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HOW THEY ENTERED CANAAN
(A Collection of Holiness Experience Accounts)
Compiled by Duane V. Maxey

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

CHARLES H. BABCOCK

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The writer of this sketch has proved now for more than twenty-five years that the wondrous grace of God has been exceeding abundant. We can scarcely find words to describe the fellowship we have with Christ, in the ministry of His glorious Gospel. We have, from the beginning of our Christian life until now, found in Him the all-sufficient Savior. The greatness of it all grows with the years, and Jesus Christ does not become an indistinct and fading vision, but the glorious, radiant, and conquering Savior, Friend and Elder Brother, the Bridegroom of the heart.

We came into this great experience of salvation when but a lad. It occurred on Sunday morning, in a Methodist Church, in the city of Paterson, N. J., where I had gone to service with my father. It was the largest church that I had ever been in, and the wonder of it all produced an awe and deep reverence. The minister was a man well along in middle life. His presence was very striking, and his preaching was in great power, and produced great effect upon the large congregation. At the close of the sermon the minister asked if there was any person present who wanted to be a Christian and find the Savior; if so, would he kindly raise his hand. This was wholly unexpected to me, but I longed to be a Christian, and wanted to put my hand up, but it seemed I could not get it up. My father saw me and said, "Put it up," and I did so. The minister said, "My son, will you come here to the altar?" I looked down the long aisle and was afraid to start, but finally did, and the nearer I got to the altar, the faster I went. When I reached the minister, I fell into his outstretched arms. But this was not all, I fell into the arms of Jesus, and He wondrously saved me. What a change came into my young heart and life! My love for the Lord Jesus was full, and the Bible and the Christian people all seemed new to me. It seemed that I wanted to be in God's house all the time, and, so far as I can remember, was always present at the prayer meeting and the Sabbath School.

Soon after, I united with the church and became active in all its work. I kept giving my testimony in the church, and missions, to the power of Christ to save, and exhorting sinners to accept Him. More and more the Holy Spirit was leading and helping me, and I was increasing in

grace and strength. The class meetings at that time were places of wonderful power and blessing, and they, more than any other service of the church, were the means of my young life in the grace of Christ.

Not long after this, I felt God calling me to preach His Gospel. Right at this point the conflict began -- not that I did not want to enter the ministry, but I fell into the hands of unspiritual leaders, who blurred my vision and hindered my preparation. I drifted into other fields of work, and finally started in the lumber business. This called me out on construction jobs, away from home and the church, and among wicked men. I was the object of ridicule and persecution for my stand as a Christian. Being alone, and not knowing just what was best, I decided to quiet down in my testimony. That was just what the devil wanted. Had I known that was his purpose I would have cried mightily to God for help. It was not long before I found myself cooling off in spiritual zeal, and drifting with the currents about me. The vision that I had of Christ, and the call to His service, became obscure, and finally vanished. I was left without Him and my heart was broken. But I drifted on for several years, seeking for satisfaction in the world's pleasure, but finding none. The enemy of my soul was determined to destroy me and made great efforts to do so. But God was watching over and seeking after me. His lovingkindness and tender mercy never left me.

The first great awakening that came to me after this was not at church, nor under the preaching of the Gospel, but while I was away from home, and preparing myself for a great ball to be held in a distant city. My plans were all laid, and preparations complete, and I was on the way to the train. When nearing the station, and rounding a dark place in the street, I heard what seemed to me a voice saying, "Stop! Stop!" This greatly startled me. I looked about to see who was calling, and, to my great surprise, saw no one. Such a strange feeling came over me that I was unable to move in the direction of the station, and the train was about due. Soon I heard the bell and whistle, and saw the train pull into the depot, then leave, but I stood still. I know now that it was God's Spirit arresting me that night. I hastened back to my room and flung myself down before God and cried out for mercy, and asked Him to keep me from going to hell. Soon after, I began attending the different churches, but no one spoke to me about my soul. It seemed to me that "no one cared for my soul." In the winter of 1898 I came back to my home much discouraged, and with a sad heart. Life seemed to hold but little attraction for me. I had sown to the wind and was reaping a bitter remorse and disappointment.

However, there was something ahead for me in the plan of God that I never dreamed of. A revival meeting was being held in the Quaker Church, and I accepted an invitation to attend. The meetings were being conducted by a woman evangelist, and were attracting quite a large attendance. As the services continued, the power of God increased, and soon conviction was upon all the people, myself included. The hand of God was heavy upon me. I fled to the altar, confessing my sins and calling upon God for mercy. The darkness was terrible. I was in despair, and felt that I could never be saved. But right at this point, the light from Heaven broke in upon my soul, the darkness was dispelled, and the sins of my life were blotted out -- "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." God, for Christ's sake, restored my soul to the love and fellowship of the Lord Jesus Christ. I fled from the church to my home and Mother, to tell her what had taken place -- that God had wonderfully saved her boy. There was great joy that night in my home, as I took Mother into my arms and told her that all my wanderings were over. That was nearly thirty years ago, and for nearly twenty-five years I have been preaching the Gospel.

There have been great changes since that night. Mother has gone to Heaven to be with Jesus, the little church is changed, and our home is not there; but the Christ is more to me now than He has ever been.

Not only did He restore my soul, but He gave me back the call to preach, and at once I began to get ready. The question, Where to go for preparation? was a problem that I was unable to settle. The pastor of the church where I was saved began to help me, and told me about the Cleveland Bible Institute (Friends), and Rev. J. Walter and Emma B. Malone, the presidents and founders of the School. This gave me a great thrill of joy; and soon I was in touch with them, and making arrangements to enter the Bible School that fall.

When I arrived at the Institute my heart was much blessed and comforted. Brother and Sister Malone began at once to help me get started in my studies. I spent four great years there; and consider Brother and Sister Malone among the choicest and clearest teachers of God's Word that I ever listened to. Their love of the truth and the high standard of righteousness that they constantly held before the students made this a Bible School of power. It is safe for me to say that outside of Mrs. Babcock, who is now in Heaven, I owe more to them than any other two persons I ever knew. I have been trying to pay my debt of gratitude throughout the years in winning souls for the Master, and getting others to do likewise.

It was while I was a student at the Bible Institute that God wonderfully sanctified my soul. Dr. B. Carradine was the evangelist. I thought all was quite well with me until I heard the great truth of his messages. His sermons on sin and Holiness were tremendous. They awakened in me a serious reflection and examination. I found that what he was preaching was God's Word, but I was not in the experience of Full Salvation, although I was much blessed, and God was graciously with me. The struggle was on, and it was different from anything I had ever known in all my Christian experience. I was being riddled by the Gospel gun of Full Salvation. I wondered if I had really been converted. Finally, I went to my friends for help, but they knew that nothing could help me but death to the "old man" of sin. I remember going to an old colored saint whom we called "Aunt Sweney Brown." She walked with God and had the glory upon her. I told her my troubles, and thought perhaps she could pray me through, and this would save me from going to the altar in public. But there was too much of self and carnality for me to get off that way. Sister Brown saw right through me, and knew my struggle. Looking me straight in the eye, she said, "Honey, de hornets is after your!" I knew there was something stinging me awfully. It was the hornets of carnality, but I was unable to understand it all then. This old saint of God got down upon her knees and took hold on the throne for me. I was greatly blessed, but did not get the blessing of Entire Sanctification there.

I went to the meetings, and was now under deep conviction for Holiness. I longed for a night when the church would not be so crowded, but to my surprise every night the congregation seemed to increase, and my condition was getting desperate. I reached a place where I must do one of two things -- either get sanctified, or back away from the preaching and experience altogether. But, thank God, I did not back away. The next night I determined to go through with God, and did, by His grace, go down to the death of self and sin. What a night that was for my soul! How can I describe it, or put it on paper! It is too great and blessed to give in detail, or fully tell of its glory.

God, for the sake of His only begotten Son, did sanctify me wholly. The struggle was over, the glory of God shone around, the fire of the Holy Ghost went through my soul, cleansing me from all sin, and prostrating me before God. When I came through I found myself down between the seats. During the battle, in some manner I had crawled under the pews, but when the work was accomplished, I came up with my heart full of praise to God that He had taken me over into the Land of Canaan. My soul was satisfied. It was a time of great joy and victory! All was settled on the inside, and there was a bright outlook for the work of the Lord'.

Source: "Christ Exalted" by Charles H. Babcock

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