



"You will know them by their fruits." Mt. 7:16

The Sanctification of Mrs. Amanda Smith

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An Autobiography- by Mrs. Amanda Smith

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INTRODUCTION

During the summer of 1876, while attending a camp meeting at Epworth Heights, near Cincinnati, my attention was drawn to a colored lady dressed in a very plain garb, which reminded me somewhat of that worn by the Friends in

former days, who was engaged in expounding a Bible lesson to a small audience.

I was told that the speaker was Mrs. Amanda Smith, and that she was a woman of remarkable gifts, who had been greatly blessed in various parts of the country.

Having spent nearly all my adult years on the other side of the globe, my acquaintance in America was by no means an extensive one, and this will explain the fact that I had never heard of this devout lady until I met her at this camp meeting.

Her remarks on the Bible lesson did not particularly impress me, and it was not until the evening of the same day, when I chanced to be kneeling near her at a prayer meeting, that I became impressed that she was a person of more than ordinary power.

The meetings of the day had not been very successful, and a spirit of depression rested upon many of the leaders. A heavy rain had fallen, and we were kneeling somewhat uncomfortably in the straw which surrounded the preacher's stand.

A number had prayed, and I was myself sharing the general feeling of depression, when I was suddenly startled by the voice of song. I lifted my head, and at a short distance, probably not more than two yards from me, I saw the colored sister of the morning kneeling in an upright position, with her hands spread out and her face all aglow.

She had suddenly broken out with a triumphant song, and while I was startled by the change in the order of the meeting, I was at once absorbed with interest in the song and the singer.

Something like a hallowed glow seemed to rest upon the dark face before me, and I felt in a second that she was possessed of a rare degree of spiritual power.

That invisible something which we are accustomed to call power, and which is never possessed by any Christian believer except as one of the fruits of the indwelling Spirit of God, was hers in a marked degree.

From that time onward I regarded her as a gifted worker in the Lord's vineyard, but I had still to learn that the endowment of the Spirit had given her more than the one gift of spiritual power.

A week later I met her at Lakeside, Ohio, and was again impressed in the same way, but I then began to discover that she was not only a woman of faith, but that she possessed a clearness of vision which I have seldom found equaled.

Her homely illustrations, her quaint expressions, her warmhearted appeals, all possess the supreme merit of being so many vehicles for conveying the living truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the hearts of those who are fortunate enough to hear her.

A few years after my return to India, in 1876, I was delighted to hear that this chosen and approved worker of the Master had decided to visit this country. She arrived in 1879, and after a short stay in Bombay, came over to the eastern side of the empire, and assisted us for some time in Calcutta. She also returned two years later, and again rendered us valuable assistance.

The novelty of a colored woman from America, who had in her childhood been a slave, appearing before an audience in Calcutta, was sufficient to attract attention, but this alone would not account for the popularity which she enjoyed throughout her whole stay in our city.

She was fiercely attacked by narrow minded persons in the daily papers, and elsewhere, but opposition only seemed to add to her power.

During the seventeen years that I have lived in Calcutta, I have known many famous strangers to visit the city, some of whom attracted large audiences, but I have never known anyone who could draw and hold so large an audience

as Mrs. Smith.

She assisted me both in the church and in open-air meetings, and never failed to display the peculiar tact for which she is remarkable.

I shall never forget one meeting which we were holding in all open square, in the very heart of the city. It was at a time of no little excitement, and some Christian preachers had been roughly handled in the same square a few evenings before. I had just spoken myself, when I noticed a great crowd of men and boys, who had succeeded in breaking up a missionary's audience on the other side of the square, rushing towards us with loud cries and threatening gestures.

If left to myself I should have tried to gain the box on which the speakers stood, in order to command the crowd, but at the critical moment, our good Sister Smith knelt on the grass and began to pray. As the crowd rushed up to the spot, and saw her with her beaming face upturned to the evening sky, pouring out her soul in prayer, they became perfectly still, and stood as if transfixed to the spot! Not even a whisper disturbed the solemn silence, and when she had finished we had as orderly a meeting as if we had been within the four walls of a church!

In those days a well known theatrical manager, much given to popular buffoonery, wrote to me inviting me to arrange to have Mrs. Smith preach in his theatre on a certain Sunday evening. I was much surprised on receiving the letter, and taking it to her told her I did not know what it meant.

Several friends, who chanced to be present, at once began to dissuade her: "Do not go, Sister Amanda," said several, speaking at once, the man merely wishes to have a good opportunity of seeing you, so that he can take you off in his theatre. He has no good purpose in view.

Do not trust yourself to him under any circumstances."

After a moment's hesitation Mrs. Smith replied in language which I shall never forget: "I am forbidden," she said, "to judge any man. You would not wish me to judge you, and would think it wrong if any of us should judge a brother or sister in the church. What right have I to judge this man? I have no more right to judge him than if he were a Christian."

She said she would pray over it and give her decision. She did so, and decided to accept the invitation.

When Sunday evening came the theatre was packed like a herring box, while hundreds were unable to gain admission. I took charge of the meeting, and after singing and prayer introduced our strange friend from America.

She spoke simply and pointedly, alluding to the kindness of the manager who had opened the doors of his theatre to her, in very courteous terms, and evidently made a deep and favorable impression upon the audience. There was no laughing, and no attempt was ever made subsequently to ridicule her. As she was walking off the stage the manager said to me; "If you want the theatre for her again do not fail to let me know. I would do anything for that inspired woman."

During Mrs. Smith's stay in Calcutta she had opportunities for seeing a good deal of the native community. Here, again, I was struck with her extraordinary power of discernment. We have in Calcutta a class of reformed Hindus called Brahmos. They are, as a class, a very worthy body of men, and at that time were led by the distinguished Keshub Chunder Sen.

Every distinguished visitor who comes to Calcutta is sure to seek the acquaintance of some of these Brahmos, and to study, more or less, the reformed system which they profess and teach. I have often wondered that so few, even of our ablest visitors, seem able to comprehend the real character either of the men or of their new system. Mrs. Smith very quickly found access to some of them, and beyond any other stranger whom I have ever known to visit Calcutta, she formed a wonderfully accurate estimate of the character, both of the men and of their religious teaching.

She saw almost at a glance all that was strange and all that was weak in the men and in their system.

This penetrating power of discernment which she possesses in so large a degree impressed me more and more the longer I knew her. Profound scholars and religious teachers of philosophical bent seemed positively inferior to her in the task of discovering the practical value of men and systems which had attracted the attention of the world!

I have already spoken of her clearness of perception and power of stating the undimmed truth of the Gospel of Christ. Through association with her, I learned many valuable lessons from her lips, and once before an American audience, when Dr. W. F. Warren was exhorting young preachers to be willing to learn from their own hearers, even though many of the hearers might be comparatively illiterate, I ventured to second his exhortation by telling the audience that I had learned more that had been of actual value to me as a preacher of Christian truth from Amanda Smith than from any other one person I had ever met.

Throughout Mrs. Smith's stay in India she was always cheerful and hopeful. In this respect, too, she differed from most visitors to our great empire. Some adopt gloomy views as they look at the weakness of Christianity, and observe the stupendous fortifications which have been reared by the followers of the various false religions of the people.

Some even yield to despair, and refuse to believe that India ever can be saved or even benefited, while only a very few are able to believe not only that India will yet become a Christian empire, but that Christ will yet lift up the people of this land, and so revolutionize or transform society as it exists today, as to make the people practically a new people.

Our good Sister Amanda Smith never belonged to any of these despondent classes.

She sometimes was touched by the pictures of misery which she saw around her, but never became hopeless. She was of cheerful temperament, it is true, but aside from personal feeling, she always possessed a buoyant hope and an overcoming faith, which made it easy for her to believe that the Saviour, whom she loved and served, really intended to save and transform India.

Soon after Mrs. Smith's visit to India, another Virginian visited Calcutta on his way around the globe This was Mr. Moncure D. Conway.

These two persons, Mrs. Smith and Mr. Conway, were representative Virginians. They had been born in the same section of the country, brought up as Methodists, and were thoroughly acquainted, one by observation and the other by experience, with the terrible character of the American slave system.

Mr. Conway in early life was for several years a Methodist preacher, but by his own published confession he never comprehended what the true spirit of Methodism was. He was at one time a well known and somewhat popular Unitarian minister, but finding the Unitarians too narrow and orthodox for a man of his liberal mind, he set up an independent church or organization of some kind, in London, and preached to an obscure little congregation for a number of years, until his last experiment ended in confessed failure.

His recorded impressions received in India were of the most gloomy kind. He saw nothing to hope for in the condition of the people, and looked at them in their helpless state with blank bewilderment, if not despair. He passed through the empire without leaving a single trace of light behind him, without making an impression for good upon any heart or life, without finding an open door by which to make any man or woman happier or better, without, in short, seeing even a single ray of hope shining upon what he regarded as a dark and benighted land.

Mrs. Smith, the other Virginian, without a tittle of Mr. Conway's learning, and deprived of nearly every advantage which he had enjoyed, not only retained the faith of her childhood, but matured and developed it until it attained a standard of purity and strength rarely witnessed in our world.

She also came to India, but unlike the other Virginian, she cherished hope where he felt only despair, she saw light where he perceived only darkness, she found opportunities everywhere for doing good which wholly escaped his

observation, and during her two years' stay in the country where she went, she traced out a pathway of light in the midst of the darkness!

As she left the country she could look back upon a hundred homes which were brighter and better because of her coming, upon hundreds of hearts whose burdens had been lightened and whose sorrows had been sweetened by reason of her public and private ministry.

She is gratefully remembered to this day by thousands in the land.

Her life affords a striking comment at once upon the value of the New Testament to those who receive it, both in letter and in spirit, and upon the hopelessness of the Gospel of unbelief which obtains so wide a hearing at the present day.

A thousand Virginians of the Conway stripe might come and go for a thousand years without making India any better, but a thousand Amanda Smiths would suffice to revolutionize an empire!

I am very glad to learn that Mrs. Smith has at last been induced to yield to the importunities of friends and prepare a sketch of her eventful life. I trust that the story will be told without reserve in all its simplicity, as well as in all its strength, and I doubt not that God will crown this last of her many labors with abundant blessings.

J. M. THOBURN.

Calcutta, October 22, 1891

CHAPTER 7

THE BLESSING – ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

I always got up as early on Sunday mornings as on other mornings. I got my breakfast and cleaned up my house, and at nine o'clock my little Mazie went to Sunday School. While she was gone I would cook all my dinner and get everything ready. I did not have time to cook much through the week, as I had often to dry my clothes in the house and I could not have the smell of cooking, so Sunday was the only day I would have a real good dinner, but I never stayed home from church to cook – so I gave my baby his bath and laid him in his cradle, then I got down on my knees and prayed the Lord to keep Will asleep till I went to Green Street Church, and to keep James in a good humor so he would not scold me, for I hated to be scolded, in the worst way. James was peculiar.

If he came and I happened to be out, even though I went to carry clothes, he would be vexed. So after Mazie came I said, "Now you read your library book and be a good girl, I am going to Green Street Church this morning; it lets out before our church does, so I will be home in time. You can tell your pa, if he comes before I get back. If Will cries, don't take him up; just rock him."

She was a good strong girl, thirteen years old, quite able to take care of him and could manage him quite as well as I could, so I went and left them. On my way to Green street, it seemed the Devil overtook me. Just as I turned in Carmine street, I felt a Satanic influence walking by my side and whispering, "Now, you know, if James comes home and finds you are out, you know what you will catch; you had better go to Bedford Street and hear John Cookman."

"Well, I will."

So when I got to the corner and was just going to turn down Bleecker street, a voice said, "No, go on." I went on. After I had gone about half a block Satan whispered again, "You are seeking sanctification?"

“Yes.”

“Well, if James comes home and you are out, he will be very angry, and that will be a sin and you should not make anybody sin.”

“No,” I said, “I will not do it.”

Then Satan said, “You had better go and hear that Presbyterian minister on the corner of Houston and Prince streets,” I had heard how kind they were to colored people and I had promised several times I would go and hear this minister; the Devil had found that out some way; I can’t tell how he knew it, but he did. “You had better go and hear him; then, it is nearer home, three blocks nearer, and you can get home quick.”

“Yes,” I said, “that is so.”

When I got to the corner, as I was about to turn down, with a gentle pull a sweet voice whispered,

“No, no, go on.”

“Lord, help me!”

Oh, how will I ever praise God enough for His tender love and faithfulness to me in that awful hour. He gave power to my fainting spirit, and when I had no might, He increased strength.

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!

I went on a little further and by and by the enemy seemed to approach me again fiercely. He said, “Now, you are the biggest fool that ever was. You think you are going to hear John Inskip; he is not there, he is at the Five Points.”

“O, if I thought Brother Inskip was not there, I would not go. I would go back.”

I went on. When I reached the steps I shall never forget the thrill of joy that ran through my heart when I heard Brother Inskip pray. With what strength I had left I said, “Thank God, he is here and not at the Five Points.” I seemed to feel the Satanic presence sweep by me and say, “O, she has found it out.” Old Satan knew I had caught him in one of his biggest lies. I went into the church and sat down about three seats from the door. I had been to that church but once before and that was Brother Inskip’s first Sunday. While I lived in York street I was very sick and could not walk away up to Sullivan Street Bethel Church where I belonged, so I went in there that Sunday. I sat in the gallery.

The people were so kind; one brother handed me a book and asked me to come again. I thank God for that spirit that was in Green street those days, even to colored people. The Sunday I got the blessing I did not sit upstairs, but O, how tired I was when I got into the church. I leaned my head forward and prayed God to give me strength. When Brother Inskip had finished his prayer he rose and made his announcements; the last hymn was sung, then came the text: -- Ephesians, 4th Chapter 24th Verse, -- “And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” He said, “In preaching from this text this morning the brethren will observe I shall have to make some reference to a sermon that I preached a few Sabbaths ago on sanctification.”

I was struck, for I had never heard a minister say that word in commencing his sermon before, and I said, “O, I have missed my chance; two Sabbaths ago I had such a drawing to come here and I did not do it; O, Lord, I have disobeyed that spirit and I am so sorry; do forgive me and help me, I pray Thee.”

O, how I wept, for I had lost my chance and I am so hungry for the blessing; but, “Lord forgive me and help me to listen now.”

I raised my head and fixed my eyes and thoughts on the speaker and got so interested it seemed he was preaching right to me, and I took every word. By and by I heard my baby scream out – I heard him scream as distinctly as ever I heard a child scream. “You told Mazie not to take that child up, but she has done it and let him fall,” Satan

suggested.

For a moment the actual thing did occur, and it was before my eyes. My heart stood still and a voice said, "Trust the Lord."

"I will," I said, and fixed my mind again and listened, and as dear Brother Inskip warmed up and I was feasting, my baby screamed out again. I jumped, and it seemed that all the people in the church heard; it was so plain.

"There," the Devil says, "James has come home and Mazie has not done as you told her, and you will catch it when you get home."

O, I felt if I had wings I would fly. I wanted to scream out. A sweet voice said, "You said you would trust the Lord."

"So I did," I said, so I sat back and was listening and drinking in and thought all was well now.

Again I heard my baby scream.

"There," said the Devil, "Mazie has let him fall and broken his back," and I got up and walked to the end of the pew.

"It is no use," I said, "I shall be tormented here; I will go home." And it was as though a person stood before me and said, "Didn't you say that you would trust the Lord with that child?"

"Yes," I said, "and I will trust the Lord, even if he is dead;" and I sat down. Just as I sat down Brother Inskip said: "There are a great many persons who are troubled about the blessing of sanctification; how they can keep it if they get it."

"Oh!" I said, "he means me, for that is just what I have said. With my trials and peculiar temperament and all that I have to contend with, if I could get the blessing how could I keep it? Now, some one has told him, for he is looking right at me and I know he means me. And I tried to hide behind the post, and he seemed to look around there. Then I said, "Well, he means me, and I will just take what he says." He used this illustration: "When you work hard all day and are very tired, -- "Yes," I said, and in a moment my mind went through my washing and ironing all night,-- "When you go to bed at night you don't fix any way for yourself to breathe," -- "No," I said, "I never think about it," -- "You go to bed, you breathe all night, you have nothing to do with your breathing, you awake in the morning, you had nothing to do with it."

"Yes, yes, I see it."

He continued: "You don't need to fix any way for God to live in you; get God in you in all His fullness and He will live Himself.

"Oh!" I said, "I see it." And somehow I seemed to sink down out of sight of myself, and then rise; it was all in a moment. I seemed to go two ways at once, down and up. Just then such a wave came over me, and such a welling up in my heart, and these words rang through me like a bell: "God in you, God in you," and I thought doing what? Ruling every ambition and desire, and bringing every thought unto captivity and obedience to His will. How I have lived through it I cannot tell, but the blessedness of the love and the peace and power I can never describe. O, what glory filled my soul!

The great vacuum in my soul began to fill up; it was like a pleasant draught of cool water, and I felt it. I wanted to shout Glory to Jesus! But Satan said, "Now, if you make a noise they will put you out."

I was the only colored person there and I had a very keen sense of propriety; I had been taught so, and Satan knew it. I wonder how he ever did know all these little points in me, but in spite of all my Jesus came out best. As we colored folks used to sing in the gone by years:

Jesus is a mighty captain,
Jesus is a mighty captain,

Jesus is a mighty captain,
Soldier of the cross.”

“Jesus never lost a battle,
Jesus never lost a battle,
Jesus never lost a battle,
Soldier of the cross.

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Amen.

I did not shout, and by-and-by Brother Inskip came to another illustration. He said, speaking on faith: “Now, this blessing of purity like pardon is received by faith, and if by faith why not now?”

“Yes,” I said.

“It is instantaneous,” he continued. “To illustrate, how long is a dark room dark when you take a lighted lamp into it?”

“O,” I said “I see it!” And again a great wave of glory swept over my soul – another cooling draught of water – I seemed to swallow it, and then the welling up at my heart seemed to come still a little fuller. Praise the Lord forever, for that day!

Speaking of God’s power, he went on still with another illustration. He said: “If God in the twinkling of an eye can change these vile bodies of ours and make them look like his own most glorious body, how long will it take God to sanctify a soul?”

“God can do it,” I said, “in the twinkling of an eye,” and as quick as the spark from smitten steel I felt the touch of God from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, and the welling up came, and I felt I must shout: but Satan still resisted me like he did Joshua. But the Captain of the Lord’s host stood close by and said, “Take off the filthy garments from him,” and Satan was mad.

Again I yielded to the tempter and did not shout. Then I felt the Spirit leave me. I knew He had gone, and I said: “O, Holy Ghost, If Thou wilt only return I will confess Thee.” I am so glad God put the word confession in my mouth. I thought I would get ready, so when the Spirit came again I would shout; but before I knew it just as though some one threw a basin of water in my face, a great wave came and just as I went to say, “Glory to Jesus!” the Devil said, “Look, look at the white people, mind, they will put you out,” and I put my hands up to my mouth and held still, and again I felt the Spirit leave me and pass away.

Then Satan said: “Now, you have lied to the Holy Ghost, for you said if the Holy Ghost returned you would confess Him, and He did return and you didn’t confess, and you have lied to the Holy Ghost.”

O, shall I ever forget the horror of that hour? I thought I had committed an unpardonable sin, so was doomed forever. All hope was gone, and a horror of darkness swept upon my spirit. For about five minutes it seemed to me I was in hell, but somehow, I don’t know how, I said, “Well, I know the Lord has sanctified my soul” -- I felt so sure of it -- “and I will go home to my church and give the witness.”

Just then Satan says: “They will not believe you because you did not get the blessing there.” Then I knew there was a little jealousy and prejudice among some, so I said: “Well, no matter, I know the Lord has sanctified my soul, anyhow.” And I went to get up to go out, but could not stand on my feet. O, I was so weak. My head seemed a river of waters and my eyes a fountain of tears. I put my hand in my pocket to get my handkerchief, but I could not get it out. Just then they arose to sing the closing hymn, that blessed hymn, “My latest sun is sinking fast.” I tried to get up, but could not; then the Devil says, “No one knows you here, and they will think you are drunk.”

“Lord, what shall I do,” and a voice seemed to whisper in my left ear, for Satan stood at my right, and would whisper his suggestions: “Pray for strength to stand up.” I took hold of the pew in front of me and trembling from

head to foot I stood up, but held on to the pew. Just as I got fairly on my feet they struck the last verse of the hymn,

Oh! Bear my longing heart to Him,
Who bled and died for me.

Whose blood now cleanseth from all sin,
And gives me victory.

And when they sang these words, "Whose blood now cleanseth," O what a wave of glory swept over my soul! I shouted glory to Jesus. Brother Inskip answered, "Amen, Glory to God." O, what a triumph for our King Emmanuel. I don't know just how I looked, but I felt so wonderfully strange, yet I felt glorious. One of the good official brethren at the door said, as I was passing out, "Well, auntie, how did you like that sermon?" but I could not speak; if I had, I should have shouted, but I simply nodded my head. Just as I put my foot on the top step I seemed to feel a hand, the touch of which I cannot describe. It seemed to press me gently on the top of my head, and I felt something part and roll down and cover me like a great cloak! I felt it distinctly; it was done in a moment, and O what a mighty peace and power took possession of me! I started up Green street. The streets were full of people coming from the different churches in all directions. Just ahead of me were three of the leading sisters in our church. I would sooner have met anybody else than them. I was afraid of them. Well, I don't know why, but they were rather the ones who made you feel that wisdom dwelt with them. They were old leading sisters, and I have found that the colored churches were not the only ones that have these leading consequential sisters in them. Well, as I drew near, I saw them say something to each other, and they looked very dignified. Now, the Devil was not so close to me as before; he seemed to be quite behind me, but he shouted after me, "You will not tell them you are sanctified."

"No," I said, "I will say nothing to them," but when I got up to them I seemed to have special power in my right arm and I was swinging it around, like the boys do sometimes! I don't know why, but O I felt mighty, as I came near those sisters. They said, "Well, Smith, where have you been this morning?"

"The Lord," I said, "has sanctified my soul." And they were speechless! I said no more, but passed on, swinging my arm! I suppose the people thought I was wild, and I was, for God had set me on fire! "O," I thought, "if there was a platform around the world I would be willing to get on it and walk and tell everybody of this sanctifying power of God!"

Of victory now o'er Satan's power,
Let all the ransomed sing,
And triumph in the dying hour
Through Christ the Lord our King."

"Oh! It was love,
'Twas wondrous love,
The love of God to me,
That brought my Saviour from above,
To die on Calvary.

Somehow I always had a fear of white people – that is, I was not afraid of them in the sense of doing me harm, or anything of that kind – but a kind of fear because they were white, and were there, and I was black and was here! But that morning on Green street, as I stood on my feet trembling, I heard these words distinctly. They seemed to come from the northeast corner of the church, slowly, but clearly: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28.) I never understood that text before. But now the Holy Ghost had made it clear to me. And as I looked at white people that I had always seemed to be afraid of, now they looked so small. The great mountain had become a mole-hill. "Therefore, if the Son shall make you free, then are you free, indeed." All praise to my victorious Christ!

“He delivered me when bound,
And when wounded, healed my wound,
Sought me wandering, set me right,
Turned my darkness into light.”
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!

When I got home I opened the door; the baby was still asleep. I said: “Mazie, has Mr. Smith come?”

“No.”

“Has Will slept all right?”

“Yes, he has not wakened up at all.”

“Well, the Lord has sanctified my soul this morning,” and she said, “Has he, mother?”

“Yes,” I said, “and I want to go around and tell Auntie Scott.” She was my good band sister. She lived in Clinton court, off Eighth street. When I got to the door, I knocked and opened at the same time. Brother Scott was lying on the sofa; he was assistant class leader to Brother Henry De Schield’s, who was my leader. He believed in the doctrine of holiness, but had not the experience at that time, but, thank God, he believed in it and said nothing against it, so that was in my favor.

Brother Scott was “on the fence,” sometimes he would seem to believe in it and talk as though he had it, at another time he would oppose it bitterly, so you never knew just when he would turn on you. When I went in that morning, I said: “Pop Scott, the Lord has sanctified my soul this morning.” He raised himself up, and said: “Did He?” (He stammered a little.) I did not wait for any more, I began to sing an old hymn that I had often heard sung in our love feasts and class meetings in the gone-by days, which seemed to be the real song of my soul. I had never felt such soul union with Jesus before in my life; so I sang:

I am married to Jesus
For more than one year,
I am married to Jesus
For during the war.

The old man looked at me and smiled and got ready for an argument. The children all looked astonished. Sister Scott had not come in from church. When I had finished the verse, I said, “Good morning,” and as I opened the door to go out, Sister Scott was just coming in. I said; “Oh, Scott! The Lord has sanctified my soul this morning.”

I thought she would be so glad for she told me that years before in Canada, she had got the blessing through Mrs. Dr. Palmer. She never spoke of it definitely and clearly, so I never understood anything about it, but to my great surprise she very coolly said, “Well I hope you will keep it,” and passed right in by me, and said not another word. I went out. Oh, what a shock!

“There,” the Devil says, “She don’t believe you have got the blessing.”

“O Lord,” I said, “Can it be that I am mistaken and will I have to go back and go all over the ground. I would rather die right here in my tracks.”

As I was turning out of Eighth street in Sixth avenue, I cried out, “O Lord, help me, and if this blessing is not sanctification, then what is it?” And the Lord did help me. Quick these words came with power to my heart: “It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”

“Believeth,” seemed to be so powerfully emphasized, and I said, “Lord, I do believe that Thou hast sanctified my soul,” and the power of God came upon me so that my knees gave way under me and I dropped as though I were

shot, right on Sixth avenue. The people were passing and looked at me and said nothing. I suppose they thought I was a little gone in the head, but God had turned my captivity and my mouth was filled with laughter. I scrambled up as best I could, for I did not fall prostrate, my knees gave way and I dropped on my hands, and every time I said the word which the Lord put in my mouth: "It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," another wave of power came upon me. Down I went again, and so three times, before I got home, I fell under the mighty power of God. Hallelujah! It is today the same, "The power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," and I do believe God, and He has kept me saved magnificently.

Hallelujah! There is a big triumph in my soul. I don't know where the Devil went, but I heard no more of him for a week, then he called on me and said, "When people get sanctified, everything gets better around them."

"Yes," said I."

"Well, you see James is not any better, if anything he is worse."

That was true, if possible, and I said I did think so too, and didn't understand it, for I thought he would be glad to know that I had got more religion.

"Then," said he, "You have no witness that you are sanctified."

"Well," I said, "I will have it, God helping me, right now."

It was Friday. I was ironing; I set down my iron and went and told Jesus. I said; "Lord, I believe Thou hast sanctified my soul, but Satan says I have no witness. Now, Lord. I don't know what to ask as a direct witness to this blessing, but give me something that shall be so clear and distinct that the Devil will never attack me again on that point while I live."

After a short prayer I waited a moment in silence, and said, "Now, Lord, I wait till Thou shalt speak to me Thyself," and a moment passed and these words came: "Ask for the conversion of Miss Chapel."

I said, "Lord, for a real evidence that Thou hast sanctified my soul, I ask that Thou will convert Miss Chapel between now and Sunday morning."

In a moment these words were flashed through my soul: "If thou canst believe all things that are possible to him that believeth." And I said, "Lord, I believe Thou will do it," and a flood of light and joy filled me. Oh, I praise the Lord. I arose from my knees praising God. I went to ironing; after a little while, Satan came again.

"You ought to go and see if the woman is converted before you are so sure."

"Well, yes, I would like to go, but then it is two miles away, and I am afraid Will might wake up and cry."

But the enemy urged me, "You had better not be too sure, you ought to go and see," and I was sorely tempted. I lifted my heart to God in prayer and said, "Lord help me, I believe that Thou wilt do it, and I will trust Thee." Then there came a still hush and quiet all over me and I went on ironing and singing. Praise the Lord!

Miss Chapel, referred to, was a very nice young woman, though not a Christian. She was a very upright, moral person. She was taken ill, and her sister, a very earnest Christian, was very anxious about her state, and asked me and others to come and pray with her. One day I went, and met Mother Jones and several others. We sang and prayed with her and left her. And now a week had passed and I had not heard from her, and I had thought that was why the enemy attacked me so fiercely on Friday. Sunday morning came and I had persisted in believing and praising God, according to His word: "If thou canst believe all things are possible to him that believeth." I went to church, and as I sat in my pew after the sermon was over, and the collection was being taken up, Sister Jones, who sat in the opposite pew, got up and came over to me, and said "Smith, Chapel has got the blessing." I said, "Praise the Lord, when did she get it?" She said, "Yesterday afternoon." Then these words were spoken to my heart in

power:

“Now that is your evidence,” and I said, “O Lord, I do thank Thee, Thou hast answered my prayer and given me this distinct witness that Thou hast sanctified my soul.”

Many times since then my faith has been tried sorely, and I have had much to contend with, and the fiery darts of Satan at times have been sore, but he has never, from that day, had the impudence to tell me that God had not done this blessed work.

Hallelujah! What a Saviour!

Everybody does not have direct witness to their sanctification nor to their justification in that way, but it is their privilege to have the clear, distinct witness of the Spirit to both justification and sanctification, and, as a rule, persons who do not get this distinct witness are unsettled in their Christian life, often waver and falter, and are more easily turned aside to new isms and doctrines; but, thank God, He has kept me in perfect peace while my mind has been stayed on Him and I have trusted in Him. Praise His name forever!

James did not come home for two weeks. When he came I sat down on his lap and put my arms around his neck and told him all about it. He listened patiently. When I got through he began his old argument. I said, “Now, my dear, you know I can’t argue.”

“O well,” he said, “If you have got something you can’t talk about, I don’t believe in it.” “Well,” I said, “I have told you all I can and I cannot argue.” O, how he tantalized me in every way, but God kept me so still in my soul, and my poor husband was so annoyed because I would not argue. I knew what it meant, but praise God He saved me. I could only weep and pray.

Shortly after I was converted, I was deeply convicted for the blessing of heart purity; and if I had had any one to instruct me, I can see how I might have entered into the blessed experience. But not having proper teaching, like Israel of old, I wandered in the wilderness of doubts and fears, and ups and downs, for twelve years; and but for the Rev. John S. Inskip’s having the experience himself, and preaching that memorable Sunday morning, September, 1868, in the old Green Street Church, New York, in all probability I might never have got into the blessed light of full salvation.

I shall ever thank God that the evidence of my acceptance with Him was so definite and clear when I was so deeply convicted for the blessing of heart purity. It was a hard struggle, anyhow; but if this point had not been settled so clearly it would have been much worse – the difference between the two convictions, pardon and purity. When I was convicted for sin I was under condemnation, and felt that I was a lost and wretched sinner. Now, when God in mercy had pardoned all my sins, he took away all condemnation and gave me joy and peace in believing. Hallelujah!

Now, when I was convicted for purity or sanctification, it was a deep conviction of want – an indescribable want; not condemnation. But, oh! That deep heart want. Like, after you have eaten a good hearty breakfast, and have worked hard all day, and get very hungry for your dinner or supper.

Well, my heart cried out and longed as one that “Longeth for the morning.” And yet I had no means, no words to express just what I wanted. One day a friend came in to see me. I was then living at Col.

S. McGraw’s, in Lancaster. She was quite a high-toned colored lady, for everyone knew the Porter family, and they were always considered one of the leading families among the colored people. The father was a large farmer in Kent county, and the sons were all fine young men, and pretty well educated, as was also the daughter. She had been a school teacher for many years, but was now married to Rev. Lewis Hood, who was pastor of the Union Church in Lancaster. So I thought I could open my heart to her, and she would be able to help me. So I said to her, “Sister Hood, I don’t know what’s the matter with me. Somehow I feel like I wanted something, but I can’t tell just what. I pray, but I do not get help just as I want.”

“Well,” she said, “What’s the matter with you? Aren’t you converted?”

“Oh! Yes,” I said, “It isn’t that.”

“Well, haven’t you got the witness of the Spirit?”

“Oh! Yes; it isn’t that.”

“Well,” she said, “If you keep on you will be crazy.”

Then I was frightened, and said, “Oh! She does not understand me; and now if she tells anybody what I said they will not understand it, and will think I have backslidden; and here I am leading class, and the leader of the female prayer meetings”

So as soon as she was gone I ran down into the cellar and got down on my knees, and asked the Lord to take out of the mind of Sister Hood all that I had said, so she would not repeat it. I was in sore distress.

Several days after this I was reading my Bible, and I turned to the forty-second Psalm, first verse, “As the heart panteth after the water brook, so panteth my soul after the living God.” My heart leaped. “Oh!” I said, “That’s what I wanted – God! Now if anyone asked me what I wanted, as Sister Hood did, I could tell them it was God I wanted.” The more I read my Bible, and fasted and prayed, the deeper my hunger became. One day I went to George James – I generally called him “Father James” -- he was a tall, elderly man, very dignified in manner, but was kind. He was very black, his hair was white, and he was a leading local preacher, and deacon of the A. M. E. Church, in Lancaster, at that time, where I belonged. So I went to him, and I said: “Father James, I have been reading the Bible today, and I see this: ‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.’ What does that mean?”

“You know,” he said, “That is in the Bible for you to come as near to it as you can. But God knows you never can be ‘pure in heart.’” “Then he went on and explained to me in his way. Of course I did not get much light. And the Devil said to me as I went home thinking it all over, “You are seeking after something that’s not for you.”

“Well,” I said, “People do have this blessing. There are Job Morris, and Polly Waters, and others, and they say they are sanctified, and everybody believes them.”

“Oh! But they are almost ready to die. But you are young, and you cannot expect to have what they have.”

“Well, perhaps so,” I said.

“Then, you know, Father James said that the Bible did not mean that.” But somehow my better judgment said he was wrong. “I believe what the Bible says, and there must be some way that this grace can be obtained, or God never would have left it on record.” But how to get hold of it I still did not know. I would read my Bible, and pray, and pray on. No light – only the deep hunger. Of course I had comfort in doing my duty attending my class meeting and prayer meetings, and I would go about and pray with the sick and dying, and work in revival meetings, and in all ways I could.

After working hard all day many times I would be called up at twelve or one o’clock at night to go and pray with somebody that was sick or dying. I never refused to go, rain or shine, cold or warm; I felt it was my duty, and I was always glad to do it. Then I would come home, sometimes at three o’clock – and have but very little sleep, and up and off to work again next morning, when I did not have work in the house. My meat and drink was to see souls coming to Christ. I had no fear to go into a congregation and speak to men or women, young or old. I hardly ever went for persons in a congregation, in time of extra meetings, but what they went forward, and many of them were converted. Praise God forever!

I return to my story. Thus as I thought, I asked again, “I wonder why the Lord did not sanctify me fully when he justified me? He was God, and He could have done it; He could have done it all at once if He had had a mind to.” Then the question, “Well, why didn’t He do it?” and I was blocked.

I believe that question was from Satan; he intended to make me think unkindly of God. “Here you have been struggling all these years; God could have done it all at once; but why didn’t He do it?”

“Yes,” I said, “that is so.”

“Well, why didn’t he do it?” And I was so sad I began to cry and said, “Lord, I don’t know why you did not sanctify me wholly when you justified me freely; but I know you have not done it.” Then the blessed Holy Spirit came so sweetly and answered my question by asking me another, “Why didn’t Jesus make the blind man see the first time He touched his eyes?” After the first touch Jesus bade him look, and asked him what he saw. He said, “I see men as trees walking.”

Then He touched him again and he said he saw every man clearly.

He was Christ with the same power in His first touch as He had with the second. He could have made the blind man see clearly the first time, but He did not.

“Why,” I said, “Lord, I see it, and it is none of my business why you didn’t sanctify me fully when you converted me; it is enough for me to know that you have done it.” I came into light and liberty praising the Trinity. I quit asking God questions about His own work. I think it is impertinence, and yet how many do this very thing, and when they don’t get an answer to satisfy themselves they become perplexed and then land in skepticism with regard to the whole doctrine and truth of this great salvation.

One of the first things I discovered after I came into the blessed light and experience of full salvation was a steady and appropriating faith that I never realized before. I always believed the Bible and all the promises, but I did not seem to have power to appropriate the promises to my soul’s need; but after the light broke in and my darkness had fled, power was given me not only to believe the promises, but to appropriate them.

“My! “ I said, as I would read the promises, “that is mine, and that is mine;” and it was like when the sailors reef their sails; I took hold of them and wrapped them round me and walked up and down in possession of the land. All things are yours, and ye are Christ’s, and Christ Is God’s. I sang:

All things are mine,
Since I am His --
How can I keep from singing?”

One day as I was busy about my room I seemed to feel the conscious presence of Jesus. I saw nothing with my eyes, but I seemed to be conscious of the presence of a Holy Being by me and around me, and I talked with Him, and I was saying, “Now, if anyone should ask me to tell the difference between justification and sanctification, how could I tell them? There is a difference; I know it; I feel it; but I don’t know how to tell it.” And the dear Lord Jesus seemed to answer my question by asking another. He said: “What is the difference between sunlight and moonlight?” In a moment I saw it. I knew the beauty of the lovely moonlight. I had read by its brightness, and had often sewed at night, and it was beautiful. That was my justified state. How many times, I did not understand clearly, as in the sunlight; but the deeper experience was in power like sunlight in the natural world. It penetrates all the dark corners. If there is even a small nail-hole in a door, or a crack anywhere, the sun finds it out and looks through; then it heats up everything all about it. There can be no frost where the sunlight is; but it is tropical all the time. There were deep recesses in my heart that the moonlight did not reveal, but when the great sunlight of sanctification came, how it seemed almost to eclipse the moonlight state of justification, save the abiding consciousness of the time when God wrought that first work in my soul. I no longer sang the old hymn,

The midsummer sun shines but dim;
The fields strive in vain to look gay,
But when I am happy in Him,
December’s as pleasant as May.

That means two distinct states as real as the moonlight and sunlight. I knew it was true, but, O, why should there be a December in my heart when I may have the beaming sun? When the Holy Ghost came to my soul in sanctifying

power it was the inaugural of a perpetual May-day that shall go on increasing in faith, and light, and strength, and power, and thanksgiving, and praise, and rest, and peace, and triumph forever and ever and ever. Amen. Amen.

How true this old hymn of Charles Wesley's:

I find Him in singing;
I find Him in prayer;
In sweet meditation,
He always is there.

My constant companion,
Oh, may we ne'er part,
All glory to Jesus,
He dwells in my heart

One day I was meditating and thinking upon His goodness. My heart was full of praise as I thought of all the Lord had done, and I said, "Oh, I will not need to pray now, as I used to do." Just then these words came: "The children of Israel gathered manna fresh every morning." I said, "Yes, Jesus." I knew He meant to teach me that it must be daily bread my soul would need, and as my natural need was met each day, so my spiritual need must be met by prayer and the reading of His Holy Word and the appropriating of His promises. Without this all else would avail nothing.

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