

The Redemption of  
*Howard Gray*



C. W. Naylor



# The Redemption of Howard Gray

By  
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## Foreword

Howard Gray, with whom we walk in the pages that follow, is no mythical character. His story is not an idle tale of fiction. There lies enshrined therein the experiences, longings, hopes, and the very heart-throbs of a real man whose life story it has been the privilege of the author intimately to know. Obviously, it was necessary so to draw the picture that the actual scenes and persons would not be disclosed. Otherwise the story, in its outlines, is actual experience with the needful links supplied to give coherence and continuity.

It is the hope of the chronicler that the story of Howard Gray may throw light on the way of salvation, so that pilgrims on life's journey may be guided into the path of peace and soul-rest. There is only one way of true happiness. Outside that way disappointment is certain. Fellowship with God is the source of the deepest and truest joy that man can know.

That the reader may be brought to know, if he does not already know, the blessed reality of this fellowship in his own life is the prayer of

—The Author

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## Chapter One

### Facing the Facts

It was a bright Sunday morning in late summer. The noise of week-day activities was hushed. A peaceful calm seemed to rest everywhere. The blue sky above and the luxuriant green on every side, with the golden sunlight falling over it, made a picture of serenity. Nature was in peace.

But the heart of Howard Gray did not respond. As he stood at the front gate of his country home, his eyes were fixed upon the ground in thoughtful and serious meditation. He was sorely perplexed. He was just at that age when the hand of experience begins to pull back the curtains of the future and to reveal some of the real problems of life. His nineteenth summer was swiftly passing by. This year had brought new experiences to him. It had awakened in him new hopes and new ambitions. It had brought him into new relations. The high thoughts and dreams of youth had come face to face with some of the realities of life, and he had found that dreaming was easier than bringing his dreams into reality. He was learning what all must learn—that life is not the easy thing that youthful dreams have pictured it. He had found that well-laid plans often meet unexpected obstacles, and that life to a large extent is

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made up of overcoming obstacles or of being overcome and thwarted by them.

Howard was a serious, thoughtful young man who liked to think things through to a conclusion. He was usually light-spirited and full of vigor. To his companions he appeared light and gay. But beneath this superficial joyousness was a current of deep, serious thoughtfulness. On this morning he had abundant reason for serious thought.

As he stood by the gate he heard the notes of the church bell in the distance, mellow and soft, calling the worshipers to Sunday-school and to church. To this call he usually responded, for in his soul there was a deep reverence for God and for His worship. However, he was in no mood to be in a crowd today. He wished to be alone with his thoughts. So he walked down the road, climbed the fence, and entered into the broad expanse of forest that lay near his home. He walked far out into its depths where no eye could see him. Sitting down upon a fallen log, he began his solitary meditations. Usually he would have been keenly alive to every movement and to every noise. He would have been watching the squirrels in their play, listening to the notes of birds as to the voices of his friends. He loved the forest and knew all its sounds; its inhabitants were all his friends. But today all around him was forgotten. A squirrel chattered at him from a tree that was nearby, but he did not look up. The glorious beauty of the summer morning was lost upon him. There was a heavy burden resting upon his soul.

This morning he meant to think this problem through to a solution. He was dissatisfied. Sitting thus in solitude he asked himself, "Why is it that I am not happier in my religion? Why is it that there is such a sense of dissatisfaction in my soul?" His mind ran back in review over his life to the time a few months before when



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on a Sunday morning he had walked down the aisle of the church, and had taken upon himself the solemn obligations of a member of the church.

But that had not been the beginning of religious things for him. As he sat with downcast eyes, his thoughts went back to his youth and he remembered how at his mother's knee he had been taught the principles of right and wrong. He heard again the sound of his mother's voice telling him stories from the good old Book. He remembered the careful earnestness of his parents in their teaching and in their guidance of his life. He remembered how, as that beloved mother had lain upon her dying bed, she called him to speak her last goodbye. How vivid was the scene before him! And he remembered as though it were but yesterday how he, although then only a child, had knelt by her bedside. He remembered the pressure of her hand upon his head and heard again her words, "Howard, be a good boy and meet me in heaven." Those words had followed him through the years. Again and again when he had been tempted to participate in evil things with his companions, he had heard those tones repeated in his soul, "Howard, be a good boy and meet me in heaven." They had held him back from many things. They had swayed a powerful influence in his life. As he remembered that departed mother this morning, he thought, "Oh, if she could have lived, she would have taught me. I might not now be in such perplexities."

In memory, Howard came down over the years. Some things he had done filled him with regret. No, he had not lived as he now wished he had lived. There were many things in the past upon which he could not look back with satisfaction. He had always wanted to do right. For some years now he had made it a practice to bow by his bedside in secret prayer every night. He had wanted to be a

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Christian, a true Christian, but in some way he had seemed to miss that for which his soul craved. He had tried to live a Christian secretly, but he had found such a life unsatisfactory. At times he had been overwhelmed with a sense of his own cowardice.

Howard had often felt that he ought to come out boldly and take his stand for Christ. He had hesitated to do this for two reasons. In the first place, he did not feel that he had within his soul that for which he yearned. He had felt himself overcome again and again in spite of his resolutions. He had found himself full of weakness in the face of temptation. He had not felt the confidence in his life that would enable him to step out boldly and call himself a Christian. Another thing that held him back was his natural timidity. He was very sensitive. He had always been very shy and backward. He had trembled to think of trying to pray or to confess Christ in public. He looked back to the time two or three years previously when he had been in a revival meeting held in the church he was used to attending. His heart then had longed for salvation. It had longed to have a knowledge of the forgiveness of its sins. He remembered how, standing in the rear of the crowded church, members of that church had come and talked to others near him and had invited them to go forward to be prayed for. He had not the courage to go without an invitation. He had wished that someone would ask him to go. That would have made it easier. But no one had said anything to him. They had passed him by for others. So he let his timidity keep him from seeking the Lord.

But Howard's soul had been touched by an influence that lingered with him. That desire to be a Christian was not lost. He looked back over the time he had tried to be a Christian without publicly confessing Christ, but he saw little in it to give him satisfaction. It was a record of failure. He had never been able to live

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up to the standards to which he felt a Christian ought to live. He had earnestly tried, but he realized that he had been trying in his own strength. He had no consciousness of divine help. He could see many manifestations of the providence of God in his life, but he seemed to lack that one thing that in his consciousness he felt he must have. A few months before he had come in contact, for a short time, with some earnest Christians. There seemed to be something in their lives that was not in his own. It was the something for which he longed. Under the influence of these Christians he had joined the church, and now for a few months he had been participating in its services. He had done so with fear and trembling. The result that he had expected to follow his membership in the church had not followed. He was conscious that sin still had a prominent place in his life.

To be sure, Howard had seen the same thing manifested in the lives of some of his fellow church-members. This morning he thought of the lives of the other church-members whom he well knew. The question arose in his mind, "What is the difference between these men and women and those other attendants of the church who are not members and who do not profess to be Christians?" He knew all of their lives. He had worked for some of them. He had done business with some of them. He was frequently in the homes of some of them. He had entered into their social life and their business life. He had often seen thoughts and feelings mirrored in their faces. He had listened to the testimony of some of these church-members that they had "a hard row to hoe," that they had "many ups and downs," that they had "many shortcomings." He had no difficulty to believe that this was true. When they had testified thus, they had told his own experiences. He could understand it very well. But in what respect did he and the others differ from those who did not claim to be Christians?

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Howard thought of one of his nearest neighbors, a man for whom he had frequently worked. He knew from experience that this neighbor was not strictly honest. He had seen him act in a very cruel manner toward his stock and display a temper that was anything but Christian. He thought of a neighbor that lived in the opposite direction from his house. This man made no profession of religion. He was a profane man. But after all, he had to admit that he was much better as a neighbor than the man that was not only a church member, but a member of the official board and a deacon in the church. He contrasted the lives of other church members with non-members. His heart sank with heaviness. "Are we better than they?" he exclaimed. "After all, has our Christianity made any real change in us?" He knew that he was trying to live right more earnestly than he had tried before he became a member of the church. He knew that his sense of responsibility to the church and to the community had kept him out of some of his old sins. Nevertheless, he had the consciousness that from time to time he was coming short, not only of reaching his ideals, but of living up to that standard of practical Christianity which had been instilled into him at his mother's knee. He had seen that standard lived out in her life and in his father's life. He could not help but contrast his own shortcomings with the examples that had been set before him. He was dissatisfied with his own life, thoroughly dissatisfied.

As Howard sat in solemn meditation, he began to recall some of the things he had heard preached. He remembered the familiar text, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Then he remembered how the Apostle Paul had said, "Oh, wretched man that I am."

"I suppose," he sighed, "that that is about the best we can hope for. I may be as good as most of the other members of our church.

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In fact, I believe I am. But is this the life the Bible really pictures as the Christian life? Must our souls be forever unsatisfied? Must we be always coming short of our expectations? Is there not a place that can be reached where we shall be at peace? I know they say that such an experience is not for us in this world, and I suppose it must be true. But oh, my soul longs for something else! I suppose we shall have to make the best of it. Perhaps in heaven things will be different. Of course, they will. People are happy in heaven, but why cannot they be happy in this world? Why does not the Christian religion really satisfy? Why must I always have this consciousness that I am not what I ought to be? But many others seem to be just the same as I. I suppose I may hope for nothing better.”

And then Howard’s mind suddenly reverted to a time two or three years in the past, and he remembered his school teacher. Yes, she had been different. There had been a something in her life that had made a profound impression upon him. There had been about Miss Burns a gentle, quiet, restful something that had made him like to be in her presence. There had seemed to be an undercurrent of joy in her life. She was different from the others. There was something about her that he had not seen in others. He had loved and admired her as a teacher. He had been deeply impressed with her noble Christian character.

Howard thought also of Mr. Peters, who some years before had been his Sunday-school teacher, but now lived in a distant city. “Yes,” he mused, “he had that same thing that Miss Burns had. I do not know what it is. I do not know how people get it, but I should like very much to have it. But then, I suppose it is not for everybody. It seems that there are some people who are different from others. They seem to be naturally better or something. If I were like that, I believe I could be happy. Now, I really have less happiness than I

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did before I tried to be a Christian. I do not know what more I can do.”

He sat thus in deep meditation for a long time. He began to think how that he had heard the preacher say at various times that people must be born again. He had heard other people tell about having been converted and how happy they had been at that wonderful time. What was it to be born again? What did it mean to be converted? If any such thing had taken place in his life he could not recall it. He had wanted to be a Christian. He had tried to be a Christian. He was a member of the church. What more could he do? Being born again was to him a great mystery and when he faced that mystery he felt a feeling of helplessness come over him. How did people become born again? Frankly, he had no idea whatever. He should like to have the experience, if such a thing were for him. “Here I have been listening to preaching all my life,” he exclaimed, “and yet I seem to know no more with certainty about religion than a cat knows about trigonometry. Of course, I know the difference between right and wrong. I know how to do wrong, and I find that easy enough. But the thing I want to know most—how to do right, I do not know at all. When Paul said, ‘When I would do good, evil is present with me,’ he certainly told my experience. I certainly am not one of those favored souls who seem to do everything right and to be good just naturally. I suppose the best that I can do is to go on doing the best I can. I think I am doing about as well as the rest of the members of our church, and if they get through all right I suppose I shall, too.”

He tried to comfort himself with this, but as he walked homeward there was still in his heart that same sense of dissatisfaction that had been there hitherto. In the days that followed he tried to console himself as best he could and to adapt himself to what he felt was the best that he could do, even though it did not

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give him that soul-satisfaction for which there was a continuous inner craving. Thus he went on until another event happened to disturb him again.

## Chapter Two

### A New Element Enters

Howard Gray had just finished supper and was standing in the doorway when a neighbor drove up. He was a young man of about the same age as Howard. They were used to being much in each other's company. He drew up by the gate and called, "Hello, Howard. Say, there are two new preachers holding meeting over at the Ridge. I was over there last night. They are making a great stir. Come and go with me tonight, will you?"

"Why, yes," replied Howard, "I shall not mind going. But who are the fellows?"

"Well, I hardly know who they are, but they are preaching things I never heard before. I will stop for you on my way over."

"All right," said Howard, "I will be ready."

His curiosity was aroused. Still, he had only a mild interest in what they might be preaching. More than two months had passed since the events of the past chapter. He had tried to satisfy his conscience with the argument that he was just as good as the other church-members, and they were all right. Did not the preacher, when one of them died, assure his hearers that this member was safe in heaven? Then, too, when he was doing the best that he could, could God require anything more of him?



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Nevertheless, there were times when his conscience was not at rest. He rather resented this, for he did not like to be disturbed. Like everyone else, he wanted peace of mind, and when anything arose to disturb this peace he shrank away from it and tried to forget it. But he could not get away from that something that kept telling him there was something amiss somewhere, something lacking, even though he might not be able to tell what it was. He would go to the meetings this night and hear some of those new things. He did not fear that he would be disturbed by what he would hear, for he was not used to being disturbed by what he heard preachers say. The disturbance seemed to arise in his own heart. He could find an answer to what the preacher said, or forget it, but there was something that would not let him forget for more than a short time the stirrings of dissatisfaction within his own bosom.

Arriving at the place of meeting, which was a few miles from his home, Howard and his neighbor found that a large crowd had gathered. The commodious church was well filled. Two strange ministers were sitting in the pulpit. They looked like intelligent, forceful men. Soon the service began. The opening exercises did not differ particularly from what he was used to until the time for prayer. Then Howard listened to a prayer that filled him with mingled feelings of awe and wonder. He could hardly tell why, but there was something in this prayer that seemed to talk right to his conscience. There were two things in the prayer that especially attracted his attention: the first was its simplicity and earnestness; the second, that the speaker addressed God as though he were well acquainted with Him. He talked to Him as a man talking to his friend.

Presently, one of the ministers arose to preach. "For my text this evening," said he, "I shall read the first clause of Psa. 11:4: 'The Lord is in his holy temple.' " Then followed a brief description of

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the ancient temple of Israel and the tabernacle that had preceded it. Attention was called to its dedication, how that it had been set apart as a dwelling-place of the Lord among His people. As the minister proceeded, he showed how God had revealed His glory there and how that temple had been kept sacred; how everything in it had been holy. He showed that when those evil-minded persons had defiled God's temple by offering strange fire there, the judgments of God fell upon them. He showed how God manifested Himself in the tabernacle and in the temple only when those structures were undefiled.

After impressing upon his audience the great importance of the holiness of the Old Testament temple, the preacher said, "But that temple is no more. It was utterly destroyed. God has now no temple of wood and stone that is the center of the Old Testament worship. Now we have a New Testament and a new worship. But instead of one temple we have many temples. In 1 Cor. 3:16, 17 we read, 'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.' Turning to 1 Cor. 6:19, we read, 'Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?' While this first text speaks of God's people in a collective sense, the latter speaks of each one of them in the individual sense. And it is this individual sense in which we are to be temples of God of which I wish to speak."

He then proceeded to bring out the thought that the word "temple" used of an individual Christian was meant to carry the mind back to the old temple with all its sacredness and holiness. He showed how the individual life must be dedicated to God, how the life must be a holy life, and how everything must be kept out of it

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that would defile it. He showed how sin defiles God's temple, and that therefore God requires true Christians to abstain from sin. To establish his point he read other texts of Scripture, such as the following:

“But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Pet. 1:15, 16).

“He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love” (Eph. 1:4).

“To present you holy and unblamable and unreprouable in his sight” (Col. 1:22).

“What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness” (2 Pet. 3:11).

He then showed how the people of God were called a holy people: “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness,” etc. In Heb. 3:1, the Christians are addressed as “holy brethren.” 1 Pet. 3:5 speaks of “holy women . . . who trusted in God.”

“This holiness,” said he, “is not a mere imaginary thing. It is not merely a ceremonial holiness. It is an actual holiness. It consists of two things—first, a holiness or purity of character; second, a holy life. There is but one thing that creates unholiness; that thing is sin. It defiles the whole course of nature, shuts us out from communion and fellowship with God, and stirs up every turbulent element of the nature. It poisons the whole spiritual being, is hateful to God, and He cannot excuse it. It ruins our lives and our happiness for time and eternity.

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“But is there any remedy for sin in this life, or must we be sinful throughout life? Paul said that ‘Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.’ John said, ‘The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin’ (1 John 1:7). Speaking of Christ, he says, ‘Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood’ (Rev. 1:5). The blood of Christ cleanses away all the defilement of our past sins. It washes away all the crimson stains. It has power to make us whiter than snow. Do you remember the old song we have sung from childhood, one line of which is, ‘Now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow’? This is the teaching of the Scriptures. Jesus said, ‘Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God’ (Matt. 5:8). I repeat 1 Cor. 3:17: ‘The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.’ Holiness is a thing of character. Therefore, we must be holy in our characters in order to be Christians. We must be washed from our sins in the precious blood of Christ. As the prophet said, ‘Wash you, make you clean.’ And Jesus said to His disciples, ‘Ye are clean’ (John 13:10). The voice of God speaking to Peter about those who had been saved from among the Gentiles said, ‘What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common’ (Acts 10:15). The lesson Peter got out of this was, ‘God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean’ (v. 28). From this we are to understand that those whom God has cleansed are different from others and different from what they were before.

“The idea that is prevalent that a Christian will be sinful in his character all his days is contrary to the Scriptures. We must be holy, for God has commanded it. To be unholy is to be unacceptable with Him. He has taught us to ‘love one another with a pure heart fervently’ (1 Pet. 1:22), and we cannot love one another in that way unless we have pure hearts. In the first part of the verse he says, ‘Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth.’ It is

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possible, therefore, for the human soul to be purified from its sin. 'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.'

"Holiness is not only a thing of character, it is a characteristic of the Christian life. Christ is our example. Peter tells us, 'Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth' (1 Pet. 2:21, 22). To follow His steps is to do as He did, to act as He acted, to be holy as He is holy. 'Like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living' (1 Pet. 1:15, A. S. V.). Again it is written, 'For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world' (Titus 2:11, 12). Again I read, 'That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life' (Luke 1:74, 75).

"But some tell us that this is an impracticable standard; that it is quite out of reach of man. They say that God only means us to aim at the mark and that we are sure to miss it. This challenges the wisdom of God. He knows what we can do; He knows what we can be; He knows what His grace will accomplish for us. To say that He raises up an impossible standard for us is almost, if not quite, to be guilty of blasphemy. The temple of God is holy. The Bible asserts it. The Bible is true. Men must be holy in their characters and they must be holy in their lives or they shall be under the condemnation of God. It is the lack of holiness that makes so many unhappy lives as there are. It is this that makes so many professing Christians live in continuous uncertainty. They want to please God, they want to do what is right in His sight, but they are constantly coming short. They are frequently overcome by sin. They are humiliated over and over

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by their conscious lack of conformity to the will of God. My friends, there is a better life than that. Christianity is something higher than that. The grace of God will lift us above sin. As it is written, 'We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not' (1 John 5:18). 'Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not' (1 John 3:6).

"And now we shall note some texts on the negative side of the question. 'He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him' (1 John 2:4). Again we read, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin' (1 John 3:9), and in the next verse, 'Whosoever doest not righteousness is not of God.' And again, 'He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked' (1 John 2:6).

"These, my friends, are only a few of the multitude of Scriptures that might be read showing that a Christian is a man who acts from pure motives and lives a holy life, free from sin. The question that confronts you and me tonight, friends, is, Do we live holy? Do we live righteously before God? Let me read you one more text of Scripture, 'He that committeth sin is of the devil' (1 John 3:8). In view of all these texts that I have read in your hearing, all should give most serious attention to the text which I read which says, 'The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.' There is power in the blood to cleanse from all sin. There is power in the grace of God to keep us from sin. But a sinful Christian life is not a Christian life. A sinner is not a Christian. And now I leave this with you, quoting again that text from Peter which says, 'As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy.' "

After the meeting had been dismissed, the people stood in groups in the churchyard discussing what they had heard. Some approved the preacher's message; some disapproved it. Howard and his companion took no part in this discussion except as listeners. On

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their way home they were for the most part silent, though they discussed the sermon and came to the conclusion that the minister must have been mistaken in his application of the text he read. In the quiet of his own room Howard thought over what he had heard. He was more disturbed over the sermon than he had been aware, and the more he thought of it, the more disturbed he became. If he should accept what the preacher taught, it would place him in a very embarrassing situation. If he rejected it, what would he do with the Scriptures that had been read? Presently he began to grow indignant. "The idea," he said to himself, "of any one teaching that we can be holy in this life; that we can live without sin here, surrounded as we are by sin on every side, and with temptation prevailing continually. It is unreasonable. That man does not know what he is talking about. I know very well I have tried, and have tried sincerely to live right and still I find myself coming short frequently. I know I do not live without sin and yet I believe I try as hard as I can to do so. I do not believe God would be just to require more of me than I can do." So he resolved that he would go to hear that preacher no more. He kept his resolve throughout the meeting. Nevertheless, he could not rid himself of the influence of the sermon he had heard.

A few days later Howard met old Mr. Benton, who had been a member of the church for "forty odd years." Mr. Benton had not attended the meetings, but he had heard of them, and when Howard mentioned having been to the meeting, Mr. Benton asked him to give him a summary of what he had heard preached there. Howard did so. The ire of Mr. Benton was immediately aroused. "Yes, I heard that they have been preaching holiness there and that people can live without sin, but anyone who has had as much experience as I have in serving the Lord knows very well that such a thing is impossible in this world. When we cross over into the glorious promised land, then we shall be free from sin. But as long as we live

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in this world we shall be sinners. For, Howard, the Bible says, ‘If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.’ ”

“Yes,” said Howard, “I know it does. I have read it.”

“Yes,” said Mr. Benton, “and it also says, ‘For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.’ That you will find in Eccl. 7:20.”

Howard noted down the text and Mr. Benton proceeded: “And in Prov. 20:9 it says, ‘Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?’ And did not Jesus Himself say in Matt. 19:17, ‘Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God.’ There are other texts, too, that teach the same thing, but I cannot just remember what they are now. I will look them up and let you know where they are.”

“All right,” said Howard, “I wish you would. And if I see that preacher again I shall tell him something.”

These Scriptures were quite comforting to Howard, but still there were times when he was disturbed in his spirit. It exasperated him that it should be so. But every time he thought of Miss Burns or Mr. Peters, a feeling came over him that was very unpleasant. He went on thus for several weeks. One night he attended a party to which he had received an invitation a few days before, but the weather was rather inclement, so there were but few present. One of these was a young man a few years older than himself who had formerly been a schoolmate. The ministers who had held the meeting before referred to, had stayed at this young man’s home during the meeting, being entertained there by his parents. He and Howard got into a conversation concerning the meeting, and Howard voiced his objections to what had been preached. The



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young man drew a New Testament from his pocket and said, “I heard both of those preachers preach when they were holding that meeting. I had many talks with them in our home. I believe what they preached is Scriptural and right.”

Howard was surprised to hear his friend express himself thus, and he quoted to him some of the texts that had been the support of his position during the past weeks. “Now, John,” said he, “you surely cannot say that those preachers were right in view of what these texts say.”

“Let us go over here where we may talk this over undisturbed,” said John. “I am not a Christian, and do not profess to be one, but I have been reading the Bible a great deal lately, and I have found that what those preachers preach is true. I know the Bible says what you say it does, and I asked those preachers about those texts, and they gave me an explanation of them which entirely satisfies my mind. Now let us consider some of these texts. Take 1 John 1:8, ‘If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.’ Perhaps you have noticed what it says in the preceding verse. I quote it: ‘The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.’ Now if one is cleansed from all sin, how much sin remains? John is talking here of one who has not been cleansed by the blood of Christ, but who declares that he has no need of being cleansed because he has no sin from which to be cleansed. This, of course, is contrary to the Scriptures, for everyone who has not been cleansed is defiled by sin, for the Bible says, ‘All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.’ Then, you will notice that the ninth verse tells us how to get rid of sin: ‘If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ Now, if ‘the blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth us from all sin,’ as verse seven says, and ‘from all unrighteousness,’ as verse nine says, cannot we

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then say that we have no sin? It must be true of one so cleansed, or else these texts are not true.”

“Yes,” said Howard, “but the Bible says, ‘There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not’ (Eccl. 7:20).”

“Well,” answered John, “let us put up by the side of this 1 John 3:9: ‘Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.’ What are you going to do with that text?”

Howard was perplexed. The two texts seemed to contradict each other very strongly.

“Well,” Howard said at length, “I do not know that I can explain that last verse, but I know the first one is true.”

“Yes,” said John, “the first one is true and so is the last one. What is needful is to get a correct understanding of the two and their relation to each other. You will have to take into consideration that this statement and some others like it were made in Old Testament times before Jesus had come and offered Himself for our redemption. In that time people did not have the experience of divine grace that people have since Jesus came. But now ‘the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,’ and the statement is true that ‘Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.’ ”

“Yes,” said Howard sarcastically, “I heard those fellows were teaching they couldn’t sin. When anybody gets that good, he is getting too good for this world. The Bible says, ‘There is none that doeth good, no, not one.’ ”

“Yes,” said John, “the Bible says that in the third chapter of Romans. But of whom is Paul talking there? Is he speaking of Christian people? In the tenth verse he says, ‘There is none righteous, no, not one;’ and in the twelfth verse he says, ‘There is

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none that doeth good, no, not one;’ and in the ninth verse he said, ‘We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.’ But what does he mean? Let us read a little further, beginning with verse 13, ‘Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes.’ Does this sound like Christian people? Are they such characters as are represented here? By no means. Christians do have the fear of God before their eyes. They have known and do know the way of peace. Their feet are not swift to shed blood. Their mouths are not full of cursing and bitterness. Paul is talking of the world without Christ. Jesus said, ‘Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things’ (Matt. 12:33, 35). So you see, Jesus understood that there were good men who lived good lives and had good things, not evil things in their hearts.”

So they went on considering text after text, but Howard saw that the argument was going against him no matter what text he brought up, for his friend had a ready answer for all his objections to a sinless life. Finally his friend turned upon him and said, “Now you are a church member, and I am not. I know I commit sin. I admit that I do. You say that you commit sin. Now in what respect are you better than I? We both do the same thing. We both live the same kind of a life; you sin and I sin. Wherein are you better than I? If God should send me to hell for my sins, will He not send you there for yours? But that isn’t all; just let me read you something. Let me read John 8:34, ‘Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you,

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whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.’ And again he says in Matt. 6:24, ‘No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye can not serve God and mammon.’ Now you say you commit sin and that first text says that you are ‘the servant of sin.’ The second says that ‘no man can serve two masters.’ Therefore, you cannot serve sin and serve Christ at the same time.”

Howard was silent. He had no answer. These Scriptures were touching a sore spot in his conscience, so he started to turn away. But John said, “Hold on a minute. I am not done with you yet. I want you to go home and read this Scripture in your own Bible and face it like a man. It is 1 John 3:8, ‘He that committeth sin is of the devil.’ Now you say you commit sin; I should like to know how you can prove by the Scriptures that you are a Christian at all, especially in view of the fact that the next verse says, ‘Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.’ One more point, however, I want to call to your attention. You said that those preachers said they were so good they couldn’t sin. Now they said nothing of the kind. They said anyone could sin who wanted to, and that we could never get to the place we could not sin if we wished, but that by the grace of God we could refrain from doing that which is evil in the sight of God. They taught that God would give to us grace to keep his commandments and they showed plainly that sin is doing what we knew to be wrong, not some accident or mistake or something we cannot help. If we cannot help doing a thing, it is not sinful. But we can keep from sinning, by the grace of God. It would be unjust for God to require something of us that we cannot do. God is not unjust: so people can live when they get the Bible experience just like the Bible says for them to live.”

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Howard went home from the party silent and thoughtful. The text, "Whosoever committeth sin is of the devil," seemed to haunt him. Day by day it repeated itself in his mind. He grew resentful because he could not get rid of it. He was a Christian no matter what John said. He was trying to do right. "I know what I will do," he said to himself. "I will read the New Testament through and mark everything it says on the subject of sin and righteousness, and then I shall know for myself. I will prove to John and to everybody else who says anything about it that I am really a Christian, and that Christians cannot expect to live without sin."

So he began reading the New Testament, and with a colored pencil he marked everything that he thought related to the subject. The further he went the more disturbed he was. Finally he finished reading it. Then he turned back and read all the places that he had marked. He had nothing further to say about a Christian living a sinful life for he saw that the Scriptures were entirely against it. He saw that he was coming short more than he had ever dreamed, and for the next two months he passed through a severe spiritual struggle. He felt he was not truly a Christian. He was thoroughly dissatisfied with himself, and yet he was not humble enough to acknowledge to others that he was not a Christian. So he went on from day to day thoroughly miserable, but still having a desire in his heart to be right and to do right.

## Chapter Three

### A Spiritual Revolution

It was a cold day in February. Howard was engaged in making some repairs on the barn when Allen Baker drove up.

“Hello, Allen,” he called.

“Hello, Howard. Say, have you heard the news?”

“News? What news?”

“Why, those holy preachers are coming back to the Ridge again to hold another meeting, those good fellows, you know, that couldn’t sin if they tried.”

“I suppose you will go to hear them,” said Howard.

“Me? Don’t you think so. I got enough of them the first time they were here.” So saying, he drove on.

“Ha! ha!” said Howard to himself. “He got enough the first time. I should say he did. They laid it down on him pretty heavy.”

Allen Baker was a church member, though he belonged to a different church than did Howard. Baker was a great talker and not always careful to tell the truth. He loved to retell the gossip that he had heard. The boys had nicknamed him The Daily Times, and some of them used jokingly to say that his religion never “took” properly.

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It had happened that one of the evangelists at the Ridge had preached in such a way that, while he did not know anything about Mr. Baker, he had pictured what that kind of a man would do in a community and how far such a life was from real scriptural Christianity. Mr. Baker had been greatly offended and the laughter of the boys at his expense did not lessen his displeasure.

Howard felt differently toward this meeting than he had felt toward the former one. He had a strong desire to go. So when the time came he was there, ready to listen eagerly. He no longer argued against the possibility of one living a righteous life nor against the doctrine of holiness. What he had read in the Bible convinced him.

But he was deeply conscious that his own life came short of what it ought to be. He was not content to remain in such a condition. He had a sincere desire to be right with God. So he went to this meeting with an open heart, ready to accept what he could understand to be truth. At the same time he expected to exercise a discriminating watchfulness and not accept what was not according to the Scriptures.

He enjoyed the preliminary exercises, especially the singing. Then the evangelist arose and said, "I will use two texts tonight as a basis for my remarks. The first is found in Matt. 11:28, 29, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.' The other is found in Matt. 16:24, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.' My subject this evening is 'The Way to Christ,' or 'How to Become a Christian.' The two texts that I have read contain two phrases that sum up the whole matter; they are, 'come unto me,' and 'follow me.' The world of sinners is far from God. They are 'without God and without hope

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in the world.’ They are unlike God in character and in life. They are laden with iniquity; they are guilty of many sins, they are on the broad way to destruction, and are going away from God. The message of God to them is, ‘Turn ye, turn ye . . . Why will ye die?’ When a man is awakened to see the sinfulness of his sins, he realizes his need of a Saviour. He may try to reform himself, but he will find that sin has such a hold upon him that he cannot conquer it. He may struggle against it as many people do; may try to live right, but he will find himself failing again and again.”

This was a picture of Howard’s experience. He knew all too well what it meant. Would the preacher really tell him the way to something better?

Continuing, the minister said, “Jesus says, ‘Come unto me.’ What does this imply? In order to come unto Him it is necessary to give heed to what He says. It also implies leaving the place where we are. The sinner must leave the way of unrighteousness; forsake his sin; and separate himself from all that is evil. Jesus demanded repentance of all. ‘Repentance’ means ‘a turning.’ Repentance from sin means a turning away from sin. As the prophet said, ‘Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon’ (Isa. 55:7). The sinner must quit sinning. He must forsake his evil ways. Jesus said, ‘Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he can not be my disciple’ (Luke 14:33). Again it is written, ‘Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I



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will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty' (2 Cor. 6:14, 17, 18).

“Christianity is a new life: ‘If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature’ (2 Cor. 5:17). He is born again. There is divine life dwelling in him. His old sins have been forgiven, and he has been cleansed from the guilt of those sins. The wall that stood between him and his God is taken away; he is reconciled to God, and has the peace of God in his heart. There has been a deep and great change in his character. But this could not take place until there was a breaking with the old life, a severing of its attachments, a deliverance from its power. So he who comes to Christ must come with his whole heart. Hitherto he has been his own master, has done as he pleased, has followed out his own inclinations, and served himself. But Christ says, ‘Take my yoke upon you.’ We must become His servants. We must surrender our wills to Him and become obedient to Him. He must have His way with us. We must surrender our way where it is contrary to His. ‘One is your master, even Christ.’ Voluntary self-surrender is demanding. Nothing short of this is taking Christ’s yoke upon us.

“Our second text says, ‘Follow me.’ To follow Christ means to live as He lived. It means to be obedient to Him, to be moved by the same motives and purposes that move Him. The Christian is Christ’s man. He is like Christ in character and in life. If he is not like Christ in these respects, he is not Christ’s man—not following Christ. The man who follows sin goes away from Christ. Only he who follows righteousness walks with Christ.

“But Jesus says that we must take up our cross and follow Him. A cross is an instrument of death. So as Christ died, you and I must die. A literal death is not what He means for us, but a death to sin. Paul speaks about being dead to sin and dead to the old life in which

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we formerly walked. That is exactly what Jesus meant. It means a separation from the old life, its purposes, desires, and sinful habits as completely as though we had actually died a literal death. The new man is to walk in newness of life. He must make a clean break with the old life. He must give up every sinful habit. Christ will break the power of habit and He will set the sinner free.”

The evangelist then told of a number of instances of men and women who had been great sinners, but who had been wonderfully saved by the power of Christ and brought up from the depths to live high and noble Christian lives. He told how he had known men to be saved from the habit of drink, from the use of tobacco, from swearing, lying, stealing, and scores of other things. And then he said, “When the liar is saved, he becomes a truthful man; when the gambler and the cheat are saved, they become honest; when the impure man or woman is saved, we find purity in the life; when the intemperate man is saved, he no longer is enslaved by the thirst for liquor. And you tobacco-chewers here, I can tell you of a remedy better than any advertised in the newspapers. It is the blood of Christ; it is the power of God. God will deliver you from being enslaved by the appetite for tobacco no matter in what form or in how many forms you use it. No matter what your sin, Jesus Christ will deliver you if you will come to Him, forsaking all.

“Coming to Christ, forsaking your sins is not all there is to do in order to be a Christian. The old account must be settled; the guilt of your sins against God must be washed away. God’s mercy is sufficient for that. The blood of Christ will cleanse you from all sin if you repent of your sins, give them up, and ask God to show mercy to you. But there are sometimes accounts with our fellow-men, and these accounts must be settled. There are people who have bitter grudges against others—they hate them. Perhaps they have been

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mistreated by these other persons. But this old account must be settled—this hatred must be gotten out of the heart, for the Bible says, ‘Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.’ Jesus said, ‘Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven’ (Luke 6:37). Again He said. ‘For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive your trespasses’ (Matt. 6:14, 15). Some people say they cannot forgive. If this be true, they never can be Christians. They wish God to forgive them, but they are not willing to forgive others. If we are not willing to give up the hatred that is in our hearts toward others, we cannot cease to be sinners; we cannot become Christians. You must give up that old grudge. You must get rid of that hardness out of your hearts. Do you say you cannot? God will cleanse your heart from that vile thing if you are willing to give it up. But if you are not willing to forgive and turn the matter over into God’s hands for Him to deal with the individual, you can never be forgiven; you will be lost forever. Jesus declares that unless you forgive, you cannot be forgiven.

“But perhaps you have wronged someone else. Christ teaches us to love our enemies. If God puts His love into your heart, you must be willing to manifest that love to others. Before you are saved, you must be willing to make right, so far as lies in your power, the wrong that you have done. If you have cheated someone, God will expect: you to make that right if you can. If you have done another person an injury, God will expect you to make that right if you can. He will not only expect you to ask forgiveness and make due confession to the individual wronged, but He will require you to repair the injury as far as possible. You will desire to do this when the love of God is in your heart. If you have cheated your neighbor, you will not wish to keep your ill-gotten gains. They are not yours and you will feel they are not yours—you will want the true owner to have them. If you have harmed the reputation of another, you will

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desire to make that right and to restore his reputation. And everything else wherein you have wronged another you will be disposed to make right if you are a true Christian. Ezekiel said, 'If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he hath robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity, he shall surely live, he shall not die' (Ezek. 33:15). How blessed it is to know that the old accounts are all made right! How blessed to know that the past is all under the blood, all cleansed through the mercy of God!

“ ‘Come unto me,’ said Jesus, ‘and I will give you rest.’ When we come to Christ, a new day begins. We commence a new life; we have new hearts, new aspirations, ambitions, hopes, desires. Life from God comes into the soul, power to abstain from sin, an earnest desire to please God, and the power to please Him. It is now Christ that liveth in us, His grace abounds toward us, and the things of evil that we once loved and that had such a strong attraction for us, have such an attraction no longer. The things of the Spirit are so much more glorious than the things of our former life that we detest what before we loved, and the spiritual things, for which we had little taste, are now the delight of our souls.

“After you have forsaken all, after you have surrendered to Christ, what must you do to be a Christian? You must confess your sins to Him, not necessarily all the details of your sinful life, but you must confess like the publican of old that you are a sinner. You must cry out, ‘God be merciful to me, a sinner.’ Like the prodigal son, you must say, ‘I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight.’ But we have the promise concerning our sins that ‘whosoever confesseth and forsaketh them shall find mercy.’ And again it is written, ‘If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ (1 John 1:9).

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“When we come to God we must believe that our prayers will be heard. He has promised to hear us, and He will not fail to do so. Every penitent heart receives a glad welcome home by the Father and by Jesus who came to seek and to ‘save that which was lost.’ So we can come to God with full assurance that He will hear us and that He will forgive us. And when we ask Him in earnestness of heart, with fullness of purpose to be His for time and for eternity, submitting our will to His will, that is, to His desire for us, then we can ask Him with assurance that He will hear us, will cleanse away our sins, and make us new creatures in Christ Jesus. ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,’ is the promise He makes to us.

“And so repenting of our sins, we raise our eyes to heaven and accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the one full, complete, and adequate sacrifice to take away our guilty stains. And trusting thus in His sacrifice, as the prophet said, God will lay upon Christ the iniquity of us all, and we are permitted to go free, purged from our sins, cleansed from our iniquities, born again, children of the Most High, heirs of God, tasting the joys of His salvation, and knowing the blessedness of being freed from our sins and washed from our guilt in the precious blood of the Lamb.

“If you will do this, you may be a Christian tonight. You may have the consciousness that you are born again. You may know that your sins are gone; that you are Christ’s and He is yours.”

Howard went away from the meeting that night deeply concerned. That was exactly the experience he desired. But he wanted time to think it over; time to apply it to his own heart. In the quiet hours of the night he thought it through. Yes, that was just the experience he needed, what his heart had been crying out for all these years. He must have it. He would go to church the next night

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and—but was he not a church member? What would the people say? If he should confess that he had never been a Christian, that he knew nothing experimentally of the new birth, and if he should go forward like others who had made no profession, what would they think? What would they say? How humiliating it would be! He fought the battle out and decided he would go anyway.

The next night he went to meeting with a settled purpose in his heart to go forward for prayer. When the time came, his heart failed him. He felt as though he were rooted to the spot where he stood. He seemed to have no power to move. The time passed. He trembled all over. When the invitation had ended, he sat in his seat overwhelmed. He heard little of what was said. He was only half conscious, it seemed, of what was going on about him.

Other nights and days of struggle followed, but Howard kept on attending the meetings. He heard many good things, and still desired to be saved. He determined again and again, when out of the meetings, that he would yield when he went again, but each time he let the opportunity pass. At last the meetings were over, and of all men he seemed most miserable. How he regretted that he had not yielded! Now it was too late; the meetings were over, and the ministers had gone. What should he do? He tried to pray, but found no satisfaction. Day by day a terrible conflict raged in his bosom.

One day, about two weeks after the close of the meeting, Howard was alone in the woods at work when it seemed he could endure the burden of his sins no longer. He cried out to God for mercy, and there made a complete surrender. It seemed that he would be crushed by the burden that rested upon him, as he cried out, “God be merciful to me, a sinner.” All at once, like a flash of lightning from a clear sky, he found himself illuminated within with a glorious, heavenly light. His burden was gone. He knew not what

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had become of it. The crushing weight no longer lay upon his soul; instead, a great peace filled his being. Everything seemed wonderfully changed; that somber March morning suddenly became transformed, and everything seemed to glow with a glorious light. He had never seen things look so beautiful before; in fact, he had never been so happy before. He lifted up his heart and praised the Lord. That praise came spontaneously. Those long months of conflict were past, and now he had what he had been craving. He was saved; he knew he was saved, his sins were forgiven, and he had a consciousness deep within his bosom that he was a child of God. The Spirit of God testified to him that he was born again. He could face the world now, and it made no difference if people did laugh. His joy knew no bounds, he was so unspeakably happy.

When Howard went home at noon there was no need to tell the family what had happened. His shining eyes and glowing face told the story. This was the beginning of a new life, the life for which he had longed, but it was greater and richer and fuller than he had ever dreamed it could be. He had never pictured it so glorious as this. There would be lessons he would have to learn in the future and these would not be easy to learn, but he knew nothing then of what lay ahead. He would find out that the Christian life had its difficulties, but now all he could consider was the joy that filled his soul, the inexpressible delight that he found in his new life.

## Chapter Four

### Unexpected Experiences

As the days went by, Howard Gray contrasted the new life he was now living with the life which he had lived before. How different it now was from those days when he had made no profession of religion, but had run his course in the way of sin, not without conscientious scruples, however, and often with a sense of the spiritual impropriety of his life, but at the same time usually giving little thought to the moral aspects of life! In general he had acted from ordinary, selfish motives. How differently he now felt! How different he was! His desires were different and his outlook on life was different. There was little in common with that old life.

This life was also a contrast to the life Howard had lived as a member of the church without being born again. Now his heart was light. He was untroubled and full of peace. There was a joyful exuberance that buoyed up his spirits. It was now a delight to attend church services, and he loved to be with Christian people. His affection for his old associates still remained, but he no longer had any desire to enter into their sinful pleasures, for he did not enjoy their company as before. Profanity, vulgarity, and rude jokes were offensive to him. The practical jokes he had loved to play did not seem to appeal to him in the same way any longer. To be sure, he had not lost his sense of humor; his wit was just as keen as before,



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and he could laugh just as heartily and have just as good a time, but in some way the whole course of his life was changed. He found his pleasures in different things than formerly. Different things appealed to him. He delighted in reading the Bible, found much pleasure in prayer, and he loved to be in the presence of older persons when they talked about the Savior and their experiences in the Christian life. As he approached God, he felt a nearness to Him. It seemed like he could talk directly to God, and God seemed to talk to him. He had learned what it is to have fellowship with God, and that fellowship was very tender and sweet.

Howard felt himself changed with respect to those outer things that surrounded him. He felt a love toward all humanity; a kindness toward all men, to which he had been a stranger before. There were some persons whom he had disliked very much; he could hardly think of them without a frown. Some of them he felt had wronged him; others he just disliked for no particular reason. His feelings toward them now were different. All the old bitterness and dislike that had rankled in his heart were gone. He could not yet approve of some things some had done, and in some he could see no very likeable qualities, nevertheless he had a kindly feeling for them, even though he did not feel like cultivating their society. Resentment toward those who had misused him was gone; he had forgiven them, and had dropped matters forever. This in itself removed a serious cause of irritation and gave opportunities for peace in a direction where there had been no peace before.

Howard showed a tenderness toward dumb creatures about him. He could no longer be harsh or cruel to the stock; no longer tormenting them with his practical jokes. He felt a mercifulness and kindness toward them quite different from anything he had felt before. He did not feel like giving pain to anything or anybody. In

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fact, he found himself having a consideration hitherto unknown. He was truly a new creature, not only in his relationship with God and in his own inner life, but in his relationship with God's creation as well.

This new life brought him supreme content. He looked forward to the coming years of life. Of course, things would always be just as they were now. That was the Christian life he had been dreaming of; that was the joyfulness that had caused Miss Burns to be like she had been. He understood it now. He knew why Miss Burns could be so even-tempered and have such an undercurrent of joy in her life.

Howard Gray, like many another young Christian, had a rosy view of his future. He was yet to find out what all learn sooner or later, that life's roses have their thorns and that the holiest of people have their difficulties. The great change that had taken place in him and the new experiences through which he was passing had for a time obscured some of the facts of life. He was wholly unaware of this. So he walked for the time being in a paradise of satisfaction. He lived on his emotions. Had he received some much needed instructions at this time he might have avoided some things that afterward gave him much trouble, and might have been spared much anguish of spirit.

But even now in the midst of his joy there were some things that troubled him. He remembered some things that had happened in his sinful life, wherein he had wronged others to a certain degree. These things he had been taught it was his duty to make right. He wanted to do so, but of course it was a humiliating task. There were not many such things in his life, but three or four stood out very clear and rested very heavily upon his conscience. Yes, he was quite willing to make them right; he wished very much they were right, but to face the parties and to humbly confess what he had done and

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ask their pardon, was a thing from which he shrank. Such a thing is rarely an easy task. Howard put it off from day to day. One day he met one of the men to whom he felt he ought to confess something and he really wished to do it, but it seemed so hard that he permitted the opportunity to pass by. How bad he felt about it! How much he wished he had used the opportunity, but it was now gone. His conscience sharply reproved him, and he felt that God was displeased. He went upon his knees and promised that he would speedily make the matter right. Then peace came into his heart again, and his joy returned. A little later he had another opportunity, but again his courage failed. This brought a repetition of condemnation.

The time came, however, when he faced the situation like a man and set about making everything right that he thought he ought to make right. When he once set about it, he did not find it nearly as hard a task as he had supposed it would be. All treated him with kindness. The man he had feared most treated him best of all, and he was ashamed that he had been such a coward as to have delayed for so long that which it was his duty to have done. But now it was done, thank God! That burden would rest upon him no more. How relieved he felt! Many another person has failed just where Howard nearly failed in this matter, and thereby lost the peace out of his soul and came under the condemnation of God, when had he played the man, his peace would have been preserved, the joy of his soul would not have been disturbed, he would have done his duty, lifted up his head, and faced all men with a clear conscience. It pays to play the man. The coward's way is always a hard way. To make things right that need making right is the noble way: any other course is ignoble and unbecoming to a professed Christian.

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Howard went on for a time, joyful, peaceful, victorious. Ah! this was the life to live! But presently something quite unaccountable happened. For some reason his joy seemed to subside, and he did not have that flow of emotion that he had had at first and most of the time since. He came to the place where he felt no particular stirrings of his emotions. His conscience did not smite him. He did not feel that he had done anything wrong, but he was troubled. That joy that he had supposed would always abide with him seemed to have faded away. He began to ask himself, "What have I done?" Doubts crept in. "Surely I have done something or I would not feel thus," he reasoned. The clear assurance of his salvation that he had had for so long seemed fading away. He went to pray, and vowed to God that he would be faithful. He earnestly asked God to help him to be a true Christian, and prayed until the joy came back into his soul. Now he knew he was saved, for he had the same joy, the same assurance, that he had had at first.

To his dismay, however, these joyful emotions did not last long, and when these joyful emotions were gone, his confidence oozed out, and his assurance gave way to doubts. The more he doubted, the worse he felt, until at last he came into an agonized state of heart from which he suffered keenly. Now he knew he must have done something wrong, but what was it? He did not know. He looked back over his life, but he could see nothing that was wrong. He sincerely tried to do what he ought to do, but he was sure he ought not to feel thus, and would not feel thus, had he not done something wrong. For days he was in this troubled state. Under the discouraging influence of this condition, he did not speak as kindly sometimes as he had been speaking before. He was not as patient as he had been. He was tried in unexpected ways. But he fled to God and prayed until the clouds cleared away from his sky and once more he was joyful.

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This joy, however, lasted but a few hours, and then subsided. Many times after prayer he would be joyful for a time, but that joy would soon pass away and then his doubts would return. For some months he went on thus, striving earnestly to do the right. Sometimes he would get along well for a few days, then the clouds would overspread his sky again.

During this time Howard had been attending the meetings at the Ridge. The present pastor was an earnest man of God; a new man who had taken up the work there at the close of the second revival-meeting, the one that had led to Howard's conversion. Howard enjoyed hearing him preach, for this man expounded the Scriptures well. Howard learned many things through his preaching, but this pastor, like many another, failed to give the young converts that simple teaching on practical points that would enter into their own experiences, which they needed much to hear. He did not seem to realize what Jesus meant when He said, "Feed my lambs." He seemed to feel that the young converts would thrive on the same kind of preaching that the old, experienced Christians enjoyed. He failed to take into consideration the fact that the young converts were merely babes and that they needed the care that should be given to babes. They needed to be given things convenient for them; things that would help them to meet the perplexing problems that arose in their daily lives. They needed that practical guidance which would help them to understand the answers to their own problems.

The preaching at the Ridge had failed to give the needed instruction, and so Howard had fought along alone, going over an unknown road, not understanding his own experiences, fighting battles with unknown foes, and often being worsted when the victory was right in his grasp because he knew not how to gain it. But one thing Howard had settled—he would not give up. He might

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be discouraged, he might have dark days to pass through, but he remembered the days of trouble through which he had passed before being saved. However, he was disappointed in his Christian life to a considerable degree. He was having the same kind of an experience that many another young Christian has had, and from which he might have been saved by proper instruction and guidance.

But help was soon to come. Some of Howard's difficulties were soon to be removed in a very simple and unexpected way. An old gentleman, Bro. Miles by name, had moved into the community with his family and had settled a little distance from the Ridge shortly after Howard's conversion. Howard had heard this man testify in the church, and he seemed to have such a quiet, settled, confident air, and seemed to be so untroubled in his Christian life, that Howard longed to be like him. Bro. Miles had noticed Howard's joyfulness in the early part of his Christian experience and that for some time now he had at times appeared joyful and at other times very much cast down. So one Sunday morning after the close of the services he called Howard aside and asked him how he was getting along.

"Well, Bro. Miles," said Howard in reply, "I can hardly tell. Sometimes I think I am getting along fine, and then at other times I do not seem to be getting along well at all."

"Come and go home with me today, Howard, and let us talk it over," said Bro. Miles. Howard was only too glad for the opportunity. He longed for help, but he had hesitated to speak to anyone about his troubles with that natural hesitation that most people feel. The very time when they should be seeking help and explanations of their troubles is the time when they feel most like shunning those who could help them, and would be glad indeed to do so. Howard learned that he might have missed many of the

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troubles through which he had passed had he gone to this friend before and opened his heart to him. He went home with Mr. Miles that day and after dinner they had a good, long talk together. Howard opened his heart to him and told the whole story. He was ashamed that it should be as it was. It was only because he so much wanted help that he would tell the secrets of his heart.

When he had finished, Bro. Miles said, “Yes, Howard, I know the story. Your experience is just like that of thousands of others. I want to explain where your trouble lies. In one sense all of these troubles have been unnecessary; that is, if you had met the situation in a proper way, you might easily have overcome your troubles. From another standpoint these things have been very necessary for you in order that you might learn some needed lessons that will be good for you throughout your life and perhaps be good for others, also.”

“I do not see how any good can come out of such things, Bro. Miles.”

“Good comes out of everything, Howard, when we are earnestly meaning to do God’s will. Have you not read the Scripture that says, ‘All things work together for good to them that love God’?”

“Yes, I have read it,” said Howard, “but I could never understand it. I could never see how good could come from such things.”

“We sometimes learn best through our mistakes,” said Bro. Miles, “and sometimes understanding comes most clearly through misunderstandings. Your trouble has been that you have misunderstood things. In the first place, you have not understood God. You have thought of God as a hard master; not the loving, kind, compassionate Father that He is. You have felt that He would

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condemn you for doing things that you did not know to be wrong. You have felt condemned and have felt that it was God condemning you, but you could not see that you had done wrong. You have loved God and yet you have been somewhat afraid of Him. God is always loving, kind, and good. He does not ask of us anything that would make Him appear unkind or uncharitable, or anything that would be in anywise unjust to us. It would have been unjust for God to have condemned you when you had done no conscious wrong, and when you were trying your best to please Him.

“God does not condemn you; that condemnation you feel is self-condemnation. You do not understand yourself; you judge yourself by a wrong standard. You think you have been feeling almost as bad and having about as hard a time as you had before you were really converted. You have been looking at only one side of things. You say that sometimes you have no evidence at all that you are converted and that you thought that you should always know you were right. You have taken into consideration only a portion of the evidence. You have analyzed your feelings and when you felt good you were sure you were all right, and when you felt bad you were sure you were wrong.

“You have lived on your emotions; that is, you have made your emotions the basis of your confidence in your experience. Our emotions can never be a safe basis from which to reckon our spiritual standing. Our emotions are like the waves of the sea they rise and fall according to the circumstances, and very often according to external circumstances. You have overlooked the differences between your present life and your past life that count most of all. When you look at your changed desires; your changed attitude toward God; the different motives from which you act; the different attitude that you hold toward God, toward His people, and



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toward His truth; look at the difference in the life you now live, that is, in your conduct; compare the seeming shortcomings of your present life with the known shortcomings of your past life—is there not a great difference along these lines?”

Howard was thoughtful for a few minutes and then said, “Yes, Bro. Miles, in those respects there is a great difference in my life.”

“Those are the things,” said Bro. Miles, “that constitute the vital difference between a Christian and one who is not a Christian. When you come to analyze where your difficulty has lain, you see it has lain principally in your emotions. The great difference in your conduct, in your relations, in your attitude, and in other similar things has been overlooked by you when you contrast your present life with your past. These are the very essentials of the Christian life. Whether you feel good or feel bad amounts to little when you are right in these things.”

“But,” said Howard, “if I am right, shall I not always feel right?”

Bro. Miles smiled. “Your feelings sometimes depend upon something else to which you have given little attention. Did you ever read in the Bible where it says, ‘The just shall stand by their feelings?’ or ‘We know we have passed from death unto life because we feel joyful?’ No, you never read anything like that. The Bible says, ‘The just shall live by faith.’ It says, ‘We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.’ Faith and love are two great things that count most in Christianity. Faith has a more sure basis than our feelings. It is founded on the unchangeable Word of God. The Bible says, ‘He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself,’ and again it says, ‘We believe and are sure.’ The Bible promises that ‘if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus

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Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.’ Now, if you are doing what you know to do to please the Lord, you have every right to believe that the blood of Jesus now cleanses you from all sin; that is, from the guilt of all your transgressions, and that you are clean in His eyes.

“This is about the way it has worked with you, as it has worked with many another person: you believed unto salvation, and joy came into your heart. Then you took that joy as an evidence of your salvation instead of taking the Word of God and that conscious change that had been wrought in you for it. You went along very well until your feelings subsided and your emotions ceased to be stirred. In other words, you began to be somewhat used to living the Christian life. Your emotions, which could not always be keyed up as they were in the beginning of your experience, became tranquil. One scientific law is that to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. When your emotions are stimulated and buoyed up, this stimulus necessarily must be followed by the swing of the pendulum in the opposite direction. This is a law of nature, and such laws are as true in the spiritual world as they are in the natural world. So a reaction from that joyful state was to be expected. The trouble was that you did not understand how to meet it when it came. When your joy subsided, you began to question yourself, and as soon as you began to question yourself, doubts came in; you opened the door to the doubts and invited them in. As soon as you began to doubt, your assurance was gone—that inner witness to salvation was gone, for we can only have that witness when we believe God, as it is based upon faith. If faith is not active, then your assurance cannot be active. This is a law and is inescapable.

“When the witness was gone, you doubted yourself still more, and the more you doubted yourself, the worse you felt, and the worse

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you felt, the more you doubted yourself. If, when your joy subsided, you had remained steadfast in faith and had relied upon the assurance of your salvation that you had from God, you would not have been shaken. You would have known that you were just as much saved when you had no particular feelings or when you felt bad as when you were joyful. Your faith would not have been founded upon your emotions but upon something more sure—something really reliable. Therefore, the fluctuations of your feelings would not have troubled your confidence in your salvation in the least. You are saved as long as you live righteously; as long as you are obedient to God; as long as you submit to His will and trust in Him. Thus, so far as it relates to your experience of salvation, you have had all this trouble for nothing.

“If you will learn to believe just as steadfastly when you have no emotions or when you have bad emotions as you do at other times, you will be victorious all the time. One thing you should always remember is that God is faithful. If you do anything that is displeasing to Him in your Christian life, He will let you know it. He will point out just what it is, and you will find that He is always ready to help you to take the right position and to maintain it.”

“Bro. Miles, I am sure that what you have said will be a great help to me. I see now that had I known these things and acted upon them, I might have avoided a great deal of trouble and distress.”

“Yes,” said Bro. Miles, “that is quite true, but you have learned, or are in the way of learning, some very valuable lessons from your experience. You will find, however, that it is not easy to discredit your feelings when you feel bad, and since you have so long relied upon your emotions, you will not find it easy to stop doing so. But you must stop doing so. You must remember how unreliable our emotions are, and you must base your salvation on something more

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substantial than emotions. However, if you have any further troubles, do not suffer them through, come to me and talk them over, or go to some other experienced Christian and talk over your troubles. There are many things that experienced Christians know that they could easily tell younger Christians if they realized their need. So go to such Christians frankly and freely and they will help you over many a hard way and through many a trouble, for the Christian may pass through many unnecessary troubles if he does not know how to meet the complications of life. The great thing is to keep your heart open to God and to walk conscientiously before Him, doing what you know will please Him, and avoiding what you know will displease Him. When you do this, you can rest in full assurance of faith in His promises to keep you from day to day.”

## Chapter Five

### A Startling Discovery

As time went by, Howard Gray learned more and more to put into practice the things that had been taught him by Bro. Miles. He found a surer way to keep a clear conscience. He was learning the way of faith. He had many temptations to trust to his emotions, but gradually he came to know how to maintain a steadfast confidence.

One day he had occasion to go to a city that was some distance from his home. While walking along the street he came face to face with one of his old associates, Jack Lee. After they had talked a little while, Jack looked at Howard quizzically and said, “Sam Logan was telling me the other day that you had gone in with those holy folks out at the Ridge and had become so good you couldn’t sin.”

“Well,” said Howard, “part of your information is correct, and part of it is not. I am attending church at the Ridge now and really have been converted, but I do not claim, neither do any of the others there, that it is impossible to sin. Such a thing would be utterly unreasonable. What we do believe is that by the grace of God we can live without committing sin.”

“Now, Howard,” said Jack, “you know the Bible teaches that everybody sins. Why, I have heard the preachers tell that ever since

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I can remember. You can't live without sin; neither can anyone else."

"How do you know that?" asked Howard. "What sin is it that one cannot keep from doing? Is it not possible to keep from lying, stealing, swearing, gambling, or in fact, from any other kind of sin?"

"Well," said Jack hesitatingly, "of course one can keep from doing such things, but there are other things." "What other things?" asked Howard.

"I—I don't know that I can tell you, but I have always heard the preachers say you couldn't live without sin."

"That may be true, Jack, but the Bible does not teach such a thing. Paul talked about having a conscience void of offense toward God and man. Now, I know by my own experience that one can have a clear conscience and can have the assurance that he is pleasing God in what he does. See here, Jack, you look at this matter from the wrong standpoint. You look at the weakness of man and not at the grace of God. You are not a Christian, and you naturally think of other people as being like yourself, just as I formerly did. Without the grace of God you cannot live without sin, though you can avoid a great many sinful things, but when one receives the grace of God into his heart it makes a great change and makes things possible that were not possible before.

"If you do not love anyone very much, you will not be very anxious to please him, but if you love someone very much, you will have a great desire to please the one you love. It will please you to please him. It will grieve you to displease him. Now, God puts His love in our hearts and we love Him sincerely and that makes us want to do our very best to please Him, and then by the grace He gives us, we can do what pleases Him. Jesus said, 'If a man love me, he

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will keep my words' (John 14:23). Again he says, 'He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me' (v. 21). He also says, 'He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings' (v. 24). Doing right is not a compulsory thing for a Christian; it is the desire of his heart. He loves God; therefore, he can say with the Psalmist, 'I delight to do thy will, O God.' When we love God it is not hard to serve Him and keep His commandments and we shrink from sin with loathing and abhorrence.

"There is another side to this question, too, Jack. God loves us, and you know it is not nearly so hard to please one who loves us as to try to please one who does not love us. Therefore, we can please God, for God is not hard to please. God is altogether reasonable and asks nothing but what is reasonable. Two people who really love each other sincerely and try to please each other have little trouble in doing so. It is just that way with serving God. It is not hard to please Him and we love to please Him; so living to please Him is an easy thing. Of course, He requires us to do what we ought to do, but when we sincerely try to do that, our lives are acceptable with Him."

"Well," said Jack, "I must say that puts things in a different light. I never looked at it in just that way before. It sounds reasonable."

"It is reasonable," said Howard, "and not only is it reasonable, but it is what the Bible teaches and what every true Christian experiences."

As the days went by, Howard became more and more settled in his Christian life. He came to understand God better and to know better how to serve Him. While this was true, he became aware that there was something within him that did not harmonize with the gracious workings of the Spirit of God within him. There was something that had a strong tendency to respond to temptation; that

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made it necessary for him to be on his guard continually, and that required an earnest effort on his part to maintain the victory. It was like a foe within him. It was the traitor to his own best impulses and purposes. He did not have that evenness of temper and that self-mastery that he felt he ought to have. Indeed, there was something within him that seemed to be in league with those external powers of evil and gave strength to outer temptation. He was able, however, by God's grace, to live a life without condemnation before God. But the very fact that such a foe was within him caused him serious disquietude of soul. What troubled him most was that that inner warfare seemed to increase rather than to decrease as the days went by. Not only did this inner foe trouble him, but he had a realization that he lacked something. He was conscious that although he was at peace with God and had many joyful times with the Lord, there was yet, especially at times, a want of completeness, a realization that he lacked that fullness of power about which he had read in his Bible and of which he had heard others speak, and of which he was conscious within himself that he needed.

The lives of some of the people at the Ridge showed to him that they had something he did not have. He felt blessed fellowship with them; he did not feel condemned in their presence, but he was conscious that there was something in their lives that was not in his own. He saw manifested in them a power that was not in his own life, a fullness of joy, an abundance of grace for which he longed. He heard them testify with joy that they no longer had to combat that inner foe. They said it had been cast out, destroyed. Howard had no reason to doubt this. He did not understand just what this difference between himself and the others was; he could not formulate his desires in logical statements, but within his heart there was a yearning for something that he did not have. That something some of the others seemed to possess, and his soul cried out, "That



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is what I want.” He had heard some teaching on a higher work of grace, but he had been so much absorbed at that time in the contemplation of his own sinfulness and of his need of being born again that he had not comprehended in a very full measure the meaning of what he had heard. He could recall some of it and that seemed to enlighten him somewhat, but to a great degree the subject was full of mystery to him.

Howard made the matter a subject of prayer. He studied the Scriptures, but the result was that he only became more and more conscious of an inner need that he knew not how to express. He determined again to go to see old Bro. Miles and have another talk with him. “For,” said he within himself, “he helped me so much when I went to him before that I am sure he will be able to tell me this time what I need to know.” So at church the next Sunday he expressed to Bro. Miles his desire to have a talk with him.

“Why, certainly, Howard,” said Bro. Miles. “Come and go home with me now, and we shall talk it over this afternoon and take all the time we need to consider the matter from every standpoint.” After they had partaken of a bountiful country dinner, Bro. Miles said: “Now, Howard, I am ready to talk with you. I think I know what the trouble is, for I have been observing you and I know some of the things young Christians experience, but go ahead and tell me in your own words just what you have experienced and what you need to know.”

Howard told him of the disquieting discovery of what seemed to be a foe within him and of that lack of divine grace and power that he felt in his soul. He expressed his confidence in his salvation but said that he could not understand that while he had peace with God there was still that inner unrest and that inner foe to combat and at times such a sense of need of more grace and power.

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“There was a time,” said Bro. Miles, “when I experienced the same thing of which you are speaking. I was converted when I was a young man. I was very happy for a considerable time after I was converted, but then my troubles began. Like yourself I found an inner foe that often caused me sore difficulties. I had no one to instruct me. I battled on against this foe for years. It happened that I found out what it was from the testimony of other Christians. They told me that there was an evil nature within, a nature inherited through our forefathers from Adam. They said that we could never get rid of it, but that until our dying day we must combat it, that we must try to overcome it and bring it into subjection. They gave me no hope of anything but a life of conflict with it. This was very discouraging to me, but I determined that if that was the best experience that could be had I would go ahead and serve the Lord anyway and do my best to overcome this inner nature. For many years I struggled against it. More than once it got the better of me and brought me into condemnation, but each time I went to God immediately and He, in mercy, forgave me and gave me the victory over it.

“But there came one blessed day when I heard the good news that there was a cure for this inner trouble. I heard the doctrine of entire sanctification preached, but it was not in a way that caused me to understand how to obtain the experience. However, it did convince me that there was such an experience for me. I began to seek it at once. Not understanding how to proceed, I did not seem to gain ground as much as I desired. I struggled along for quite awhile until one night the Spirit of God flashed into my soul a comprehension of what I must do. In a little while I found myself able to draw near to God and reach out to Him for that which my heart craved with a simplicity of heart and earnestness and yearning that I had not experienced before. My faith took hold upon God and

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I became conscious that a change had taken place. I need not describe the emotions of that hour, for they were no part of the experience itself. But from that time on, I have had an experience that I never had before. I have had no further trouble with that inner foe. I have had the conscious realization that God cleansed me from the last remains of sin and that He filled me with His own Spirit and power.

“Since that time my life has been on a higher plane. I do not say that I have lived any more righteously from an outward standpoint; a man must live righteously to be a Christian at all. But I have found it easier to serve God. I have found that that inner answer to temptation no longer troubles me. As I heard one man express it, ‘Whereas temptation used to get right up close to me and take hold of me, now there seems something between it and myself, so that it cannot approach so closely to me.’ At the same time there has been a great deepening of my spiritual life. I have come to know God as I did not know Him before. I have entered into closer communion with Him. I now have richer fellowship with Him, and an inner quietness that I did not know before. The presence of the Holy Spirit within me is more real and more effectual in His working. There is within me a readier response to the Spirit. I do not feel that I am any more a Christian than I was before I attained to this experience, but it is a much more satisfactory experience than that which had preceded it. It is impossible to describe this experience so one who has not himself experienced it can understand it. You can feel your need of it and thus you can realize in some measure what it will do for you. It is not important, however, that you have an intellectual knowledge of all its details. What is really important is that you understand it enough to receive the experience and the details will take care of themselves.”

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Howard had listened eagerly, and he now responded, "That is just it, Bro. Miles, what I want to know is how to get the experience that my heart craves. I want what I see that you possess and what some of the others at the Ridge have. But I wish you would explain the doctrine to me as far as you conveniently can. I am sure you can explain many things to me."

"Yes," said Bro. Miles, "there are many things that can be explained. The Scriptural basis for the doctrine can be explained, though of course it will not be needful for me to go into all the details. I can also tell you some of the teachings of the great teachers on the subject. Almost all Christians have believed and taught that man has an inherited nature that was transmitted through the race. Not only has it been believed and taught by Christians in general that there is a depraved, sinful nature in mankind, but it has also been taught by probably nine-tenths of the Christians through the ages that this sinful depravity remains in the regenerated believer. The leading denominations in general have acknowledged and taught that this is true, not only as a theological matter, but as a matter of personal experience. This element has been variously termed 'native depravity,' 'inherited sin,' 'Adamic sin,' etc. One careful writer has said: 'That man is fallen and sinful by nature has been generally held by mankind. Among all people in all ages men have believed this. With the exception of Pelagians and a few others, Christians have universally believed in native depravity in some sense.' Again this writer has said: 'The doctrine of native depravity is vital to the doctrine of the new birth, sanctification, and to an experimental religion generally.'

"I shall now call to your attention some things the Bible says upon the subject. You may get that Bible there on the writing-desk, turn to the passages, and read them for yourself. We shall turn first

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to Gen. 6:5. There it says, 'And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.' Now turn to Gen 8:21, 'The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.' David testified in Psa. 51:5, 'Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.' Again in Psa. 58:3 he said, 'They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.' There are many other passages in the Old Testament that bear similar testimony to the sinfulness of mankind.

"Turning to the New Testament, we find the seventh chapter of Romans giving a very vivid picture of that inner sinful nature. Paul called it 'sin that dwelleth in me' (v. 20). He also called it a law that was in his members warring against the law of his mind, bringing him into captivity to the law of sin which was in his members (v. 23). He also shows in this chapter the effect that that indwelling sin had upon his life, bringing him into bondage to sin. He wished to do good, but how to perform it he found not. He approved the law of God, but could not keep it because his good resolutions and purposes were overwhelmed by this indwelling sin. In Eph. 2:3 he said that we 'were by nature the children of wrath.'

"The Bible throughout assumes this sinful nature in man. Jesus said, 'Out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts' (Mark 7:21). He also said to the Pharisees, 'Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean' (Matt. 23:26). In studying such a subject from the Scriptures it is necessary for us to keep in mind that they do not teach things from a systematic theological standpoint, but rather from a practical standpoint and whatever theological teaching they may contain is incidental. No, we do not find any systematic theological explanation of the doctrine of native depravity, or inherited sin, but

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what is everywhere assumed in the Bible is supposed to need no proof. The Scriptures not only assume that this depravity is in the sinner, but also assume that it is in the Christian. This assumption has proved to be a practical fact in the life so that it is commonly acknowledged by Christians everywhere that the regenerate children of God have this element still remaining in them. There are comparatively few who question this: the vast majority acknowledge it. But we need no stronger proof from the Scriptures of inherited sin in the regenerated than the proof that a cleansing is provided after regeneration. It is true that a great many people teach that we never can be cleansed from this inherited sinful nature in this world. This is inconsistent with the teaching of the Scriptures on the point and also with the experience of thousands of earnest Christians, not alone of this present age, but of past ages. Before going further, however, I might call your attention to the fact that a number of the great creeds recognize the fact that this inherited sinful nature still remains in the regenerated. The Anglican Church creed says, 'And this infection of the nature does remain, yea in them that are regenerated.' The Westminster Creed of the Presbyterians says, 'This corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain, in them that are regenerated.' Dr. Miley, in his 'Systematic Theology,' says, 'That somewhat of depravity remains in the regenerate, or that regeneration does not bring to completeness the inner spiritual life, is a widely accepted doctrine. Indeed, exceptions are so few that the doctrine must be regarded as truly catholic.' "

"My experience," said Howard, "is all that I need to convince me that that nature is still in me. What I want to know is whether or not I can get rid of it. I believe that I can for I believe some have."

"Yes," said Bro. Miles, "you can, for some have; yes, many have; tens of thousands have. But, while you are convinced by your

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own experience, it will be a good thing for you to know the Scriptural basis upon which the doctrine of cleansing of this sinful nature is based. Paul, after having spoken very highly of the Christian experience and conduct of the Thessalonians, said to them: 'And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.' (1 Thess. 5:23, 24). He prays for two things for them: first, that they might be sanctified wholly; second, that they might be preserved blameless. Then he promises them that God will do both. Entire sanctification, therefore, is an experience for those who already have been regenerated. It is a higher, deeper, broader experience than the experience that precedes it. The expression 'wholly' in this text means entirely, fully, completely. The word 'sanctification' always has in it, when applied to mankind, the idea of cleansing. It is never without this idea when applied to a spiritual experience as it is in this text. There is therefore a cleansing of the heart after regeneration.

"This entire sanctification, or entire cleansing, is the work of God, as verse 24 shows when Paul says, 'Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it,' and in verse 23 when he says, 'The very God of peace sanctify you wholly.' Entire sanctification, therefore, is a divine work wrought in the soul, a work of purification and cleansing. This is perfectly in harmony with John 15:1-6, where under the figure of a vine and its branches a cleansing is taught for those who have already been grafted into the vine. Jesus said, 'Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit.' The word 'purgeth' here means 'cleanseth.' That is the meaning of the original term employed here. There is, therefore, a cleansing of those who are already in Christ.

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“Jesus prayed for His disciples, those who had been with Him in the ministry for three years or more, just before He left them, saying, ‘Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth’ (John 17:17). Verse 19 says, ‘That they also might be sanctified through the truth.’ But were these disciples already Christians? They were believers in Christ, as many Scriptures make clear. In Luke 10:20 we are told that their names were written in heaven, and in John 1:12, 13, we are told that those who believe in Christ are born of God. They were not of the world, as we read in John 14:17 and 15:19. They were obedient to God, as it says in John 17:6, ‘They have kept thy word.’ It was for these same disciples who were followers of Jesus that Christ prayed that they might be sanctified.

“There is another part in this great work that must not be overlooked. Sanctification may be called the negative part, for it is the removal of that inherent nature of sin and the purification of the heart. There is also a positive side that is carried along in the Scriptures with the negative; that is, the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus told His disciples to tarry at Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high, and He also said to them, ‘Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence’ (Acts 1:5). In John, chapters 14 to 17, we find sanctification coupled with His promise that they should receive the Holy Ghost as the Comforter who would abide with and in them.

“In the second chapter of Acts we have a picture of the coming of the Holy Spirit and the mighty outpouring of power that accompanied His coming. He did not fall upon sinners, for Jesus had already declared that sinners could not receive the Holy Spirit. John 14:17 says, ‘The Spirit of truth; whom the world can not receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.’ Peter tells us what



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occurred on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Ghost came. In comparing what happened to the household of Cornelius, as recorded in the tenth chapter of Acts, with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, Peter says in Acts 15:8, 9: ‘And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.’ Just as Jesus coupled together the coming of the Holy Ghost and sanctification, so Peter in his comments upon the subject linked the two together as being the experience of the apostles at Pentecost and of the household of Cornelius at a later day. The coming of the Holy Spirit was accompanied by a purifying of their hearts by faith, and this purifying of their hearts by faith was what Jesus meant when He spoke of sanctification.

“In the eighth chapter of Acts we have the experience of the Samaritans recorded. First, they received the gospel from Philip, the evangelist (Acts 8:5). They believed what Philip taught and were filled with great joy, just as are others who believe the gospel and receive divine pardon from their sins. Great joy does not come from just hearing the gospel. It comes only to those who partake of the blessings of the gospel in the salvation of their own souls. Later on, Peter and John went down to Samaria, and of them it is said, ‘Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost’ (v. 17). There can be no doubt that the same result, that is, the cleansing that went with the baptism of the Holy Ghost in the two instances previously noted, accompanied that baptism at Samaria.

“That there should be two works of divine grace is not at all inconsistent when we consider the fact that there are two forms of sin: first, committed sin, or sins which we do or intend to do, and for which we become guilty, and of which we must repent and receive

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forgiveness of God; and second, that inherited sinful nature, for which we are not guilty, but from which we need cleansing, which still remains in the regenerate heart, and from which, thank God, the Scriptures plainly teach we may be cleansed and thus be brought into the blessed condition of which Jesus spoke when He said, ‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God’ (Matt. 5:8).

“We have now noted a few of the most prominent texts that bear upon this second cleansing, and while there are many others in the New Testament that teach the same thing, there are also many figures of the Old Testament that typically teach two cleansings. It would take more time than I have at present to go into the details of these. I shall just read you something from a book I have here entitled “Holy Spirit Baptism and the Second Cleansing.” . . . I shall read what it says concerning the typical symbolism of the old tabernacle and temple. Beginning on page 77, we read:

“The tabernacle was divided into two rooms, called the holy place and the holiest place. At the entrance of these two places was a veil. Two altars were placed one before each of these veils. Blood was sprinkled upon each of these altars. What could be more perfectly typified by these two rooms, two veils, two altars, two sprinklings of blood, than the fact that there are two cleansings in the work of one’s salvation? Outside the first veil was the brazen altar and the laver. On this altar the blood of the offerings for sin was sprinkled. This sprinkling is generally allowed to be typical of justification from committed sin (Heb. 9:13, 14). At the laver they washed before entering the house of God. This has been generally and rightly understood as being typical of regeneration (Titus 3:5). But the blood of sin-offerings for the priests was also to be sprinkled on the golden altar inside the first room, before the second veil. Of what was this typical? Christ’s blood was shed to cleanse from sin.

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If that blood typical of Christ's blood when sprinkled on the brazen altar typified justification, what must the sprinkling of it on the golden altar typify but the second cleansing or the entire sanctification of the believer?

“ ‘This is clearly taught also in Heb. 10:19-22: ‘Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.’ Here the exhortation is to ‘brethren,’ those already justified and regenerated, to go ‘into the holiest’ from the holy place where they then were. They were to enter it ‘by the blood of Jesus,’ by which believers have their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience [justified at the brazen altar] and their bodies washed with pure water [regenerated at the laver], which admitted to the first apartment, after which they are urged to go on into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. This clearly teaches that these altars, veils, rooms, etc., foreshadowed the way of salvation and that there is a double phase to salvation entered by a twofold cleansing by the blood. And this agrees perfectly with the idea that the tabernacle was a type of the church, for is it not a fact that the church contains those merely converted as well as those wholly sanctified? This is in perfect harmony with the sanctifying of the church in Eph. 5:26. Thus we see that the two apartments in God's ancient house have a counterpart in this spiritual house, the church.’

“Of the abundance of Scriptural teachings on this subject, I shall mention one more; that is, the soul-rest referred to in the fourth chapter of Hebrews. Perhaps it does not refer exclusively to the

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entirely sanctified state, but it is evident that it is more fully true of this state than of the regenerated state. That rest which remains to the end, and into which the Israelites could not enter because of their disobedience, is a rest of soul, as Jesus said, 'I will give you rest . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls' (Matt. 11:28, 29). This soul-Sabbath well expresses and illustrates the blessed rest of soul that comes to all who enter that glorious experience, entire sanctification. There is a rest of soul in this experience that is entered into and maintained by faith in God. That is the true Sabbath, a rest not of one literal day a week, but a spiritual rest that is constant and abiding.

"Howard, I entered into this rest twenty years ago. I have had soul-rest through all these years. There has been no conflict with that inner foe. To be sure I have had trials and difficulties, for while one may have rest and peace within, he may be beset from without by many things, but these outer things, if met in faith and faithfully, need not disturb that inner quiet and rest. It is only when one has the experience of this rest in his own soul that he can understand the full force of the Scriptural teaching and know within himself the blessed reality of having what Christ promised."

"I believe this, Bro. Miles," said Howard, "and I desire more than anything else in the world to enter into this experience myself."

"You may do so," said Bro. Miles, "without delay. Begin to seek the experience definitely and earnestly and it shall be yours."

## Chapter Six

### **“I Am Not Disappointed”**

Howard had just returned from a three weeks' visit to the State Capitol. During his visit he had been much occupied with the thought of entire sanctification. He had talked with different people concerning it and had heard some preaching upon the subject. He was very eager to talk it over with Bro. Miles, for the different opinions he had heard expressed did not harmonize with each other. He seized the first opportunity to visit Bro. Miles. He was warmly greeted, and they spent the evening in friendly discussion.

“Bro. Miles,” said he, “while in the city I talked with an old gentleman concerning sanctification. He said he had heard of it all his life and knew all about it. He claimed that we grow into it; that it is an experience that we cannot attain to until death, but that we gradually grow and develop until we reach it.”

“Yes,” said Bro. Miles, “there are many who teach thus, but they have neglected to consider some things that the Bible says. The Bible speaks of it as a present experience. Jude addressed his epistle ‘To them that are sanctified’ (Jude 1) not to those who should be sanctified in the future. When Paul wrote the First Epistle to the Corinthians he addressed it ‘to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus’ (1 Cor. 1:2) and in chapter 6:11 he said, ‘Ye are sanctified.’ In Heb. 2:11, the writer of that Epistle said, ‘they who are sanctified.’

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In chapter 10:29 he speaks of people that were sanctified; so, you see, it is not an experience that we can only get at death.

“Now, as to the question of it being a growth—it is true that we grow in grace; we are to grow and develop in the Christian life so long as we live, but that is altogether a different thing from the experience of entire sanctification. A point to be noted is that growth does not change the nature; it only increases what already exists. Therefore, we can increase in growth only in what we already have. Too, growth does not decrease; therefore, the sin that is innate in the unregenerate cannot be grown out any more than weeds can be grown out of one’s garden. Growth neither gives anything new nor eradicates the old.

“The Bible plainly teaches that our hearts must be purified, and purified not by growth but by a cleansing through the blood of Christ. Let me read you some texts from the Bible. Heb. 13:12 says, ‘Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.’ Chapter 10:10 says, ‘We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.’ And verse 29 of this chapter says, ‘the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified.’ Now if we are sanctified, as the Scriptures say, by the blood of Christ, does He apply His blood many different times and cleanse us a little at a time? There is no thought of growth in the idea of cleansing. ‘The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin’ (1 John 1:7). It is, therefore, a definite, specific act. It is God who acts in order to sanctify us, as Jude said—‘Sanctified by God the Father’ (Jude 1). And we read ‘The very God of peace sanctify you wholly’ (1 Thess. 5:23). This proves that it is not a continuous act, but one act as complete in its results as that act of God which cleanses us from the guilt of our actual transgressions.

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“Another thing—we are sanctified by faith. Acts 26:18 speaks of ‘them which are sanctified by faith.’ Peter speaks of ‘purifying their hearts by faith’ (Acts 15:9). This is exactly the means by which we are justified. There must be a definite act of faith, and this brings a definite operation of God in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Then too, as I pointed out to you before, the gift of the Holy Ghost, or the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which is the same, accompanies this cleansing of the heart, and God does not give the Holy Spirit to us piecemeal. The Holy Spirit fell ‘suddenly’ on the disciples at Pentecost and on other occasions. There was nothing gradual in the work.

“Another thing to take into consideration is the fact that in speaking in the Greek language of sanctification, the Greek being the original language of the New Testament, the past tense is frequently used. This always signifies completed action; it means once for all. This tense is used in Eph. 5:26 where it says of the church, ‘That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.’ The Revised Version says, ‘having cleansed it.’ The work is done now; it is not a future thing; it is not a growth. It did not wait till death. The experience is a present, completed one. There are other similar texts that might be quoted.”

“I see, Bro. Miles,” said Howard, “that that old gentleman was mistaken. You are right in what you said about it not being a growth, but that it is a present experience. I found some other people who were teaching very differently. They teach much as you have taught me, but they also say that when one is baptized with the Holy Spirit, he will speak in tongues as the evidence, and they say that no one has the experience unless he does speak with tongues as the evidence. I attended some of their meetings. They certainly are very positive in their teaching, and I saw some strange things among

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them. I have some of their literature here. Would you like to look at it?"

"I suppose it is just about like that which I already have had," said Bro. Miles. "I am quite well acquainted with their teachings and have attended some of their meetings at various places. There is such a thing as the gift of tongues spoken of in the Scriptures, but the Bible nowhere teaches that all the sanctified will receive this gift, or that all did receive it, or that all who receive the Holy Ghost speak in tongues.

"There was one thing you noticed in their meetings; that is, their love of the spectacular. They love physical manifestation and cultivate emotionalism. As I have already pointed out, these things are no part of salvation. Giving way to wild emotionalism is bound to produce hysterical results. People who 'fall under the power,' or who go through wild unseemly demonstrations, do so as the result of physical excitement of unrestrained enthusiasm. Carried to the extreme this often produces a form of catalepsy. People often go into trances and perhaps lie unconscious for hours. In many cases these things are physical and mental results and do not come from the Spirit of God. The tongues that many people speak nowadays, in many instances no doubt, are mere manifestations of subconscious mental action.

"The same results are often produced outside of religion. Insane persons are said often to speak in tongues. Spiritualistic mediums frequently do the same. It is a well-known fact that among the Chinese and East Indians it is no uncommon thing for people to speak in tongues. These people are not Christians, and the tongues they speak are not by the Holy Ghost. So we need to be careful about this tongue craze that is leading astray so many people. The laws of such demonstrations are very well understood by psychologists.



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There are many tongues that are not the operation of the Spirit of God. In fact, some of the ‘tongues’ ministers have admitted to me that they could not tell the difference between the false tongues, which they admit are among them, and the true ones. Sometimes people in the meetings who make no profession of religion whatever go to speaking in tongues. People who do profess and yet live godless lives frequently speak in tongues. We need some better evidence than this that the Holy Spirit has come.

“The real evidence is the indwelling Spirit of God Himself. It is that pureness of heart; that power that comes only from the Holy Ghost; that enriching of the spiritual life; the fullness of love; all these are evidences of this work wrought in the heart.

“People spoke in tongues in Mr. Wesley’s day, but he rejected it and said it was not of God; that is, the kind of tongues they spoke. The true gift of tongues may be manifested. Some people may speak in tongues when they are sanctified wholly, but the majority do not and never did so far as we have any record. The initial outpouring at Pentecost was perhaps the greatest manifestation that has been seen. I want something as evidence that is a little more substantial than a temporary jabbering in some supposed tongue that neither I nor anyone else understands, and which may be produced by a variety of other causes. When you get the Bible experience, Howard, you will know it without having any need of speaking in tongues. You will have that inner consciousness of the work done. You will know it as really and truly as you knew when you were converted. The experience is just as real and just as definite as the experience of conversion.”

“Bro. Miles, will you please tell me how to get the experience? My heart craves it very much. I long to be cleansed entirely. I long

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for the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to dwell in me in His power and glory.”

“I can tell you some things that you must do to receive the experience,” said Bro. Miles, “but there are some things that cannot be made plain to you. God has left it so that your heart must reach out for Him and desire Him without fully understanding, until your heart goes beyond the understanding of your mind; so that your heart’s deepest depths are reached. To follow out a mere mental conception of receiving the experience is to be disappointed. For that reason God does not make every step plain to us in the Scripture. But the Holy Spirit will guide us and the yearnings of our hearts will reach out in the right direction.

“The first thing for you to do is to consecrate yourself fully to God. You must yield to the whole will of God. You must come to the place where you are willing not to be your own; not to choose for yourself, but to let God choose for you and work His will in you, for you, and through you. You must dedicate yourself completely to God, without reserve. When you do this you will come to the place where you will realize that you are all surrendered to God. You will know that you have reached the end of self-surrender. Some tell us that this of itself is sanctification. Such is not the case, however, for as I have pointed out to you, sanctification is a work of God wrought in us through the blood of Christ. Consecration and dedication are our part: sanctification is God’s part.

“Along with this dedication of yourself must be an earnest desire and diligent prayer for God to do the work. You received forgiveness of your sins only when you became earnest enough to seek Him with your whole heart. You will become sanctified only when you reach that same earnestness and seek Him with all your heart. Along with a whole-hearted dedication and earnest seeking

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and asking must go a definite faith. We are sanctified by faith: therefore, it requires as definite and active an operation of faith for our sanctification as it does for our conversion. The Scripture says, ‘What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.’ God desires to give you the Holy Spirit. He desires to cleanse your heart completely, and as soon as you reach the point of whole-hearted dedication, earnest seeking, and definite faith, you will receive the experience. One point to keep in mind concerning faith is that it is not struggling or trying, but is simply relying upon God’s promises. It is accepting them as true—true for you here and now. Faith operates naturally, easily, and effectually when we have reached the proper place in consecration and earnest seeking.”

“Bro. Miles, how shall I feel when I am sanctified?”

“I have no idea,” said Bro. Miles. “Sanctification is no more a matter of feeling than is regeneration. Whatever emotion goes with it is an accidental or incidental thing and no part of the work of God. People are usually joyful when they receive the experience. The emotions of some run very high. If people are of an emotional temperament they are likely to become very happy and perhaps shout. I have seen people who rejoiced and shouted until it seemed they could hardly stop. I have seen other people who were perfectly calm and collected. There was only a quiet, joyful peace, accompanied by no external demonstrations beyond the look of satisfaction and joy in their countenances. These quiet ones who made no demonstration have shown in their lives that they had received just as much of an experience, just as deep an experience, and just as real an experience as those who had been so demonstrative. So I cannot tell you how you will feel when you receive the experience.

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“You will need to put into practice with respect to your sanctification the lessons that you learned concerning your justification. You can thereby miss conflicts similar to those through which you passed after your conversion when you trusted your emotions and rated your relationship with God by your emotions. One’s emotions are the result of his temperament. The more emotional one is and the more he trusts his emotions, the greater his spiritual conflicts are likely to be. Great emotions, therefore, are not to be sought after; neither are demonstrations of any kind. Demonstrations of themselves mean nothing. They have little real value from a spiritual standpoint. If one’s joy depends on his emotions, then emotion is a necessary part of life, but if we make any part of our salvation to depend upon our emotions we shall make trouble for ourselves. We must live by faith and base our salvation upon faith, even when our emotions are exalted. Unless we do so, when emotions subside our faith will subside, our confidence in ourselves will subside, and we shall be left to battle against doubts.”

They talked on of various things, and of many other phases of this great experience. As Howard went home he determined in his heart to seek the experience of entire sanctification immediately. He reviewed his life. He saw that he had given his all to God in the beginning, as far as he comprehended what that meant. Now he could realize in a far deeper sense and to a far greater extent the possibilities of a deeper dedication, of a more perfect surrender, of a more extensive yielding. He began to yield himself. He did not find himself able to yield all at once to the full depths of his nature, but gradually he came more and more to the point of self-surrender. Not many days were spent in this, but it was a time of intense heart-searching. He found many indications, small in themselves, but pointing out a great fact, that he had never realized what full self-surrender meant. As fast as he saw how to yield and what to yield,

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he yielded. The more he yielded, the more intense became his desire for the experience that he was seeking. The more intensely he prayed, the nearer he seemed to draw to God. One night he came to the point where his desire became so great that he determined to shut himself up in his room and seek until he found the experience which he craved.

Howard fell upon his knees. The Holy Spirit seemed at once to open up to his understanding the whole subject, in such a way as to enable him quickly to reach the point of complete self-surrender. When he reached that point he knew it; there was a consciousness that there was nothing withheld. Then his faith took hold upon God and he realized that the work was done. His emotions were altogether different from those that filled him at his conversion. This was doubtless because of the difference of his attitude and of his mental state. Some have similar emotions at both times; others quite dissimilar ones. With Howard there was no particular emotion, only it seemed that a great calm and a wonderful peace had settled down upon his spirit. He arose from his knees and went to bed. He did not shout; he did not feel like it. The thing that stood out the clearest of all was the inner consciousness that the work was done. There was a satisfaction in this. He felt like a man who had been on a long journey and who in returning to his own fireside had opened the door, stepped into his own home and reached the end of his journey, the resting-place he desired.

The next morning when Howard awoke his heart was full of joy. His Lord seemed very precious to him. It is useless to describe the details of his experience for there is a great variety of personal experiences and we cannot make the experience of one person the test of the experience of another except in that inner work wrought

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by God's Holy Spirit. The external manifestations and the emotions vary widely.

A few days later Howard met a man whom he had seen at the Ridge at different times. He told this man of his new experience.

"Yes," said the man, "I was sanctified in the revival last winter. I consecrated and took it by faith just as they told me to."

"Did you realize that you received the real experience?" asked Howard.

"Well," said the man, "I did not notice much difference, but I just took it by faith."

"That is the way I got it, too," said Howard, "but faith in my case brought real knowledge of a change wrought, of something added to me. I knew the work was done; I know it still. Does that correspond with your experience?"

The man hesitated. "I cannot just say that I feel that way about it. Sometimes I feel that I am sanctified, and then sometimes I doubt it, but I took it by faith the best I knew how."

The next day Howard went to see Bro. Miles to tell about his experience. Howard's face told the story to Bro. Miles before he had said a word. "Ah!" said Bro. Miles, "I see you have what you wanted."

"Yes," said Howard, "I have it. I know I have it." Then he told of the gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon his heart and related the particulars of his experience. "I am not disappointed," he exclaimed. "It is what I have longed for." "But," said he, "there is one thing I cannot understand. I was talking to Mr. Jason yesterday and he said that he took it by faith, but that he did not seem to know that he had received anything. I wondered how that was."

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“It is true, Howard, that some people claim to take things by faith from the Lord and still do not have any consciousness within themselves that they have something. We get what we get from the Lord through faith. When we exercise a definite faith for a thing and receive it through that faith, we have an inner consciousness that our prayer has been granted and that we have the thing that we desired. Faith brings knowledge. The trouble with Mr. Jason is that he has never reached the proper depths of consecration and dedication of himself to God so that faith can operate normally. The faith that he exercised was a mere intellectual faith. There is a difference between mere intellectual faith and that real faith of the heart that grasps the promises of God and makes them our own. This latter faith can come only when we have definitely met the conditions God has given us, for what we are asking.

“There are many people, who, as they say, take it by faith, who never have it in reality. The trouble is that they do not take it by faith. They only attempt to do so and fail in the attempt. Faith cannot operate effectually until it has a solid basis and that solid basis in receiving entire sanctification is wholehearted dedication and earnest seeking. If there were more of this wholehearted dedication to God; this complete yielding; this choosing of His will instead of our own, there would be fewer people claiming to have the experience without its fruit in their hearts and lives. Real faith brings real experience. But the foundation and background for faith, as I have said, is wholehearted dedication to God and His will. Faith founded on this brings the real experience to the heart. The real experience is something definite and soul-satisfying.”

“Bro. Miles, now that I have that foe destroyed from within me and my heart is cleansed, will I have any more temptations, or any more battles to fight?”

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“Oh, yes,” said Bro. Miles, “you will have plenty of them.”

“But if my heart is pure, how can I be tempted?” asked Howard.

“How was Jesus tempted? His heart was pure, yet it is said, ‘He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.’ Adam’s heart was pure but he was tempted and overcome. So, having a pure heart does not guarantee that we shall have no temptation. You will have many battles to fight; you will have many things to overcome. But, you will not have that foe within you to answer to temptation. However, you are still a human being and you will find that you still have the weaknesses that belong to humanity. While you are redeemed from all sin and your heart is purified and made white in the blood of Christ, you will find in yourself many imperfections. There will be imperfections of judgment; of understanding; you will make many mistakes in the course of your life and many times you will find that your wisdom is inadequate.

“You will often need additional strength from God to meet the circumstances that arise. Then, too, you have within yourself those inherited traits and characteristics that are not sinful in themselves but a part of your real self, that sanctification does not eradicate from you because they are not spiritual impurities. These things will have to be carefully guarded. It is also necessary for you to remember that you, though a spiritual being, live in a human body. This fleshly body has its natural functional desires. These must be guarded and guided and sometimes must be overcome by sheer will-power. These things of themselves are not evil, but Paul said that he kept under his body lest while he preached to others he himself might become a castaway. He brought himself into subjection.

“You will not be righteous automatically. You cannot control yourself without an effort. It is true that the greater grace you have the easier you will maintain yourself on the plane of righteousness,



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but Paul spoke of the Christian life as a battle as well as a race. There must be self-mastery. That means that there is something left to master, something left to overcome. Yes, there are many things in life we must overcome, but we can overcome them through the grace of God and live victorious Christian lives until God shall call us up higher.

“The indwelling Spirit and the power of holiness is a wonderful thing in a life. You will find that some things that have troubled you in the past will trouble you no longer. You will find more of an evenness in your spiritual life than hitherto. You will find greater breadth and depth and an illumination of your spiritual understanding such as you did not have before. Your life will be richer and fuller. The presence of God will be real to you if you live spiritually.



. . . “Sinners are living an abnormal life. Full salvation restores life to normality. One thing to remember, Howard, is to keep simple-hearted. Walk close to God. Do not think you are any better now than you were before, in, and of yourself. Remember that whatever good there is that has come to you is by the grace of God. Live a humble, pure, and godly life, and you will know what is the true value of life and the sweetness of divine fellowship. You will find that human life reaches its normal development only through the operations of the divine Spirit and the outpoured grace and power of God.

“And now, Howard, I shall say a few additional words about the Christian’s personal life: The inner Christian life is the fruit of God’s Spirit working in us. We must maintain that inner spiritual relationship with God whereby we draw from Him our life and the grace we need to keep saved. It is by maintaining that inner Christian

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character and by this means alone that we can manifest a Christian life to the world about us. Our inner life will be reflected in our outer life. The inner fountain of life must be pure if the outer life is to be pure. Christian character is priceless. If we allow anything to mar our Christian characters, we lose our most precious possession.

“You are young yet, Howard; your life is before you. Be careful to maintain those high ideals you have. Do not lower your standard. Preserve your ideals and remember that whatever success you may make in life can be rated from any proper standpoint a success only when you are successful in carrying out the true principles of Christianity. Christian principle should permeate everything in your life. Only Christian ideals will enable us to live on a lofty plane. True nobility is found in the way of Christ. Let your outward life correspond with the inner ideals you have. Develop integrity, straightforwardness, a rugged honesty. Let your faithfulness characterize every detail of your life. If you will do this, you will become a Christian man who ‘needeth not to be ashamed’ but one who will stand steadfast and unmovable in the storms of life.”

“It is my purpose, Bro. Miles, to live a worthy Christian life. I assure you that I mean to live up to my ideals and put into practice those things that are taught in the Bible. I know it can be done, for other men do it. I know it is worthwhile to do it, not only for time, but for eternity. I thank you for your counsel and advice. I mean to profit by that.”

Howard went back to the ordinary tasks of his life. He became a stalwart Christian and a few years later entered the ministry. His earnest, faithful Christian life was an inspiration to many others. Here we leave him. We have told you how he passed over the road that led him to that settled, holy, vital Christian manhood which it is God’s will for all to attain. That road all may travel; to that goal of

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life all may come, and as the days and years go by the Christian life will become broader, richer, and more heavenly until at last life's race having been run the soul will pass joyfully through the gates into the great beyond to the final goal of eternity.









