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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

MELVIN H. SNYDER
(Wesleyan)

[At the time this testimony was written, Melvin H. Snyder was general superintendent of
The Wesleyan Church.]

The fall of 1931 marked the beginning of an epochal experience in my spiritual pilgrimage -- an experience of conscious heart cleansing from all sin. Foundational to that cleansing, however, was a conversion experience in 1928. Having been reared in the Church and in a parsonage, I knew the ethics of the Christian faith as interpreted by the "holiness movement." I had often knelt an altar of prayer and professed a trust in Christ for salvation only to discover later that I was indeed void of any real assurance.

It was not until early in my 16th year that I walked down a Bible college chapel aisle saying to myself, "If there is any truth in this religion and they can get it through my thick head what I am to do to obtain it, I shall do it." Though I did not realize it at the time, that resolve obligated God to reveal himself to me, for it is written, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine" (John 7:17).

What I had heard all of my life, but not really comprehended, became crystal clear to my heart and mind. I must place the whole weight of my sinful soul upon Christ as my personal Saviour and believe that God for Christ sake, and His sake alone, forgave me of all my sins for no other reason in the world but that I believed Him. I dared to do it. And instantly I received the assurance that I had not believed in vain. I knew my sins were forgiven. It was life from the dead! Immediately I had an overwhelming desire to share the good news with others.

Subsequently, I received a definite call to the ministry and in 1931, at the age of 19, I found myself engaged in a quest for souls wherever God opened doors. However, I had already found that an inner foe still remained in my redeemed soul. Manifestations of the fear of man, pride, self-will, and other unchristlike tempers troubled me at times. I knew I loved the Saviour, but was not a little disturbed that He had a rival and it was within my own breast. Such classics as

Holiness and Power by A. M. Hills, Perfect Love by J. A. Wood, Wesley's Plain Account, and the little book, Men and Women of Deep Piety convinced me that the Scriptures clearly taught the possibility of deliverance from this inner foe.

A Sunday afternoon in 1931 marked the moment of deliverance. I entered my room determined never to cross the threshold again, or to enter another pulpit, until I had the assurance of a clean heart. Thinking the battle might last for days, I decided to first think through the prayer of confession of need before I approached the throne of grace. I decided to catalog the carnal traits which had troubled me with all the honesty of which I was capable, and then declare before a holy God that I believed the blood of Christ could cleanse and completely deliver me from this plague of my soul. The Rubicon had been crossed. I determined I would never turn back from my pursuit.

Strangely enough, I was never permitted to pray that prayer. God had been listening in all the while. I was suddenly aware that the heavens had opened over my head and that Calvary's flow was making me whiter than now. What I had desired with my whole heart had suddenly become a real. Words are utterly inadequate to describe what the eyes of my soul perceived in the atoning work of Christ and perceiving, claimed by faith. This subjective part of that cleansing experience having been settled, instantly my heart was broken with a burden for lost men everywhere and an unquenchable passion to bring them to the Saviour.

The blessing received that day by almost an unconscious faith has been retained across the years by deliberate acts of faith with the rewarding assurance that the cleansing blood is continuously mine. As the sainted David B. Updegraff averred, "We are sanctified by a single act of faith, but we are kept sanctified by the habit of faith."

Source: "And They Shall Prophesy"
Compiled by George E. Failing

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THE END