

All Rights Reserved By HDM For This Digital Publication
Copyright 1994 Holiness Data Ministry

Duplication of this CD by any means is forbidden, and
copies of individual files must be made in accordance with
the restrictions stated in the B4Ucopy.txt file on this CD.

* * * * *

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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

WILLIAM WARNER CLARK
(Methodist)

I was born in the township of London, Canada West, on the sixteenth day of March, 1838. I was born again of the Holy Ghost in the same township, on the twenty-third of September, 1854. Oh, the rapture of that moment! I praised God aloud. I feared not the charge of enthusiasm, for I knew that I was a child of God and an heir of Heaven. Not a doubt obscured my vision. My evidence of sonship was clear as a sunbeam. O, the bliss, the joy, the RAPTURE I then felt in communion with the people of God. Can I ever forget that moment? No; the recollection of it is as fresh and vivid today as ever. My heart warms within me when I look back to the time and place in which I was born for immortal bliss.

For several years prior to my conversion, even in the indecision and perplexities of irreligion, my thoughts were dedicated to the pulpit as the arena in which my life should be spent. My highest ambition was to make an efficient Methodist preacher. And now that the Holy Spirit had changed my heart, giving me a new name and a new nature, the path of duty was clearly revealed. The preaching of the Gospel was the undertaking to which every holy influence called me. Conscious of this, I placed myself in the way to obtain an education that might, to some extent, qualify me for the work; after which I offered myself for the itineracy, and received my first appointment in August 1856. I now felt myself fully committed to the work of saving souls. I was pledged, not only to God, but to my fellow-men to preach "The unsearchable riches of Christ." But O, my youth! My inexperience! My weakness! How deeply I felt the need of something which I did not possess. About this time Arthur's "Tongue of Fire" fell into my hand, the perusal of which led me to cry out--

"'Tis worse than death my God to love,
And not my God alone."

I felt that I could not consistently exhort sinners to love God, while a part of my own affections were withheld from Him; that it was as really my duty of my neighbor to love Him at all. O, how I longed for "the richer baptism."

"My longing heart was all on fire
To be dissolved in love."

Sometimes I fancied I could almost claim the blessing; then again darkness obscured my vision. In this fluctuating state of mind I continued for three years, coming sometimes up to the very borders of the land.

"Where fear and sin, and guilt expire,
Cast out by perfect love."

In this perplexed state of mind I attended three Camp Meetings in the month of September, 1859. At the last of the three, held in London township, (the place of my nativity) my soul was in such agony that I could neither preach nor pray with liberty. There hung over me a dark and leaden blackness which seemed as if it would crush me into the earth. I longed to go with the penitents to the altar of prayer, and seek the blessing of "perfect love;" but the thought that I was a minister, and might, but such an act, bring reproach on the cause of Christ, deterred me. I expressed my desires and fears to Sister R -- , whose prompt and wise answer decided my course: "Brother," said she, "you will never hurt God's cause by getting right yourself!" I also expressed to her the fear that I could not keep the blessing. In this instance her answer was equally wise and heaven-directed: "You have no right to expect grace to keep what you have not got. Seek the blessing, and along with it God will give the grace to keep it. **YOU NEED THIS BLESSING TO KEEP YOU.**"

Precious word of encouragement! I went to the altar of prayer, and "with strong crying and tears," besought God to cleanse my heart from all sin, and fill it with love divine. O, what a struggle! My heart was as hard as a rock, but my determination was strong. Around me gathered a number of my ministerial brethren, who longed to see me enter into rest. Their prayers were ardent, earnest; their faith as strong, bold. The consecration was made. All the powers of mind and body were deliberately and voluntarily handed over to God. Then came the promise, "We that believe do enter into rest." My struggling soul grasped it. I stood then on "promised ground;" and as Sister R-- was repeating in prayer the words, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," I cried out, **IT DOES CLEANSE!** and in a moment my soul was happy.

I had not the shadow of a doubt of my entire sanctification. O, how I realized the presence of the Triune God of Holiness. Blessed, hallowed hour! Victory was mine through the blood of the Lamb. This was on the evening of Saturday, September 17th, 1859. The next morning I was asked to preach, and I took for my text, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be presented blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." O, how sweet was duty then. How light the cross. The words leaped as fire from my lips into the hearts of the congregation; one, and another, and another caught the flame, and soon the whole encampment was on fire for God. O, what a scene! Never can I forget it.

"Heaven came down our souls to greet,
And glory crowned the mercy seat."

I returned to my circuit, and established a select meeting for seekers of holiness. God gave me in the eyes of the people. One after another sought and found "the gift of power." Soon the circuit was in a revival flame. Many were the living witness which God raised up to testify that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." I felt myself possessed of the necessary "pioneer experience" to lead the followers of Christ out into a large place. Every difficulty which arose in the minds of anxious inquires after full salvation, God seemed to give wisdom and power to solve. For months I continued in the happy frame of mind. My soul seemed to float in an ocean of infinite purity and love. All my ransomed powers flowed sweetly in the channel of the Divine requirements. My own will was lost in God's will. I seemed borne onward in the discharge of duty like sparless bark before the sweeping storm. The light fell around me with wondrous splendor. God was glorified by a pure flame of love, which is the essential element of His character and felicity.

But alas! the darkness came again. I had not learned the secret of living by faith: and as soon as the first outburst of joy, which accompanied the witness of full salvation was over, I doubted. O, THAT AWFUL DOUBT! It brought with its gloom and sadness. Still I did not entirely lose my evidence, nor relapse into my former state of fear and despondency. No, God was with me in the valley, and occasionally I enjoyed glimpses of "the full assurance of faith." In this state I continued to live, until God, in his inscrutable providence, put me into the furnace of affliction. As I drew near the gates of death, and heard my ease pronounced very critical, my thoughts turned inward. I examined carefully my state of my heart. The evidence of my acceptance with God was clear; I knew that I was His child, but the evidence of "heart-purity" was not clear. I lifted my heart to God in earnest supplication. I doubted not His ability and willingness to cleanse that moment. Then came the promise, "The Lord is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." Blessed assurance! Thrice blessed portion! My soul cried out, "It is enough; 'this is all my salvation and all my desire.'"

The next day my disease had increased so rapidly that I felt I could not bear up much longer. I looked to God for grace to sustain me in the final struggle. Then came the promise clear as light; distinct as if uttered by some unseen visitant, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." From that moment my disease took a turn for the better; I slowly recovered; and now I am able to go forth "And declare the works of the Lord."

My sojourn in the "Border Land" greatly enriched and invigorated my religious experience. I now possess an unwavering confidence in the divinity of our holy religion. I have tested its power to sustain in the solemn prospect of death. And I now believe that He who hath called me with this holy calling, will preserve me blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherever I go I am determined, by God's help, to preach a free and full salvation -- A SALVATION FOR EVERY SINNER, AND A SALVATION FROM EVERY SIN.

Source: "Pioneer Experiences" by Phoebe Palmer

* * * * *

THE END

