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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

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(Methodist)

I am now trying to preach the gospel of the Son of God, and am very thankful for the privilege. I was converted in January, 1852, and began to preach about a year afterward. My conversion was very satisfactory, not a doubt being left upon my mind: and, though I have been tempted to doubt many things since, the enemy has never tempted me that I was not converted.

From my earliest religious experience, I believed in the doctrine of entire sanctification; it seems most reasonable, and during four years as a local preacher, and for half a year as an itinerant, before I enjoyed it, and as I look over the skeletons of those sermons, I discover no departure from Wesley in theology, though I do not know that they produced much fruit.

All this time I enjoyed daily the witness of the Spirit that I was a child of God, and tried to keep myself "unspotted from the world." I had many precious seasons, and, I think, always felt that the enjoyments of religion were an ample compensation for all that I had lost in giving up the world; but I did not enjoy the blessing of perfect love. I was much interested about it at times, but would allow other religious questions to push it aside.

At a camp-meeting at Titusville, N. J., in August, 1847, I was, on Tuesday evening about six o'clock, suddenly awakened again to the vast importance of being entirely holy. In company with another minister of this (N. J.) Conference, I knelt in a secluded spot in the grove, and prayed for a pure heart. This prayer was on my lips and in my heart: --

"Wash me, and make me thus thine own;
Wash me, and mine thou art:
Wash me, but not my feet alone,
My heart, my hands, my heart."

I believed in Jesus; and, in about an half an hour, I felt that the work was done. I preached the next morning, and remember, the sweet, unspeakable peace that filled my soul. I went home full

of it. I remember, when I went to look after my horse, I spoke to him in my usual way, and immediately asked myself, "Is that the tone of perfect love?" It seemed to me that perfect love should not only dwell in the heart, but be heard in the voice, be seen in the look, soften every gesture, and beautify every act. He who is in the enjoyment of the highest order of holiness held out to man, should oftener speak in the persuasive tone of love, than in the commanding voice of justice. It is now nearly ten years since I received this grace. I have had to watch and pray; but Jesus' blood has been all-availing the last ten years, and will to the end.

It is apparent to me that I might easily get sour. In this age of pride and worldly display in the church, and no less in the pulpit than in the pew; but I must not. Perfect love keeps sweeten others. I feel, too, that I might drift with the Church in the worldly current. To the insidious fallacies about refinements in church architecture, refinement in preaching, &c, I might easily yield, especially when urged from such high places, in the name of progress; but I must not. Perfect love lives only in the bosom of simplicity; for, according to the example of Christ and the apostles, true religion is severe in simplicity.

The precious Saviour blesses me in preaching this doctrine. I find many, very many, who hear this pure gospel "gladly," and are rising up to stand as monuments of Jesus' power to save from all sin. And yet I find that every new success in the blessed work imposes the necessity of a fresh baptism of holy fire to keep me down in my place at the foot of, the cross.

I am content to go through life in an humble pathway, if I may enjoy this perfect peace. Will the faithful pray that I may be kept in this blessed state, and that God will help me lead many others into this pleasant pathway? There is to be a great "review" ere long, and I have a desire to lead a white-robed band before the CAPTAIN of our salvation.

Rise! clothed in strength, assert right,
Thou of the first born sons of light,
Christ is thy strength, and in His might
Go forth and His salvation see!

O! great shall thy rejoicings be;
Ceaseless, thy boasts of victory,
Till thou thy King in glory see,
Through whom thou wast omnipotent.

Source: "Pioneer Experiences" by Phoebe Palmer

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THE END