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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

CHRISTIAN WISMER RUTH
(Nazarene)

The writer was born September 1st, 1865, in Hilltown township, Bucks county, Penna. Both my father and mother were devoted and consistent Christians and members of the Evangelical Association before I was born, hence I grew up in a home-atmosphere of real spirituality and godliness. For this I am devoutly thankful. Among my earliest recollections are the family altar, the Sabbath School, and attendance upon the prayer meetings, revival meetings and camp meetings with my parents. I was the first-born, and only son, having three younger sisters. I do not think there ever was a day, from my earliest childhood to the time of my conversion, the Spirit of God did not strive with me, and bring to my heart conviction for sin and my need of a Savior. Often times I was "almost persuaded" to become a Christian, and always cherished the purpose to do so at some time, and yet, withal, procrastinated, and so became more and more hardened and corrupted by sin. But the consciousness that my parents were daily and constantly praying for me, often restrained me from outward sin, and kept my conscience tender. For several years I lived on the farm with my grandparents, who also were devout Christians, and here too the influences of religion constantly surrounded and restrained me. Having but limited means, my parents were unable to provide me with any especial educational advantages. Being in a country village or on the farm, I never had the privilege of attending even a graded school, and for the most part attended a country school; and even here circumstances compelled an irregular attendance. At the age of sixteen it was decided that I should learn some trade, and so arrangements were made for me to go to a neighboring town (Quakertown, Penna.) to serve an apprenticeship in a printing office. Here again I found myself surrounded with religious influences, as the proprietor of the printing office was a Christian gentleman. In the same office with me was the son of a preacher. We became quite intimate friends. After a few months he was sent for by his father to attend a camp meeting. At once I surmised the object in view, and remarked to a fellow-workman that when the preacher's son would return from the camp meeting he would be religious. The more I thought of it, the more fully I believed it would be so, and the thought greatly distressed me. Somehow, I felt that if he was converted I would have to be. As he returned on Monday morning, just one look into his countenance, before he had uttered a word, convinced me that my fears had come true. Instantly I was in trouble, and under deep conviction. I felt there was a chasm between us. Without saying

much to me upon the subject of religion, he declared his purpose to attend the mid-week prayer meeting, and insisted on my going with him; this I finally consented to do.

This was on a Friday night. Here conviction became so pungent and intense, I publicly confessed myself a seeker; after much earnest crying and agonizing prayer to God, by day and night, confessing my sins, I was gloriously converted on the following Sunday night. The pastor of the church I attended, after an earnest sermon, invited seekers to come forward to the altar of prayer. I rejoiced in the opportunity, and rushed forward to the altar, fell upon my knees, and plead for mercy. At about 9:30 o'clock, God in mercy heard my prayer, the burden of my guilt, was rolled away, the light of heaven broke into my soul, the Spirit witnessed with my spirit that I was pardoned and accepted of God, and was indeed a new creature in Christ. Although I had been averse to religious demonstrations, I now found myself shouting aloud the praises of God. I was born again and knew it. This occurred early in September, 1882. Praise God forever more! Soon after this I was baptized and united with the church.

During the following year I lived a most earnest and devoted Christian life, attending faithfully all the means of grace. I carried two testaments -- one German and one English -- in my pockets, and used my spare time in studying the same. Thus I maintained a clear justified experience. But I had gone only a very short time in my Christian experience until I discovered, much to my amazement, that there still remained a something in my heart that hindered me, and at times even defeated me. The principal manifestations of that "something" were, a man-fearing spirit, the uprising of an unholy temper, difficulty in forgiving and loving an enemy, etc. I learned that Jesus could remove the root of those difficulties out of the heart. Just one year after I had been gloriously converted, while yet in my first love, I definitely sought the experience of entire sanctification. After seeking earnestly for some days, one Sunday night while walking down the side-walk toward the church, conscious that I had consecrated my all for time and eternity, I was enabled to look up into heaven, and say, "I believe that the blood of Jesus cleanseth my heart from all sin now; He sanctifies me now" and suddenly and consciously the Holy Ghost fell upon me, and I knew just as positively and as assuredly that God had sanctified me through and through, as I had known a year before that he had pardoned my sins. I rushed into the church, and before the pastor had time to announce the opening hymn, I told the congregation what had occurred on the sidewalk, and that God had sanctified me wholly. Billows of glory swept over me until my joy seemed to be utterly inexpressible and uncontainable. Oh, the blessedness of that hour! Surely heaven could be no better. And from that day to the present -- now almost twenty years -- Satan has never had the audacity to tempt me to doubt even for one minute that God did not then and there sanctify me wholly.

Source: "Entire Sanctification" by C. W. Ruth

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THE END