times	85
13. Joy of Teaching.	93
14. Perfect Timing of God	101
15. Cancer: Edifying, Not Destroying	109
16. God's Grace	121
17. Chemo: A Hard Place	129

18. God's Special Events.	139
19. Cancer Again	148
20. Trusting God	159
21. Alone With God	167
22. Family Time.	178
23. Joy of the Lord	190
24. God's Blessings.	199
 Sources.	 209

INTRODUCTION

When I was a little girl, I received a small gold bracelet with a tiny mustard seed encased in a plastic ball. This was a gift from my Sunday school teacher. She explained to us why this tiny mustard seed was mentioned in the Bible, sharing Jesus' explanation.

“For verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.”

—Matthew 17:20, KJV

See also Mark 4:31-32, Luke 13:18-19, Matthew 13-32.

This bracelet with its tiny seed became very important to me. I was fascinated by the fact that God was telling us that all we needed was a small bit of faith and we could move mountains. I later learned that these mountains can be all kinds of obstacles or problems. In my walk with the Lord I have seen Him work many miracles. I have often recalled this verse, remembering

GROWTH OF FAITH THROUGH MIRACLES

that if I only have faith as a grain of mustard seed, God can move mountains.

Therefore, the purpose of this book is to capture on paper those times in my life when God has given me the faith of a mustard seed in order to remove or move mountains. I pray it may encourage others who read it to be increased and strengthened in their faith.

Chapter 1

A NEW BEGINNING

My husband, Leigh, was in the Air Force for 28 years. During that time we moved 20 times. Leigh told me I couldn't count the moves from off base to on base. I told him any time I had to pack things and unpack them that was a move. In August, 1972 we were sent to McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey. He was told by the officers in charge that they had removed the commander and the administrator. The clinic was in a big mess. This move would make or break his career. It all depended on if he could reorganize the clinic to make it function correctly. He cleaned up the mess so well that he got the reputation of one who could go into a clinic that was having problems and make it work better. This was the reason for us to have a lot of short notice assignments.

While we were there our third child was born on April 8, 1973. We named her Leanne, a combination of our names, Leigh and Sherian. The pediatrician wouldn't release her to me, nor would he tell me what was wrong. Leigh and I were on our way to the nursery to see our daughter. In the hallway we saw the doctor who had delivered her.

GROWTH OF FAITH THROUGH MIRACLES

When he asked how she was doing, I told him we didn't know because they hadn't brought her to me yet. I was going to nurse her and I should have had her that morning. It was now 5:00 p.m. I broke down in tears. He said he'd look into it for me. Leigh and I continued on to the nursery.

When I saw my precious little girl, she was lying in her diaper with those round sticky things all over her body. We could barely see her tiny body. I didn't understand that they were checking her heart. Later that evening the pediatrician brought her in. Our daughter had a hole in her heart and would have to be monitored very closely. We were to bring her back to hospital every week for a while so they could continue testing her. We took her back the first week and nothing had changed.

Before I took her back the second week I took her with me to a prayer group. I had been going to this prayer meeting while I was pregnant. I shared my baby's condition with the women. They laid hands on her and prayed for a healing. When I took her to the hospital for her next check up, the doctors couldn't find the hole. They tried to explain it by saying it must have moved to the back where we can't see it.

I told them about the women praying for her and that God had healed her. They didn't respond, except to say that they wouldn't put in her medical records that she was born with a hole in her heart. If they put it in her records, then when she was older and wanted to play sports she would not be allowed to play. She did play sports and had no problems. God is so good!

Leigh wanted me to have my tubes tied after Leanne was born. He didn't want any more children. We discussed it for several weeks. I finally agreed to do it. When I went to the hospital to sign the paperwork I just couldn't do it. I went home and told Leigh, who was very upset with me and didn't understand. I told him maybe later I would be able to do it. I really wanted another baby.

A NEW BEGINNING

I prayed, “Lord, if you want us to have another child, please let me pregnant before Leanne turns one.” I did get pregnant, but I lost the baby in the first few weeks. I never told Leigh. I was very confused and questioned God, but received no answer. I did get an answer, but not until we moved to Virginia 17 months later. I was standing in church singing praises to God when He spoke to my heart and said, “Sherian, count the months to see when that baby would have been born.” When I did, the baby would have been due around the first of December—the same time we moved to Virginia. Leigh had to go back to McGuire during the first two weeks. He came home on the weekend. The Lord continued by saying, “I promised you I would never give you more than you could handle and I knew you would not be able to handle having a baby at that time.”

While we were at McGuire I experienced a lot of new things. I was in a prayer group that met once a week. I was amazed that when they prayed it was as if they were talking to a real person. As they prayed I would be thinking of what I would say. I prayed about family, weather, people, but it was so rote and empty. I had such a desire to be able to pray like the other women. One day I had such churning in my Spirit. I felt like God wanted to tell me something, I didn’t know how to hear Him. At the next meeting I shared my dilemma with the ladies. I really expected someone in the group to tell me what I could do to hear from God. I was really disappointed when no one said anything. After everyone left I was fixing lunch for me and the children. A woman from the prayer group came to my kitchen door. I invited her in. She told me she felt like the Lord wanted her to come back and talk to me. She asked me if I knew anything about fasting. I told her I knew people fasted in the Old Testament. I had fasted one time in college to lose weight. I didn’t know people fasted today. She continued to tell me what she did when she wanted to hear from the Lord. She would not eat breakfast or lunch. She ate supper with her

GROWTH OF FAITH THROUGH MIRACLES

family. Her husband was not a believer so she didn't want to offend him. She would go about her daily chores stopping every so often to read scripture. She sat listening to her praise tapes, waiting on the Lord. She assumed I didn't have any praise tapes so she brought one to give me. After she left I felt so confused. I said to the Lord I didn't want to do something just because someone else did it. If this was something He wanted me to do then He would have to let me know somehow.

I kept my Living Bible on my nightstand. The next morning I opened up my Bible and it fell open to Joel 2:12 "That is why the Lord says, Turn to me now, while there is time. Give me all your hearts. Come with fasting, weeping, mourning." At that point in my life I didn't know the Bible well enough to know where to look. God was faithful to show me that scripture. I chose to obey and to fast. I started getting a lot of phone calls. Friends wanting me to go shopping, even go to lunch. This wasn't normal and at first it was hard to resist. Then I realized Satan was trying to keep me from seeking the Lord. I told Satan that I rebuked him and I was staying in the house waiting on the Lord. As soon as I did that the phones calls stopped.

I went out to get the mail. There was a flyer and when I opened it up the scripture just seemed to jump up at me in bold print. The word was from Revelations chapter 3 verses 15 and 16. "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. 16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." This scripture had always bothered me mostly because I didn't understand it. I understood it then. I had just enough taste of what it was like to be with God and I sure didn't want Him to spit me out of His mouth. I fell to my knees sobbing. I asked Him to forgive me for being lukewarm.

You see, I was playing a game. I would go out and party Saturday night, then go to church on Sunday. I had one foot in the world and the other in heaven. Things changed that day. I

A NEW BEGINNING

gave my entire life over to God. I told Him I wanted to serve Him for the rest of my life. When I stood up I knew something had happened. I felt new inside and was full of peace. When I prayed now I was talking to God from my heart. My understanding of the Word was enlarged. I was filled with such joy.

Leigh and our family went to Kansas to visit our parents. I had always gotten car sick. I was unable to read or do anything but stare out the front window. I had found a book explaining the Holy Spirit. I was so hungry for information on the work of the Lord. I began to read it, forgetting I got car sick. When I realized what I was doing I stopped and thanked the Lord for healing my car sickness. I read the whole book out loud to Leigh. I stopped whenever we wanted to talk about something. We learned so much about the Holy Spirit. When we arrived at Garden City, Kansas I was so excited about my new found life that I shared it with my whole family. The reaction I got was, "Oh, Sissy (nick name my family calls me) is on one of her things again. She will get over it soon enough. They found out that I never got over it. A few years later they were calling me asking me to pray for them.

After arriving back at McGuire I discovered a few of the ladies from the pray group were attending a Bible college. They asked me if I would be interested in going. Like I said earlier I was so hungry for the word. I enrolled and took a course. The next semester they were doing a class in Revelations. I talked Leigh into going with me. The man who was teaching was short in stature and had the bluest eyes I have ever seen. When he opened his mouth to teach his face just glowed. We found out later that he and another man put together the Scofield Bible. We learned so much from him.

I put Brett and Mendee to bed every night with prayer and devotion. Mendee, who was two, asked me one night, "What does Jesus look like?" I had a hard time trying to explain enough to satisfy her. I bought her one of those little pictures of Jesus

GROWTH OF FAITH THROUGH MIRACLES

and put it on her night stand. That didn't seem to answer her question. She just kept asking for about a week or so. Then all of a sudden she just quit asking. I asked her if she still wondered what Jesus looked like. She said, "No Mommy, I saw Jesus." Amazes me how Jesus answered a small child's prayer.

Leigh told me he saw a big change in me. He didn't know how to handle it. He said if it had been another man he would know what to do. What do you do with the fact that you are no longer number one in the life of your wife—it's now Jesus. He also said he was jealous of my new relationship. He wanted it too, but he didn't know how to get there. He reacted to me with anger. He treated me so mean for a few weeks.

One night after I had put the kids to bed I went down to clean up the kitchen. Leigh was sitting in his chair watching TV. He completely ignored me. I begin to cry as I was doing the dishes. When I had finished the dishes I went upstairs to our bedroom. I sat in my blue chair and cried out to the Lord. I sat with my Bible in my lap, tears flowing down my face. *Lord I need my husband to help me!* The Bible fell open to a scripture that said, "No, all you need is me!" I felt such peace like I never felt before. I realized that Satan was using my husband to bring me down. Satan will use anything or anyone to pull down a believer. When I realized he was at work on me again I rebuked him in the name of Jesus. As soon as I did he fled, and Leigh treated me better again.

I received a phone call from my sister Connie. She told me my mother was in the hospital with a bleeding ulcer. Connie and my Dad were told by the doctors that the situation didn't look good. When she hung up I ran up stairs to my blue chair. I knew there was no way I could get to Kansas. I opened my Bible and just started flipping through random scripture. Every thing I read was about someone dying. I closed my Bible. I cried out to the Lord that I wasn't ready to lose my momma. I did not want her to die! After a time of crying and refusing to accept the fact

A NEW BEGINNING

that she was dying. I finally said, OK Lord, if this is Your will for my mother, then I accept it. When I calmed down I opened my Bible to a scripture that simply said, “She lives.” I knew for certain that God had given her life. Later when I talked to Connie I found out the same time I released her to the Lord was the very same time my momma revived. Momma told me later that she was walking toward a gate where there were flowers of every color all around. The most beautiful place she had ever seen. She felt such peace. She said it looked very much like a card I had sent to her. Then all of a sudden she woke and saw she was in the hospital. I praised the Lord for His miracle of life for my momma.

Chapter 2

BELIEVE WITHOUT SEEING

We moved to Springfield Virginia from McGuire Air Force base, New Jersey in December 1974. We were trying to buy a townhouse with a VA (Veterans Administration) loan, which involved a lot of paperwork. The owner said he would let us rent until the paperwork went through. We moved in and I threw all of the packing boxes away, thinking we would be there for three years. We kept running into closed doors. The owner was so kind to work with us, and we finally got all the paperwork finished. We were told that we had to be approved by the president of the townhouse association before we could buy the house. He was out of town for a couple of weeks. We were in that townhouse for about six months.

Shortly after we moved in, Karen Smiley came to welcome us to the neighborhood. Her daughter Christina played with our daughter Mendee who was four, just one year older.

Karen's sister had just turned her life over to Jesus. She had quit wearing any make-up, and only wore dresses, no pants. She was on Karen all the time trying to make her do the same thing. When Karen saw that I was a born-again believer and I

BELIEVE WITHOUT SEEING

still wore make up and pants, she was confused. She stayed all day asking question after question. When I finally realized she wasn't going to leave any time soon, I started doing my chores. She followed me around, talking the whole time. She was still there when Leigh came home from work, and the next day she was back doing the same thing.

Leigh and I had started going to the Methodist church. I had joined a women's Bible study where the church provided nursery. Karen went with me one day. After we opened with prayer, I asked if anyone wanted to accept Jesus into their life. Karen tapped me on the leg, and said, "I knew you were going to do that." She prayed and accepted Jesus into her life. We became close friends and have remained so over the years.

Gay Koon started coming to our Bible study. Gay had two small children about the same ages as Karen's and mine. One day I was talking about people who go to church every Sunday, attend Sunday school, and believe they are going to heaven just because they do that. They don't realize it takes a personal relationship with Jesus to get into heaven. After Bible study I was driving us all back home. Gay, who was in the front seat with me said, "Sherian, I am one of those people you were talking about. I don't know what to do to accept Jesus."

I told her I would help her when we got to my house. While five little kids ran around making lots of noise, I prayed with Gay. She asked God to forgive her for her sins against Him. She wanted Him to take over her life and from now on she would follow Him. The three of us continued to get together and became good friends.

Because the paperwork on the townhouse was taking so long, Leigh and I looked at new townhouses and found one we really liked. Leigh said the interest rate would have to be seven percent for us to be able to afford it. In God's perfect timing, the interest rate came down and we signed the papers. The day after we signed, the president of the townhouse association came

GROWTH OF FAITH THROUGH MIRACLES

by our house. He told us we didn't need to have his signature to buy the townhouse, but we had already signed the papers for the new townhouse.

Isn't God clever in the ways He works things out? We were there just long enough for Jesus, through me, to lead Karen and Gay to become Christians. God is so good!

We also learned the mortgage rate was to go up to seven and a half percent that Friday. We closed the following Monday and it was still at seven percent. Jim, Karen's husband, who worked for HUD (Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development) told us the only reason it was still seven percent was because of a paperwork glitch. He also said, "Boy, you guys must have an in with God." He was a new Christian who accepted Christ shortly after Leigh and I shared with him. Karen told people that God dropped us off at the first townhouse just long enough to get them saved. Our friendship has flourished over the years.

I fought moving because we were going to have to move ourselves. Leigh had been in the Air Force for nine years at this point. The Air Force had always supplied a moving company. I was struggling with anxiety of moving and all that goes with it. God had a friend call. She said she knew I didn't want to move, but that I should let go and let friends help. I felt at peace after that.

It turned out to be a wonderful move, one of our best. The night before, several of us took our grill and picnic table to the new townhouse. We put the picnic table in the kitchen. We shared our first meal in our new God-given house. After we ate, we dedicated the house to God. We went into every room and prayed. Our prayer was that whoever entered our house would feel the love and presence of our Lord, even if they didn't understand what they were feeling. People who came to visit said our house felt very warm and welcoming. The experience of

BELIEVE WITHOUT SEEING

dedicating the house to God was special, and we have continued to dedicate our homes.

One day in June, I waited for a phone call from the hospital that would tell me if my pregnancy test was positive or negative. When they called and told me I was pregnant, I felt confusion and fear. I desperately wanted another child to add to our two daughters, Mendee and Leanne, and our son Brett. I was afraid that Leigh would be unhappy. He had expressed his desire to not have any more children.

I dreaded having to tell him. When he came home from work, I asked him if I could sit on his lap. He asked me why? As I sat down, I hid my face in his shoulder. I didn't want to see his reaction. I said, "Because this pregnant lady needs to sit down." When I looked up at him, his face was filled with joy.

I said, "You really are happy, aren't you?"

He replied, "Yes, I am, aren't you?"

I told him I was happy as long as I knew he was. Then he told me he knew I was pregnant. This amazed me, and I asked him how he knew. He told me that the night I conceived in May, the Lord told him it would be a boy.

Praise God! This was to be a glorious experience in our lives.

In July, we decided to tell the children. We ate in the dining room with candles and made it a very special supper. When everyone was through eating Leigh said he had something special to tell them. He told them they were going to have a baby brother. When they asked how he knew it was a boy, Leigh said because God had told him. The Lord gave us lots of opportunities to share His truth. The children never questioned or doubted we were having a boy. From others we received all kinds of reactions: disbelief, laughter, and advice, such as, "You'd better have a girl's name picked out just in case."

At one point, after being met with a lot of doubt from friends and family, I began to allow Satan to bring doubt into my mind. The Lord reminded me that Mary and Joseph had

GROWTH OF FAITH THROUGH MIRACLES

similar reactions to contend with and that we were to stand firm in what He had told us.

About three months before the baby was born, we began to think about a name. One night, I took a book with baby names and prayed, “Lord, if there is a name that you want us to give this baby, please show it to me through this book.” As I read through it, Jonathan, David, Michael, and Matthew seemed to stand out.

When I saw the meaning of David Matthew together, my heart leaped. I knew that this was to be his name. David means “beloved,” and Matthew means “gift of the Lord.” When I shared this name and its meaning with Leigh, he said, “Yes, that’s what we’ll name him.”

One night, Leigh was relaxing in bed when a warm sensation came over him. He realized that there were words in his head that he didn’t understand. He asked the Lord for an interpretation of this strange new language. That was when the Lord told him, “With the name David Matthew I am well pleased, and with the baby’s mother I am well pleased. This child shall do mighty works for me.”

A few times during my pregnancy, thoughts came to me, seemingly from out of nowhere—thoughts like, *we will never bring the baby home from the hospital and if we do, something will be wrong with him.*

My dear friend Karen Smiley gave me a shower. After putting all the baby things away, I awoke in the middle of the night with the thought *I’ll never be able to use these things if I don’t bring a baby home from the hospital. Who could I give them to?*

On yet another occasion, I went to open the drawer just to look at the baby clothes, and as I opened it, I heard a strange voice saying, “No baby of yours will ever wear these clothes.” I immediately closed the drawer and left the room in fear. Soon I realized that Satan was attacking me again. I rebuked him, and I began to ask God why these thoughts kept coming in on me. I

BELIEVE WITHOUT SEEING

knew they were of Satan, but I didn't understand the meaning behind them. I only knew that they were so awful that I couldn't share them with anyone, not even Leigh. I was afraid that by saying the thoughts aloud, they might come true.

Sunday night before David was born, I was reading Catherine Marshall's book, *Something More*. I had tried for several months to finish this book, but for some reason, I couldn't get it finished. I realized that the Lord's timing is always perfect. I hadn't been able to finish it because I hadn't needed what the Lord revealed to me. I was reading the passage in which Derek Prince was talking to a lady who had been a medium.

She asked him to pray with her. As he looked into her eyes, he sensed duplicity. He knew that his prayers for her would do no good unless she was ready to make a clean break with Satan. Derek suggested that she was not yet ready and to come back when she was sure she wanted to give up her past. A day later, the woman again came to Derek asking for prayer, this time insisting that she had changed her mind about spiritualism and had repented. Though Derek found himself nagged with doubts about her sincerity, he finally agreed to pray with her. But he found it hard-going, like he was tackling a series of obstacle courses all the way. After a few moments, he told the woman that he wanted to take a little rest, so he withdrew a few steps and leaned against the altar rail, thinking and asking for God's direction.

Suddenly, he was jerked from his reverie. A loud, clear voice of a different tone from the woman made him whirl around. He saw her pointing a finger at him. "I see you in a car, and it's wrecked against a tree," she said. Derek Prince's reaction was trigger-quick. Recognizing now what he was really up against, he said with great firmness of voice, "You spirit of divination, I refuse to accept that from you. That's Satan's lie. I will not be in any car that's wrecked against any tree." Later, telling of this incident, he concluded by saying, "Had I not been on my guard, had I begun to believe this

GROWTH OF FAITH THROUGH MIRACLES

woman, I would have been in real trouble. The woman was seeing and describing Satan's destiny for me. By admitting this idea into my mind, I would have been submitting myself to Satan's plan.¹

Praise God that He can teach us through many sources. Immediately after reading this, I began to cry and realized these thoughts were directly from Satan, and death was his plan for David. He was trying to get me to accept his plan by planting these thoughts in my mind. I rebuked Satan in the name of Jesus and told him I now understood the reason for the recurring thoughts. I told him I wouldn't accept his plan for David. God had already told us that David was His, and he would do mighty works for Him.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

—James 4:7 KJV

I then shared all this with Leigh. Satan no longer had a hold on me. This was one of the lessons God taught us before David could be born.

Sometime before Christmas, we received the book *A Daily Guide to Miracles* by Oral Roberts. This was a real faith-builder for us. We were learning how to plant seeds for our lives and others. Leigh and I both felt we were to send money from our tax refund to evangelist Cal McCarter. We prayed about it and both came up with the same sum of money. When we received our check from the government, the first thing Leigh did was to sit down and write a check to Cal. He included a letter explaining that the money was a seed we were planting for our son David's life in Christ.

Another lesson surfaced in the form of decision making. We were to place a Bible in honor of David in a church pew.

BELIEVE WITHOUT SEEING

You would buy a Bible and the church would put the name that had been requested on a sticky paper plaque. The plaque would then be placed in the front of a new Bible. The Bible would be randomly placed in a pew. Leigh and I had discussed and prayed about doing this and both agreed on it. We brought home the form, but it lay in the house for several weeks, untouched. I asked Leigh if he was going to fill it out. He said he would, but thought he would wait until after David was born. I reminded him that we would not be practicing seed faith. The Lord wanted us to do it before the birth, as a testimony of our faith in His Word. That Sunday, Leigh filled out the form. David was born that following Tuesday.

That same Sunday as we were leaving church, the assistant pastor came up to us. He heard we believed that our baby was going to be a boy and we had even named him. In those days they didn't do a sonogram unless there was a problem. He told us he didn't believe he could put God on the spot like that. I replied that it was God who was putting us on the spot. God was expecting us to trust Him with what He had told us about David.