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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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MY CONVERSION

I was now in my early teens. I became more and more concerned regarding the salvation of my soul. I desired above everything else to have the assurance in my heart that I was a Christian. I thought three things were absolutely essential to getting saved. First, going to church; next, that there be a revival in progress; and last, to kneel at an altar and pray.

I had never seen anyone get saved. I think this idea had taken form in my young mind from occasional remarks that I had heard my schoolmates make regarding people who got converted in the little Methodist church about two miles from our home. I had not the least idea that anyone could become a Christian in any other way.

By and by many of my young schoolmates professed having been converted. However, they said very little about it, other than that they had been to the altar during the revival. Not one said anything to me that would shed any light on how I might find God. I was too timid to inquire.

As I grew a little older the hunger in my heart increased and finally became so intense that I felt I must do something, at any cost, that would enable me to get saved.

During the summer vacation a girl friend, living in St. Louis, came out to visit her sister. They called at our home and I inquired of her as to whether she could get employment for me in the city. Our home was at Huegely, Illinois, fifty miles from St. Louis. I had no desire to leave home, except that I might have opportunity to go to church and to a revival.

After some time a letter came from Tillie asking me to come at once. When I told my parents about it they objected seriously, saying that a large city was no place for a young girl unless her parents could accompany her. I did not tell Father the reason for wanting to go to the

city for I was certain if he knew he would not give consent. However, I begged, I pleaded, I coaxed and I wept. All the time I prayed much in secret the best I knew how. Finally my parents relented, saying that I might go for awhile for they were certain that I would soon tire of it and come back home.

I confess that I was near homesick before I started, but the hunger for God in my heart urged me on. The "good-byes" at home and at the depot caused tears to flow. Though I knew it would mean hardships I never for one moment wavered in my purpose to go, what I believed to be the only way. I thought it would lead me to the church, to a revival, to an altar of prayer and then to God.

Tillie met me at the Union Station. Before we reached her home I said, "Tillie I want to go to church while here in the city. Will you take me next Sunday?" She seemed a bit surprised but agreed she would. The following Sunday morning Tillie called for me and soon I found myself on the way to church -- and, oh, how happy I was.

That afternoon Tillie was called away from the city and I was left all alone, a young girl without a single acquaintance in the large city of St. Louis, a city that impressed me as being a wicked, unfriendly place.

The church where we had attended service that morning was a long way from where I roomed. I knew that at night I must go alone. What it meant for me to undertake this no one knows unless he has had like experience. I had never been very far away from home, and always among friends. I had never before been in a large city. Never had I seen a street car. However I resolved, since the Lord had thus far opened the way for me, I would go, trusting Him to go with me and protect me.

That Sunday afternoon I spent much time in prayer asking God to help me to get back to church safely and above all that the church might soon have a revival. I started early and made it without difficulty. I entered the church and slipped into one of the rear seats of the large auditorium. I was not much impressed with the service for I did not hear much of what was said. I was praying continually and thinking of my soul's condition. Suddenly something of interest caught my ear. Just before pronouncing the benediction the minister was making an announcement. "Remember," he was saying, "that tomorrow night we are beginning our revival meeting in this church."

Oh, what good news that announcement was to my hungry heart. I was not yet saved but I felt like shouting loudly for joy. I was convinced that God had once again answered my humble prayer.

At seven-thirty on Monday evening I was again in my place in the rear seat of the church close by the door. I was overjoyed with the thought that I was in a revival meeting. On the other hand I was about as miserable as a human could be. I was a young girl and I felt so "alone." Everyone in the church was a stranger to me. I was homesick and sinsick. Though I had lived a very sheltered life, I had always tried to be good and had never gone into outbroken sin. Yet I felt wretched. I knew somehow that I was not a Christian. Everything was so strange to me. I

wondered just how a person would have to do to go to the altar and when to go. Again I heard little of the service for my mind was occupied with the thought of finding God.

Having concluded the sermon the minister made some kind of an invitation for those who wished to come forward. I wanted to go. The hour for which I long had prayed had arrived at last. This was my opportunity. The congregation arose and an invitation hymn was sung. I stood with the rest of the audience and made an attempt to go forward, but found that I could not move a muscle. My hands were as if glued to the back of the seat before me; my feet as if nailed to the floor. Several verses of the hymn were sung, yet I could not move. When no one responded to the minister's call, he said, "We will have a brief prayer and then be dismissed." The audience sat down, while a very few in the front seats kneeled.

Never will I be able to express in words the embarrassment of that moment. Not a person in the audience was standing except myself. People from many parts of the building began to look my way, yet, had my life depended upon it, I could not have moved.

I have been asked why it was that I had lost my strength and was not able to go? I answered, I do not know. But I firmly believe that the Lord would not let me sit down and Satan would not let me go forward. Some may think this is a trivial expression, but not so. I sincerely believe that this was true in my case. I am convinced that there is a personal Savior who is marshaling the forces of heaven to save a seeking soul. On the other hand that there is a personal devil who has at his disposal the powers of hell and marshals them to defeat any soul that is seeking to find God. However, the Christ, who has defeated Satan on every battle field and who is the captain of the hosts of heaven, came to my rescue at just the right moment. Just when all seemed lost and Satan seemed to be victorious, the mighty Christ stepped into the arena to command the battle.

In one of the very front pews I had noticed an aged man with snow-white flowing locks and a long white beard. He had knelt to pray. Suddenly, while I was standing there in the rear pew, I saw him lift his head turning his face heavenward in silent prayer. Then he opened his eyes and saw me. Immediately he arose and walked down the long aisle toward me. Jesus had whispered into his ear, "Go speak to that young girl," and he obeyed. He reached forth and took my hand in his wrinkled, trembling hand and with an entreating smile on his face said pleadingly, "My dear young sister, would you not like to be a Christian?"

The Lord knew that a kind invitation and a warm handclasp from one of His own children would break the spell that Satan had cast over my soul, and therefore Jesus did not let me sit down. Quick as a flash I responded saying loudly, "That's just what I want!" at the same time, hardly realizing what I was doing, I pushed the aged man aside and the next moment I was kneeling at the altar. Thus this warrior of many battles, in obedience to the whispering of Captain Jesus, was the means of starting a soul for heaven. How important that we, His children, mind the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

No, Satan did not give up the fight and withdraw his forces in defeat. Instead, I think he marshaled a few more regiments from the lower regions. The minister, who I learned later was a good man, but perhaps had never witnessed a scene like this, was baffled and confused. He did not

seem to know how to meet the situation and help a seeking soul to God. He had seen me, a perfect stranger, stand alone while the rest were seated. He heard me exclaim loudly in response to the invitation of that aged saint to come to Jesus, "That's just what I want!" He had seen me coming running to the altar, weeping loudly as I came. And all this in the first service of the revival. He seemed to be confused, but finally knelt down on the inside of the altar and prayed a short prayer.

After the brief prayer the minister asked me to arise and leave the altar. I was weeping loudly and refused to go. When he insisted I finally arose and sat down on the front seat. He then quickly asked the audience to stand and pronounced the benediction.

Immediately I rushed forward, took his hand and with tears flowing freely begged him to help me, saying, "O preacher, won't you help me pray? I have been praying for a long time to become a Christian. I cannot leave this altar with this burden on my heart -- please help me pray."

He quickly withdrew his hand, saying as he turned away, "Well, there is something the matter with you yet." Then he took his hat and coat and slipped out a side door. For some time I stood before that altar, alone, weeping; not knowing what to do next. Then with bowed head and gushing tears, I started down the aisle toward the door.

No, Satan had not surrendered the battlefield. If I did not believe in a personal devil on any other ground I would believe in his existence because of what took place when I left that altar and began to walk toward the church door.

A hissing voice spoke into my ear -- and when I say, a hissing voice, I mean that very thing, for it was a sharp, hissing voice that spoke these exact words, "You see, nobody cares whether you get saved or not, the preacher doesn't even care. If I were you I would go out of that door and never step inside another church."

These words were spoken the second time and with more emphasis. But, thank God, Jesus again intervened. Again the Lord was just in time. Halfway down the aisle sat a young man and his wife. The young man stepped into the aisle before me, took my hand and with flowing tears said, "Sister do not let all this discourage you. We will help you pray. Jesus saved me and he will save you if you will continue to pray."

Oh, what words of comfort! This gave me hope. I looked at him saying, "Oh, surely He will; I need Him so much!"

When I stepped into the vestibule I saw a young woman leaning against the wall with face buried in her folded arms, sobbing. She saw me and quickly threw her arms around me. For some moments we stood, her head on my shoulder and mine on hers, strangers weeping together. Then she also spoke such comforting words, telling me that Jesus had saved her and she was confident that this same Christ would save me if I would continue to pray.

The following evening I went back to church, and though I did not know that I was at all welcome there, I went to the altar again. Things occurred about the same as the evening before. I rushed to the altar weeping. The pastor prayed a short prayer then insisted that I arise. After much

insistence I finally arose reluctantly. Then he quickly pronounced the benediction and again left by the side door.

This time before I had gone many steps from the altar I said, "Lord, if no one in this world cares; if even the preacher does not care for my soul, I still believe that you care. I am now going home and I will kneel down by my bedside, never to get up until I know that I am saved. They will find me dead on my knees if you do not save me, for I still believe that you care."

The substance of this prayer I prayed fully a dozen times from the time I left the church until I arrived at my room.

When I came home it was nine o'clock. I removed my hat and coat and dropped on my knees by my bedside. With both hands raised toward heaven, I repeated my vow to God that I would not get up until I knew I was a Christian. The clock struck ten. It struck eleven and I was still on my knees praying the best I knew how. I begged the Lord, I pleaded with Him to show me why I did not get saved. I told Him I would do anything, no matter what the price, if only He would save me.

I did not know at the time that no one can get saved without faith. I had no one to tell me, I had no Bible and knew of no Christian to whom I could go for help.

I thank the Lord that again He was on time to help me take that last step of faith. It brought me into the kingdom. While kneeling there alone by my bedside with lifted hands, imploring God to help me, suddenly I heard singing. It seemed far away up in the sky and yet I could hear every word distinctly as if it had been someone singing by my side in the room.

There were no other persons at home in the big house, if there had been they would not have sung religious songs. The neighbors were not Christians and there were no radios in those days.

I have heard beautiful singing in my life but never anything as heavenly as that, I am convinced that I shall never again hear anything so beautiful until I hear the angel choir sing the praises of God in heaven. The song that I heard was the following:

There is a gate stands open wide,
And through its portal gleaming;
A radiance from the cross afar,
The Savior's love revealing.

That gate stands open wide for all,
Who seek through it salvation;
The rich and poor, the great and small,
Of every tribe and nation.

I listened, and that moment scales seemed to fall from my eyes. It seemed as if a heavenly sun in all its effulgent glory had broken forth in my tempest-tossed soul. It was as if all heaven had

been emptied into my very being. The struggle was over. I knew beyond doubt that I was now a child of God, for the Holy Spirit was bearing witness with my spirit that I was born again.

With hands uplifted I arose and walking back and forth in the room gave expression to the newfound joy in my heart with audible praises to God. The first words that I uttered after arising were, "Why, of course, Lord -- why, sure you save -- oh, why didn't I trust you before? Of course you are forgiving my sins just now." I remember very distinctly that I was greatly surprised that I had not believed it before. It seemed so easy now to trust the Lord.

After walking the floor praising the Lord for some time I retired, and oh, what sweet rest. I now had rest of soul and mind. Now my body could rest. The next morning when I awoke the sun was shining brightly. I walked to the window, looked out and it seemed to me I was looking into a new world. A gentle breeze was stirring in the trees. The thought came to me that the trees were clapping their hands. Later I found that I was not so far wrong for I read that the Bible makes mention of the trees clapping their hands.

I was now a Christian, and, of course, I wanted a Bible. All the Bibles that I remembered having seen were large pulpit Bibles, such as my aunt and uncle used at family devotions when I was at their home; also a few others that had peculiar hard board covers. I really did not know a Bible when I saw one. Two days after I was converted I walked in the city of St. Louis from store to store for a whole afternoon, trying to buy a Bible, but did not happen to find a store where they sold Bibles. A number of places they showed me some black books. I looked at them and asked, "Is this book what is called a Bible?"

"No, not exactly," he said, "but it is a prayer book."

"I do not want a prayer book," I replied, "I am looking for a book that is called The Bible." I was converted and could now pray without a prayer book.

I went to my room disappointed. But I learned that the Lord knew why this disappointment, for already a Bible was on the way. The following day the door bell rang and the mail carrier handed me a package. When I unwrapped it there was my Bible!

My sister Mary, who lived in another state, and did not yet know that I was converted, had sent the precious Book to me. On the flyleaf she had written, "READ THIS BOOK, BELIEVE THIS BOOK, OBEY THIS BOOK AND IT WILL BE WELL WITH YOU."

Little did she realize what the gift of that Bible would mean to her sister in years to come. Her devoted Christian life also has meant much to me as the years have come and gone.

Yes, my Bible came just when I needed it Again the Lord was on time -- He always is, He is never late. I praise Him!

While yet in the bloom of life's morning,
And all things around me seemed gay;
I heard the sweet call of the Savior,

But no one would show me the way.

I was left like a sheep on the mountain,
A lamb that was out in the cold;
But the Savior himself led me gently,
Gently home to the sheep of His fold.

Oh, the wonderful love of my Savior,
Can never, no never be told;
He mended my poor broken heartstrings,
His love is more precious than gold.

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MY SANCTIFICATION

I now had in my possession two things that I prized above everything on earth. I had salvation and I had a Bible, two things for which I had longed and prayed for many months and even years, and I was very happy.

My Bible seemed such a sacred treasure that I almost hesitated to handle it. For months I never read it seated in a chair, always on my knees. Usually I read it kneeling on the spot where Jesus had saved me. There I read its sacred pages, praying God to help me understand its teachings. Often my prayer was this, "Dear Jesus, Thou knowest that I have no one to teach me, be Thou my teacher that I may not go wrong."

I did not know how to read the Bible nor where to read. I did not even know that there was an Old and a New Testament in the Bible. Usually I let it fall open and wherever its pages chanced to separate there I read. I recall that at one time I thus opened it, soon after I was converted, my eyes fell on the words, "He that committeth sin is of the devil." I was surprised, for I had no idea that such words were in the Bible and I read and reread them. Though I knew that the Lord had saved me from sin and I felt that He was graciously keeping me day by day, yet I was troubled. I lifted my hands and prayed this prayer, "Lord, if you say in your Word that he who commits sin is of the devil, then what about so many church members who do not even try to live above sin?"

Then a clear, gentle voice seemed to whisper into my ear, saying, "What is that to thee, follow thou me." I lifted my hands a bit higher and said, "O Lord, I will, I will follow only Thee, no matter what others may do."

From that day to this I have refused to get my eyes on people.

The church that I attended did not teach sanctification as a second work of grace for the believer. However, I had been converted only a few weeks when the Lord directed me to scriptures that taught this precious truth and immediately my heart began to hunger for the cleansing and infilling of the Holy Spirit.

I searched the Scriptures prayerfully, entreating the Lord not to let me go wrong, but for Him to be my Guide. Soon I was convinced the Bible taught there was another, deeper experience for the Christian.

For a time I was confused because of so many different terms used in the Bible regarding this work of God's grace wrought in the believer's heart. I read about it as cleansing, purifying, purging, sanctification, perfect love and the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

Because of these and many other terms used I could not discern just what it meant, therefore I did not know what to ask for. In my prayer I usually asked the Lord to give me that "something" that I felt so much in need of and for which my heart was hungering.

One morning I received a letter from home informing me of my mother's serious illness. I went home at once. For four months, with the rest of the family, I watched by her sick bed. She suffered much but was always patient. During all those months of extreme suffering not one word of complaint came from her lips. Often I heard her say, "Yes, I am suffering much but Jesus bore greater suffering for me."

We now had a Bible in our home. My brother had been converted and had purchased one. Frequently when Mother's suffering seemed beyond endurance she would ask that we read a portion to her. One midnight hour when suffering intensely she said to me, "Minnie, will you get the Bible and read to me?"

"Mother, what shall I read?" I asked.

"Read the seventeenth chapter of St. John," she replied, "There is nothing better in the Bible."

While I was reading she frequently said, as she lay with folded hands, "Thank the Lord; praise His precious name."

When I read verse seventeen, "Sanctify them through thy truth," she said, "Thank the Lord for that verse."

When I read the twentieth verse, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also that shall believe on me through their word," she pressed her folded hands to her bosom and with tears glistening in her eyes, exclaimed, "Glory to God, that means me!"

One morning Mother slipped away to be with Jesus, whom she had loved and served so faithfully. I am convinced that Mother had the experience of holiness. Her life proved it. I cannot recall that I ever saw Mother ruffled in spirit or that I ever heard her speak harshly. It is quite certain that Mother never heard a sermon preached on the subject of holiness, therefore she knew little about the doctrine. For this reason, I think, she was not able to help others as she might have, if she herself had been taught the doctrine.

One day during Mother's illness I was going out and with hat on I stepped into her bedroom. I was bedecked with such things as Mother did not approve of for a Christian. She looked at me with those loving eyes that were soon to close in death, and said, "Minnie, if you do not ask Jesus to take that pride out of your heart it will cause you to lose your soul."

I did not answer but left the room, went into my bedroom and wept bitterly. Though I was saved I was not yet sanctified. My transgressions were all forgiven, but I knew only too well there was an unholy pride in my heart. I learned a few months later that it took the baptism with the Holy Spirit to sanctify and make the heart clean. Even the tears that I wept when my mother so kindly rebuked me did not remove this carnal nature. After Mother had spoken to me about it, whenever I entered her room I first laid aside those outward manifestations of what was in my heart.

Some time after Mother had left us, sister Clara and I learned about a holiness camp meeting at Mount Vernon, Illinois. We decided to go if we could get Father's consent. We prayed and then I went to Father, saying, "Father, there is a camp meeting at Mt. Vernon and Clara and I would like to attend."

I shall never forget how Father looked at me. It was a look of mingled anger and pity. "No, indeed," he replied, "I shall never give consent for my children to go to a place like that and mingle with the class of people who gather at such places. Speak no more to me about it."

Again, we resorted to prayer, and after a few days I once more approached Father, asking him to permit us to go.

"Minnie," he replied, "do you remember what I told you when you asked me before? Now do not say another word to me about this matter. No, you shall not go!"

This sounded very much as if it were final. But the Lord had already answered so many prayers, that I took courage, and after more earnest prayer, I approached Father with the same question. "Father," I said, "if you knew how badly we want to go, I am sure that you would permit us to go."

This time he looked at me in pity, saying, "Well, go if you feel you must. But remember that I would much prefer that you stay away. Civilized people should not mingle with people who attend such gatherings."

Two of my sisters, a few friends and I went to that camp meeting. Upon our arrival my sisters and I walked clear up to the front seat in the large tabernacle. We did not sit down in the rear, for we were there for business. They sang. They prayed. The preacher preached. When he had finished his sermon I could not remember anything he had said. I was constantly praying for that "something" which I felt so desperately in need of.

At the close of his message the preacher made an altar call. Immediately my sister knelt down at the altar. I held back, but I think my face must have betrayed the hunger of my heart for the song leader reached across the altar, took my hand saying, "Come kneel at the altar and Jesus will help you."

I said, "No, not now, I want to learn all about the doctrine first, so I will know better how to pray.

"All right, sister," he replied. But scarcely had he left me than I also bowed at the altar by my sister's side. There were many other seekers kneeling at that long altar, I suppose not less than twenty-five. Soon some arose with victory and finally all had prayed through and left the altar, but I was still kneeling there not knowing just what to do. Most of the crowd had left to get their dinners. Some stayed with me to help pray. Just why I should have such a long, hard struggle I do not know. I am sure that I was not willfully refusing to meet any of God's requirements.

Finally the struggle became so intense that I suddenly lost my strength and fell backward to the floor. A little while after I had fallen, I realized what had happened and tried desperately to arise. Finding it impossible to move even so much as a finger, I gave up the attempt and began to worry over what Father would say when he heard about it. For I was certain that he would hear of it. I did not think that such a thing as this had ever before happened, and that anything so unusual would surely come out in the daily papers. If it did I knew Father would read it. I struggled with the thought for some time. At last I came back to the issue of my soul's need. Then for perhaps an hour or longer I was as completely unconscious of my surroundings as if I had left this world. I was not aware there was a person around me, though by this time, as I was told later, the crowd had already begun gathering back.

Why the Lord at times permits a seeking soul to pass through such an experience as I passed through, I do not know, and it is not mine to question. In my case, however, I think that perhaps one reason was, that at this particular altar service, God was hindered by well meaning and wholly consecrated Christians from getting a message to my heart. While kneeling there and trying to pray, several people spoke loudly into my ears telling me what to do; while in front of me some were doing the same. Some were saying, "Lord, kill her out to sin," another said, "Lord, crucify the old nature -- Lord, make her an empty vessel -- Jesus, give her a clean heart; baptize her with the Holy Spirit and sanctify her now."

It was confusing to me when some said, "Lord, kill her," while others said, "Lord, fill her."

I would not say that any of these terms were unscriptural, I do not think they were. Yet to me, one who had not had any light on the teaching of holiness, it seemed not only contradictory but extremely confusing.

When first I knelt at the altar I had made a vow to the Lord that I would not get up until the Lord had satisfied the longing of my heart. The Lord knew that amidst this confusion He could not help me to get to a place where the condition of my heart and mind would be ready for the incoming of the Spirit.

I believe that for this reason He chose to withdraw me completely, for the time being, from my surroundings in order that He himself might have better opportunity to teach me.

I did not know that one of the requisites to sanctification was consecration. Had anyone tried to tell me this it would, doubtless, have been like a foreign language to me. After He had drawn me aside the Lord could speak to me in a language that I could understand.

For many years after my sanctification I did not tell anyone the following experience. It seemed too sacred to tell. But in recent years the Lord has rebuked me for not testifying to it. For that reason I am inscribing it here.

The next hour or more I saw no one save Jesus only. He stood by my side and asked questions in such a kind, understanding way that it did not seem hard to converse with Him. He asked, "Do you promise that from this time forth your life shall be wholly and continually yielded to me?" To this question I unhesitatingly answered, "Yes." Then He asked would I use my time wholly to His glory? Should my ambition, henceforth, be only to glorify God and to be a blessing to mankind? Would I place what talents I had wholly at His disposal? To all this there was a glad "yes" in my heart.

Many more definite questions were asked, such as, Would I use my hands continually to do His bidding, my eyes to look upon clean things only and read only those things that were helpful and upbuilding? Would I allow my feet to take me to none but such places where I could take Jesus with me? Would I always endeavor to dress in modest attire such as Christians should wear, and would I conscientiously use whatever earthly means might be entrusted to me as He directed and not for self-gratification?

Now came the hardest question, "Will you go back to your home and live the life there and witness that I have power to save, sanctify and keep?"

At this point I talked back to the Lord. I said, "Lord, you know that Father always said if I got converted I could not come back home. Now if I get sanctified he will never let me come home again."

I loved my father and loved my home and Satan made this look like a wide, turbulent stream to cross. I felt that I could do almost anything but this.

With a look of deep compassion the Savior stood before me in silence. He stood there as real as I have ever seen anyone. Yet I failed to trust Him. Then He bent low and slipped His loving arms underneath, lifted me up and carried me far up over the trees into the thickly wooded camp meeting grove. There He gently laid me down.

No, I do not say that my body was actually taken away, for it was in spirit only that I was taken away. However, to me it was as real as if I had been carried away in the body. Even now I can see the grass, the trees and the other surroundings where the Lord laid me down as gently as one would lay down a little child.

Then the Savior stepped back a little space and looked at me, saying, "You are going to die now."

His words seemed a very great surprise to me. Immediately, I cried, in great ecstasy of joy, "O Jesus, that will be wonderful, for as long as Thou art near me I am not afraid to die!"

I shall never forget the sad, reproving look on the Master's face as He replied, "Then you are not afraid to trust yourself, soul and body, into my care for eternity, yet unwilling to trust me to take care of you at home."

Without a moment's hesitation I fully trusted the Lord to go with me and take care of me at home.

Then in the twinkling of an eye I realized that I was back at the altar and I pleaded very earnestly for the Lord to show me if there was anything else in the way.

"Will you trust me and believe that I sanctify you now?" He asked so tenderly.

And here are the exact words that I gave in answer, "Yes, Lord, I will believe, just as soon as I feel that it is done."

The Lord was grieved and withdrew. I felt sad, but had not the least idea what I had done to grieve Him. I pleaded very earnestly for Him to reveal to me why He had withdrawn. But there was silence.

I had so little light regarding spiritual things that I did not know I was asking contrary to the Word of God when I placed feeling before believing. When the Lord had saved me that midnight hour He had so wonderfully blessed me, but I did not now stop to think that the assurance of my conversion did not come until I first believed. I did not realize that faith, as it always must, had come before the Holy Spirit's witness that the work was done.

Finally I ceased praying and began to reason. I said to myself, "What was wrong with my words when I said, 'I will believe when I feel it'?" I studied and tried to analyze that sentence. I came to the following conclusion: The Lord has promised in His Word that He will sanctify. Now if I have met conditions and then refuse to believe that He does sanctify me until I first have the witness, then I am not believing His Word.

I began to pray, saying, "Lord, I do believe that Thou dost sanctify me now, and if I never have any witness I will yet believe."

I told the Lord that I would arise and testify publicly that He had sanctified me. Then I would go to my tent and eat -- for I had been fasting -- then I promised to testify at every opportunity, that my heart had been cleansed by the blood.

I was still lying motionless where I had fallen. After making this contract with the Lord I immediately arose without the least bit of difficulty. It was about time for the opening of the afternoon service. The people had gathered, some close around me. Some were seated and many were standing on the benches looking over the crowd to see what I would do when I arose. I arose

as calm as I have ever been in my life and in a very moderate voice said, "Friends, the Lord has just now sanctified me."

I could see that many in the crowd were disappointed and doubted as to whether I had really been sanctified. They seemed to think that since I had such a long, hard struggle I should do or say something very spectacular.

I now started to go to my tent, calm and composed, but with a persistent faith. Such a faith always brings victory. Just before I stepped out from under the tabernacle I thought I would honor God by once more testifying. I turned, looked at the crowd and said with emphasis, "The Lord has sanctified me!"

Well, about this time I got more feeling than I knew what to do with. It seemed as if a cloud of liquid glory touched my head, and like a refining fire passed clear through my being from the crown of my head to the sole of my feet. And oh, I felt so clean!

My soul was now overflowing with the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit. I could not refrain from shouting aloud the praises of God and others joined me. The next thing I knew I was on the platform with Bible in hand testifying and exhorting the people. While standing there I felt something like two hands laid on my shoulders gently pushing me forward, saying, "Now go and tell it, go and tell it."

Oh, what a happy hour when the Holy Spirit had come in all His fullness, cleansing my heart. From that hour He has been my constant Companion and unailing Guide. Though many years have now passed He has never failed to stand by me when I stood in need of His help.

Many times since that day Satan has severely tempted me, even suggesting that I might have lost this glorious experience. But some things he has never attempted to do. He has not once suggested that at the midnight hour, kneeling alone by my bedside, in my room at 3705 Washington Ave., St. Louis, Missouri, I might have been mis-taken about my conversion. Nor has he ever attempted to make me believe that after my complete consecration and trusting faith, while at the Bonnie camp meeting eighteen months after my conversion the Lord did not sanctify me.

My poor hungry heart had been yearning,
For the fullness of God's perfect love;
For the gift of the blessed Holy Spirit,
He had promised to send from above.

When I made my complete consecration,
When my all on the altar I laid;
Then He answered with fire from heaven,
All my fears and my doubts were allayed.

Now I'm shouting a glad hallelujah!
For saving and cleansing my soul;
For His Spirit now sanctifies wholly,

His word makes me every whit whole.

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Source: "His Guiding Hand" An Autobiography by Minnie E. Ludwig

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THE END