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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. S. BISHOP
(Methodist)

I had pious parents, who taught me to walk in the paths of piety and peace. Left early to the care of a dear mother (she has been now many years in glory), I was taught to fear God, to love His word and His messengers, to reverence His Sabbaths, to look upon religion as the one thing needful. I loved to hear those who spoke of Jesus and to sing His praises. Oh how often did my young heart swell with desire of becoming one day a missionary -- that seemed to me the post "par excellence!" -- oh that I could preach Jesus when I became a man!

In the month of October, 1847, on the Lord's day evening, after a searching sermon, I was found, heart broken and almost in despair, at the communion rail, earnestly seeking deliverance. There I wept and prayed -- there I tried to believe. The meeting closed, and I left the chapel still bearing the load of unpardoned sins. But praise God, while on the way home, lifting my heart to God in earnest mental prayer, my burden fell off, my chains were broken, I felt, I was free -- Jesus was my Saviour. The spot where this happened will be ever graven upon my memory. It is hallowed ground. There God spoke peace to my soul. Praise His name! With the assurance of salvation, my old conviction and desires respecting preaching returned with redoubled energy and distinctness. After much hesitation and doubt as to my fitness for the work (of the call I never had the least doubt), I offered myself as a local preacher and was accepted.

But to be fully set apart to this glorious work was my ambition and earnest conviction. Praise the Lord, He undertook for me, and after enabling me to mount obstacles and difficulties, He opened my way. I was accepted by the Conference and sent as a probationer to the place I now occupy in the Lord's vineyard, as a missionary at Jeremie, St. Domingo.

I began my labors here with a single eye to the honor and glory of God, desiring nothing but to please God and save souls. I endeavored sincerely to do the Lord's work to the best of my ability. But little success seemed to reward my toil, and I was driven to look within. I saw the need of being holy; I read and prayed: I strove to believe. It was the 14th of December, 1851, encouraged by reading Mrs. Fletcher's life, I laid myself wholly upon the altar, and received the

assurance that God had truly accepted me. I did not confess Jesus before men, and therefore lost the blessed assurance. Oh, had I been wise, my peace might have flowed as a river. I hid my treasure, and I lost it. Since that time, as often as I have laid myself on the altar, I have received the assurance of sanctification, but I have as often lost it by hiding it from God's people.

The closing services of the last, and the introductory ones of the present year, have been seasons of blessing to my soul. Writing in my journal on January 9th, I could say I believe I have that perfect love which casteth out fear. Still I did not profess it openly. Need I tell you by this means I was shorn of my strength? A few months ago we received several back numbers of the "Guide to Holiness." Bless God for that precious collection of testimonies to the cleansing efficacy of Jesus' blood! I love its pages. The papers on holiness are clear and convincing; but the best part, to my taste, are those simple and encouraging experiences of God's sanctified ones. Since reading them, I have been afresh stirred up to claim a clean heart as mine, and, blessed be God, he has anew given me the testimony of His Spirit to the fact. Oh, what abounding grace to me, unworthy, unfaithful me!

Last Sabbath afternoon I was reading the "Guide," and happened to light upon an experience which in some points resembled mine, especially in having obtained often, and as often lost the witness, through unwillingness to confess it openly. There and then I determined to lose no time, but to state fully and simply what great things God had done for me. This Satan would rather not hear, and many were his insinuations with the design of frightening me from the performance of what I felt was a duty.

I looked upon the affair as involving my present and eternal salvation, and by God's grace, plainly and humbly related my experience in the chapel instead of preaching. I do not repent having done so, I believe I never shall. Praise the Lord. I am now committed to the doctrine. I mean to witness for Christ on all suitable occasions. This I see is the only means of retaining the assurance of the blessing. I do now feel that I am wholly and unreservedly the Lord's; I have given myself fully to Him, and that for ever, and I am assured that He has accepted, and doth now accept me. Glory to His holy name, He has saved me, even such a rebel as me! I bless God that I enjoy a heavenly settled peace; I have a calm and simple trust in Jesus as my complete Saviour; He is my all in all. I love Him, and all my desire is to live to show forth His praise.

Source: "Pioneer Experiences" by Phoebe Palmer

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THE END