



CHAPTER SEVEN

THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

I always got up early on Sunday mornings as on other mornings. I got my breakfast and cleaned up my house, and at nine o'clock, my little Mazie went to Sunday school. While she was gone I would cook all my dinner and get everything ready. I did not have time to cook much through the week because I often had to dry my clothes in the house and I could not have the smell of cooking, so Sunday was the only day I could cook. I would have a real good dinner, but I never stayed home from church to cook. So, I gave my baby his bath and laid him in his cradle, then I got down on my knees and prayed the Lord to keep Will asleep until I went to Green Street Church, and to keep James in a good humor so he would not scold me, for I hated to be scolded, in the worst way. James was peculiar. If he came and I happened to be out, even though I went to carry clothes, he would be vexed. So after Mazie came I said, "Now you read your library book and be a good girl, I am going to Green Street Church this morning; it lets out before our church does, so I will be home in time. You can tell your dad if he comes before I get back. If Will cries, don't pick him up; just rock him." She was a good strong girl, thirteen years old, quite able to take care of him and could manage him quite as well as I could, so I went and left them. On my way to Green Street, it seemed the Devil overtook me. Just as I turned on Carmine Street, I felt a Satanic influence walking by my side and whispering, "Now, you know, if James comes home and finds you are out, you know what you will get;





CHAPTER SEVEN

you better go to Bedford Street and hear John Cookman.”

“Well, I will.”

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

“Yes.”

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

“No,” I said, “I will not do it.” Then Satan said, “You had better go and hear that Presbyterian minister on the corner of Houston and Prince Streets.” I had heard how kind they were to colored people and I had promised several times I would go and hear this minister; the Devil had found that out some way; I can’t tell how he knew it, but he did. “You had better go and hear him; then, it is closer to home, three blocks nearer, and you can get home quick.”

“Yes,” I said, “that is so.”

When I got to the corner, as I was about to turn with a gentle pull a sweet voice whispered, “No, no, go on.”

“Lord, help me!”

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

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





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

"Oh, if I thought Brother Inskip was not there, I would not go. I would go back."

I went on. When I reached the steps I will never forget the thrill that ran through my heart when I heard Brother Inskip pray. With strength, I had left and I said, "Thank God, he is here and not at the Five Points." I seemed to feel the Satanic presence sweep by me and say, "Oh, she has found out." Old Satan knew I had caught him in one of his biggest lies. I went into the church and sat down about three seats from the door. I had been to that church once before and that was Brother Inskip's first Sunday. While I lived on East York Street I was very sick and could not walk all the way to Mother Bethel Church AME Church, where I belonged, so I went in there that Sunday. I sat in the gallery. The people were so kind; one brother handed me a book and asked me to come again. I thank God for that spirit that was in Green Street those days, even to Black people. The Sunday I got the blessing I did not sit upstairs, but Oh, how tired I was when I got into the church. I leaned my head forward and prayed to God to give me strength. When Brother Inskip had finished his prayer he rose and made his announcements; the last hymn was sung. Then came the text: Ephesians, 4th Chapter 24th Verse, "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." He said, "In preaching from this text this morning the brethren will observe I shall have to make some reference to a sermon that I preached a few Sabbaths ago on sanctification."

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

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





CHAPTER SEVEN

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

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

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

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

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

"So I did," I said. I sat back and was listening and drinking and thought all was well now. Again I heard my baby scream.

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

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

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





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

“Oh!” I said, “he means me, for that is just what I have said. With my trials and peculiar temperament and all that I have to contend with, if I could get the blessing how could I keep it? Now, someone has told him, for he is looking right at me and I know he means me.” And I tried to hide behind the post, and he seemed to look around there. Then I said, “Well, he means me, and I will just take what he says.” He used this illustration: “When you work hard all day and are very tired, “ Yes,” I said, and in a moment my mind went through my washing and ironing all night.”

“When you go to bed at night you don’t fix any way for yourself to breathe.”

“ No,” I said, “ I never think about it.”

“You go to bed, you breathe all night, you have nothing to do with your breathing, you awake in the morning, you had nothing to do with it.”

“Yes, yes, I see it.”

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

“Oh!” I said, “I see it.” And somehow I seemed to sink down out of sight of myself, and then rise; it was all in a moment. I seemed to go two ways at once, down and up. Just then such a wave came over me, and such a welling up in my heart and these words rang through me like a bell: “God in you, God in you,” and I thought doing what? Ruling every ambition and desire, and bringing every thought unto captivity and obedience to His will. How I have lived through it I do not know, but the blessedness of the love and the peace and power I can never describe. Oh, what glory filled my soul! The great vacuum in my soul began to fill up; it was like a pleasant draft of cool water, and I felt it. I wanted to shout Glory to Jesus! but Satan said, “Now if you make a noise they will put you out.”





CHAPTER SEVEN

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

“Jesus is a mighty captain,
Jesus is a mighty captain,
Jesus is a mighty captain,
Soldier of the cross.”
“Jesus never lost a battle,
Jesus never lost a battle,
Jesus never lost a battle,
Soldier of the cross.”
Halleluiah! Hallelujah! Amen.

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

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

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

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

“God can do it,” I said, “in the twinkling of an eye,” and as quick as the spark from smitten steel I felt the touch of God from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, and the welling up came, and I felt I must shout but, Satan still resisted me like he did Joshua. The Captain





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

of the Lord's house stood close by and said, "Take off the filthy garments from him," and Satan was mad.

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

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

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

Just then Satan said: "They will not believe you because you did not get the blessing there."

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





CHAPTER SEVEN

“Lord, what shall I do,” and a voice seemed to whisper in my left ear, for Satan stood at my right, and would whisper his suggestions: “Pray for strength to stand up.” I took hold of the pew in front of me and trembling from head to foot I stood up but held on to the pew. Just as I got fairly on my feet they struck the last verse of the hymn:

“Oh! bear my longing heart to Him,

Who bled and died for me.

Whose blood now cleanseth from all sin,

And gives me victory.”

And when they sang these words, “Whose blood now cleanseth,” what a wave of glory swept over my soul! I shouted glory to Jesus. Brother Inskip answered, “Amen, Glory to God.” O, what a triumph for our King Emmanuel. I don’t know just how I looked, but I felt so wonderfully strange, yet I felt glorious. One of the good official brothers at the door said as I was passing out, “Well, auntie, how did you like that sermon?” But I could not speak; if I had, I should have shouted, but I simply nodded my head. Just as I put my foot on the top step I seemed to feel a hand, the touch of which I could not describe. It seemed to press me gently on the top of my head, and I felt something part and roll down and cover me like a great cloak! I felt it distinctly; it was done in a moment and oh what a mighty peace and power took possession of me!

I started up Green Street. The streets were full of people coming from the different churches in all directions. Just ahead of me were three of the leading sisters in our church. I would sooner have met anybody else than them. I was afraid of them. Well, I don’t know why, but they were the ones who made you feel that wisdom dwelt in them. They were old leading sisters, and I have found that the colored churches were not the only ones that have these leading consequential sisters in them. Well, as I drew near, I saw them say something to each other, and they looked very dignified. Now, the





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

Devil was not so close to me as before; he seemed to be quite behind me, but he shouted after me, "You will not tell them you are sanctified."

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

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

"Of victory now o'er Satan's power,

Let all the ransomed sing,

And triumph in the dying hour

Through Christ the Lord our King."

"Oh! it was love,

'Twas wondrous love,

The love of God to me,

That brought my Saviour from above,

To die on Calvary."

Somehow I always had a fear of white people. I was not afraid of them in the sense of doing me harm, or anything like that, but a kind of fear because they were white. They were there, and I was Black and was here! But that morning on Green Street, as I stood on my feet





CHAPTER SEVEN

trembling, I heard these words distinctly. They seemed to come from the northeast corner of the church, slowly, but clearly: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus,” (Galatians 3:28). I never understood that text before. But now the Holy Ghost had made it clear to me. And as I looked at white people that I had always seemed to be afraid of, now they looked so small. The great mountain had become a molehill. “Therefore, if the Son shall make you free, then are you free, indeed.” All praise to my victorious Christ!

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

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

“No.”

“Has Will slept all right?”

“Yes, he has not woke up at all.”

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

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





my favor. Brother Scott was “on the fence,” sometimes he would seem to believe in it and talk as though he had it, at another time he would oppose it bitterly, so you never knew just when he would turn on you. When I went in that morning, I said: “Pop Scott, the Lord has sanctified my soul this morning.”

He raised himself up and said: “Did, did He? ” he stammered a little. I did not wait for anymore, I began to sing an old hymn that I had often heard sung in our love feasts and class meetings in the old days, which seemed to be the real song of my soul. I had never felt such soul union with Jesus before in my life; so I sang:

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

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

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

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

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





CHAPTER SEVEN

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

"Believeth," seemed to be so powerfully emphasized, and I said, "Lord, I do believe that Thou hast sanctified my soul," and the power of God came upon me so that my knees buckled under me and I dropped as though I were shot, right on Sixth Avenue. The people were passing and looked at me and said nothing. I suppose they thought I was a little gone in the head, but God had turned my captivity and my mouth was filled with laughter. I scrambled up as best I could, for I did not fall prostrate, my knees gave way and I dropped on my hands, and every time I said the word which the Lord put in my mouth: "It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," another wave of power came upon me. Down I went again, and so three times, before I got home, I fell under the mighty power of God. Hallelujah! It is to-day the same, "The power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," and I do believe God, and He has kept me saved magnificently. Hallelujah! There is a big triumph in my soul. I don't know where the Devil went, but I heard no more of him for a week, then he called on me and said, "When people get sanctified, everything gets better around them."

"Yes," said I.

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

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

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





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

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

After a short prayer, I waited for a moment in silence, and said, “Now, Lord, I wait till Thou shalt speak to me Thyself,” and a moment passed and these words came: “Ask for the conversion of Miss Chapel.” I said, “Lord, for a real evidence that Thou” hast sanctified my soul, I ask that Thou will convert Miss Chapel between now and Sunday morning.”

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

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

“Well, yes, I would like to go, but then it is two miles away, and I am afraid Will might wake up and cry.” But the enemy urged me,

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

Miss Chapel, was a very nice young woman, though not a Christian. She was a very upright, moral person. She was taken ill, and her sister, a very earnest Christian, was very anxious about her state and asked me and others to come and pray with her. One day I went,





CHAPTER SEVEN

and met Mother Jones and several others. We sang and prayed with her and left her. And now a week had passed and I had not heard from her, and I had thought that was why the enemy attacked me so fiercely on Friday. Sun day morning came and I had persisted in believing and praising God, according to His word: "If thou canst believe all things are possible to him that believeth." I went to church, and as I sat in my pew after the sermon was over, and the collection was being taken up. Sister Jones, who sat in the opposite pew, got up and came over to me, and said: "Smith, Chapel has got the blessing." I said, "Praise the Lord, when did she get it?" She said, "Yesterday afternoon." Then these words were spoken to my heart in power: "Now that is your evidence," and I said, "Oh Lord, I do thank Thee, Thou hast answered my prayer and given me this distinct witness that Thou hast sanctified my soul." Many times since then my faith has been tried sorely, and I have had much to contend with, and the fiery darts of Satan at times have been sore, but he has never, from that day, had the impudence to tell me that God had not done this blessed work. Hallelujah! what a Saviour!

Everybody does not have a direct witness to their sanctification or to their justification in that way, but it is their privilege to have the clear, distinct witness of the Spirit to both justification and sanctification. As a rule, persons who do not get this distinct witness are unsettled in their Christian life, often waver and falter, and are more easily turned aside to new isms and doctrines. But, thank God, He has kept me in perfect peace while my mind has been stayed on Him and I have trusted in Him. Praise His name forever!

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

"Oh well," he said, "If you have got something you can't talk about, I don't believe in it."





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

“Well,” I said, “I have told you all I can and I cannot argue.” Oh, how he tantalized me in every way, but God kept me so still in my soul, and my poor husband was so annoyed because I would not argue. I knew what it meant, but praise God He saved me. I could only weep and pray.

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

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

Now, when I was convicted for purity or sanctification, it was a deep conviction of want an indescribable want; not condemnation. But, oh! that deep heart want. Like, after you have eaten a good hearty breakfast, and have worked hard all day, and get very hungry for your dinner or supper. Well, my heart cried out and longed as one that “Longeth for the morning.” And yet I had no means, no words to express just what I wanted. One day a friend came in to see me. I was then living at Colonel McGraw’s, in Lancaster. She was quite a high-toned colored lady, for everyone knew the Porter family, and they were always considered one of the leading families among the colored





CHAPTER SEVEN

people. The father was a large farmer in Kent County, and the sons were all fine young men, and pretty well educated, as was also the daughter. She had been a school teacher for many years but was now married to Rev. Lewis Hood, who was pastor of the Union Church in Lancaster. So I thought I could open my heart to her, and she would be able to help me. So I said to her, "Sister Hood, I don't know what's the matter with me. Somehow I feel like I wanted something, but I can't tell just what. I pray, but I do not get help just as I want."

"Well," she said, "What's the matter with you? Aren't you converted?"

"Oh! yes," I said, "It isn't that."

"Well, haven't you got the witness of the Spirit?"

"Oh! yes; it isn't that."

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

Then I was frightened, and said, "Oh! She does not understand me, and now if she tells anybody what I said they will not understand it and will think I have backslidden. Here I am leading a class and the leader of the female prayer meeting."

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

Several days after this I was reading my Bible, and I turned to the forty-second Psalm, first verse, "As the heart panteth after the water brook, so panteth my soul after the living God." My heart leaped. "Oh!" I said, "That's what I wanted, God! Now if anyone asked me what I wanted, as Sister Hood did, I could tell them it was God I wanted." The more I read my Bible, and fasted and prayed, the deeper my hunger became. One day I went to George James, I generally called him "Father James" he was a tall, elderly man, very dignified in





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

manner, but was kind. He was very black, his hair was white, and he was a fading local preacher, and deacon of the A. M. E. Church, in Lancaster, at that time, where I belonged. So I went to him, and I said: "Father James, I have been reading the Bible to-day, and I see this: 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' What does that mean?"

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

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

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

"Well, perhaps so," I said.

"Then, you know, Father James said that the Bible did not mean that." But somehow my better judgment said he was wrong. "I believe what the Bible says, and there must be some way that this grace can be obtained, or God never would have left it on record." But how to get hold of it I still did not know. I would read my Bible, and pray, and pray on. No light only the deep hunger. Of course, I had comfort in doing my duty attending my class meeting and prayer meetings, and I would go about and pray with the sick and dying, and work in revival meetings, and in all ways I could. After working hard all day many times I would be called up at twelve or one o'clock at night to go and pray with somebody that was sick or dying. I never refused to go, rain or shine, cold or warm; I felt it was my duty, and I was always glad to do it. Then I would come home, sometimes at three o'clock and have but very little sleep, and up and off to work again next morning when I did not have work in the house. My meat and drink was to see souls





CHAPTER SEVEN

coming to Christ. I had no fear to go into a congregation and speak to men or women, young or old. I hardly ever went for persons in a congregation, in a time of extra meetings, but what they went forward, and many of them were converted. Praise God forever!

But at times, my spirit was vacillating. Sometimes high on the mountain. When I would tell of the rapture and joy I felt, sometimes the older brethren and sisters said, "Ah, child, I was that way, too, when I first got converted; but you wait till the Devil shoots a few bombshells at you and you will not have so much joy." Poor me! I tried to look out for these bombshells. Oh! why didn't they tell me of the land of corn and wine and oil, and that the God of Caleb and Joshua was able, and would bring me in if I would only trust in Him? But, dear souls, they did not know it themselves, so could not help me. So one day I felt I must go and talk with Father James, for I had been reading the fourth chapter of second Thessalonians and third verse, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." So I said, "Father James, I have been reading the Bible to-day, and I see this." Then I quoted the text.

"Oh!" he said, "my child, don't you know when people die very happy?"

"Yes," I said.

"Well, you know, God does not sanctify you until just before you are ready to die. Of course, you could not go to heaven unless you were holy, and sanctification makes you holy, and you could not live in this sinful world if you were holy. So if you were sanctified you would die."

"Yes," I said. "Well, if it is going to kill me, I don't want it. I don't want to die. The Lord has done a great deal for me. I can do a little for Him; so I will just go on and do the best I can." So on I went.





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

Some time after this I was reading the fifth chapter of Mathew, and when I got to the eleventh and twelfth verses I said, "My experience does not come up to this: Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven. I cannot rejoice when anyone lies on me; it's no use; I can't do it." Then came up all my good works. "I go to church; I attend to all my duties; I do not go about meddling with other people's affairs; I mind my own business; and when anybody says anything about me that is not true, I must have satisfaction. I am not going to stand it." I had not read, "They that love God in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

But, Oh! Haven't I learned it since then. One day one of the dearest friends I had, as I thought, told a real lie on me. It made quite a stir. I wondered where all the coolness came about in different directions but did not know the real cause. So I made up my mind I would go and ask the parties what the matter was. So I got down and prayed that the Lord would give me the right spirit, and not let me get vexed, and not let the parties get vexed, and make them tell me what the matter was. So off I started a little after nine o'clock in the morning. I walked till about two o'clock in the afternoon and found myself about as near the truth when I stopped as when I started. The first place I called I said to the friend, calling her by name, "I hear so and so; I came to ask you what about it?"

"All I know," she replied, "is what John B. said that Mary said that you said that I said that she said," and so on.

Well, I went to the next parties. They said the same thing: "Well, all I know about it is Ann So and So said that you said that she said, that I said that they said, etc." I went the round, then started home, so ashamed and disgusted. As soon as I got home I took off my wraps, went down into the cellar and got down on my knees, where I always went to settle hard difficulties, and I said, "Oh! Lord, if you will help me, I will never, while I live, go after another lie." And thank God I





CHAPTER SEVEN

never have, though sometimes I have been tempted: but the Lord has always delivered me. Praise His dear name! Amen.

Some months after this I got interested in the subject of baptism, and I thought if I were immersed it would help me to see the way better. So I went to Father James and told him I would like to be immersed. My father and mother had all of us children baptized, as the discipline of the Methodist Church required; but I thought if I could answer for myself it would be better. Then if I came up to all that the Bible said as far as I knew, the Lord would be obliged to give me the great blessing I sought. Father James did not discourage me in this but rather was favorable. So this helped me to think that I was on the right track now. There were four or five others who wanted to be immersed also; so I went around to see them, and it was decided to send to Philadelphia for a good brother and local preacher in the African Methodist Church, a sanctified man named Brother Jones. Some years before there was a great revival in Columbia, and some six or eight of the converts wanted to be baptized. So they sent to Philadelphia and got Rev. Bob Collins, who was a powerful preacher in his day, and a leading minister in the A. M. E. Church. It was in the dead of winter.

The Susquehanna River was frozen over, and they cut the ice, and Brother Collins baptized eight, I think it was. And they shouted and sang. They stood on the shore and all around on the ice by hundreds. It was six o'clock in the morning. Oh! what a time! Of course, all the Baptists believed in that, and they were out and rejoiced with them that did rejoice. Our minister at that time was Rev. Sanford. His wife's sister, Henney Johnson, had been very sick, and she had got converted. But she leaned toward the Baptists. So to save her to her church, she was baptized that Sunday, and she got well after that, which was a great wonder to many. Sister Harriet N. Baker was one of the strong members of the church. She was baptized the same Sunday morning. Lancaster was only twelve miles from Columbia so that we in Lancaster got water struck! For most all the colored people in Lancaster would go to Columbia to quarterly meeting. Oh! how I have





seen the power of God displayed in the salvation of souls. What men and women they were to pray in those days. How I remember Candes Watson, Sarah Henderson, Chris Stokes, Simon Morris, John Morris, Jake Snively, and a host of others. How they come before me now, as I think it all over. But all these have gone, though it seems but as yesterday.

But to return to my story. After I had seen the parties I went to Father James and asked him to write to Brother Jones and find out what the cost would be. He replied that we were to pay him twenty dollars and his traveling expenses from Philadelphia and back. I was willing to pay him a month's wages, which was six dollars if the others would make up the balance. So they were to try. A few weeks passed, then one of the leading ones in the number, Sister Maxwell, was taken sick, and her husband would not let her go into the water. Brother Williams went away. I had got my dress ready, but the others all backed out. Then Father James was taken sick. So he said that March was a bad month to go into the water, so if I would wait until April or May he would perform the ceremony. But alas! Poor man! About the first of April, I stood by his bedside and saw him die, and heard his last words.

It was Sunday evening, and after I had come from church, I went to sit with Sister James, his wife. It was about half-past ten or eleven o'clock p. M. and the old man seemed to be sleeping quietly. All at once he roused up and coughed and made a noise as though something was in his throat. I said, "Father James, what is the matter? Do you want a drink of water?"

"No," he said, there seemed to be a big Black man standing by me running red hot irons down my throat.

Oh! how disappointed I was. For I wanted him to get sanctified a few minutes before he died, as he had taught me. But now all was over, and I had no one to go and talk to, but must wander on in darkness. Not a ray of light could I see.





CHAPTER SEVEN

After a year or two, I went to Philadelphia. There I was married to my second husband, James Smith. Then I had given up seeking the blessing definitely, and so went on. Several years later on, we moved to New York; and, after many more trials, that I have already referred to, I was deeply convicted again for the need of heart purity. And again I began to seek it by works. I read in the Bible, "If I, your Lord and Master, wash your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet," John, 13:15. There were four of us sisters who had united in a band to pray for mutual help to each other; Sister Scott, Sister Bangs, Sister Brown, and myself. I told them what the Bible said about it, and they all agreed. I did not tell them I was seeking the blessing of holiness. I was afraid they might say something to turn me aside, and I was so hungry.

So I got ready, and I thought as there were only four of us, and we were trying to help each other, that it would be right for all four of us to be together at this time. But now I praise the Lord that He did not allow this to come to pass, though I did not know then that He was hindering them, as I do now. I was the only one that had a small baby. Sister Bangs and Sister Brown had no families, and Sister Scott's children were all grown. So I had them come and meet at my house every Mon day afternoon. Sister Scott always came. Sister Bangs would be there one afternoon, and Sister Brown would not be there. Then when Sister Brown was there, Sister Bangs wouldn't be there. So they were never all there at once. Still I held on and thought it was best not to have this feet-washing done unless we were all together.

I told the sisters and they agreed with me that the four, ought to be together. We did not try to get up a society of this kind, but just we four united for our own mutual help. After three or four weeks went on, and we were defeated every time, I decided not to do it. I prayed about it, and it seemed to come to me that I was not to do it. So that is how the Lord saved me from the mistake of seeking salvation by works. How I ever praise Him for His lovingkindness, and for His tender mercy, and for His great patience and forbearance with me. I see now that if I had not been hindered as I was, that I should have





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

gone about teaching that immersion, and the washing of feet, were necessary in order to be sanctified, which would have been a great mistake, but the Lord saved me from it. Praise His name. Amen.





CHAPTER SEVEN





CHAPTER SEVEN

THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

I always got up early on Sunday mornings as on other mornings. I got my breakfast and cleaned up my house, and at nine o'clock, my little Mazie went to Sunday school. While she was gone I would cook all my dinner and get everything ready. I did not have time to cook much through the week because I often had to dry my clothes in the house and I could not have the smell of cooking, so Sunday was the only day I could cook. I would have a real good dinner, but I never stayed home from church to cook. So, I gave my baby his bath and laid him in his cradle, then I got down on my knees and prayed the Lord to keep Will asleep until I went to Green Street Church, and to keep James in a good humor so he would not scold me, for I hated to be scolded, in the worst way. James was peculiar. If he came and I happened to be out, even though I went to carry clothes, he would be vexed. So after Mazie came I said, "Now you read your library book and be a good girl, I am going to Green Street Church this morning; it lets out before our church does, so I will be home in time. You can tell your dad if he comes before I get back. If Will cries, don't pick him up; just rock him." She was a good strong girl, thirteen years old, quite able to take care of him and could manage him quite as well as I could, so I went and left them. On my way to Green Street, it seemed the Devil overtook me. Just as I turned on Carmine Street, I felt a Satanic influence walking by my side and whispering, "Now, you know, if James comes home and finds you are out, you know what you will get;





CHAPTER SEVEN

you better go to Bedford Street and hear John Cookman.”

“Well, I will.”

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

“Yes.”

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

“No,” I said, “I will not do it.” Then Satan said, “You had better go and hear that Presbyterian minister on the corner of Houston and Prince Streets.” I had heard how kind they were to colored people and I had promised several times I would go and hear this minister; the Devil had found that out some way; I can’t tell how he knew it, but he did. “You had better go and hear him; then, it is closer to home, three blocks nearer, and you can get home quick.”

“Yes,” I said, “that is so.”

When I got to the corner, as I was about to turn with a gentle pull a sweet voice whispered, “No, no, go on.”

“Lord, help me!”

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

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





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

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

I went on. When I reached the steps I will never forget the thrill that ran through my heart when I heard Brother Inskip pray. With strength, I had left and I said, “Thank God, he is here and not at the Five Points.” I seemed to feel the Satanic presence sweep by me and say, “Oh, she has found out.” Old Satan knew I had caught him in one of his biggest lies. I went into the church and sat down about three seats from the door. I had been to that church once before and that was Brother Inskip’s first Sunday. While I lived on East York Street I was very sick and could not walk all the way to Mother Bethel Church AME Church, where I belonged, so I went in there that Sunday. I sat in the gallery. The people were so kind; one brother handed me a book and asked me to come again. I thank God for that spirit that was in Green Street those days, even to Black people. The Sunday I got the blessing I did not sit upstairs, but Oh, how tired I was when I got into the church. I leaned my head forward and prayed to God to give me strength. When Brother Inskip had finished his prayer he rose and made his announcements; the last hymn was sung. Then came the text: Ephesians, 4th Chapter 24th Verse, “And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” He said, “In preaching from this text this morning the brethren will observe I shall have to make some reference to a sermon that I preached a few Sabbaths ago on sanctification.”

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

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





CHAPTER SEVEN

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

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

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

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

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

"So I did," I said. I sat back and was listening and drinking and thought all was well now. Again I heard my baby scream.

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

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

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





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

“Oh!” I said, “he means me, for that is just what I have said. With my trials and peculiar temperament and all that I have to contend with, if I could get the blessing how could I keep it? Now, someone has told him, for he is looking right at me and I know he means me.” And I tried to hide behind the post, and he seemed to look around there. Then I said, “Well, he means me, and I will just take what he says.” He used this illustration: “When you work hard all day and are very tired, “ Yes,” I said, and in a moment my mind went through my washing and ironing all night.”

“When you go to bed at night you don’t fix any way for yourself to breathe.”

“ No,” I said, “ I never think about it.”

“You go to bed, you breathe all night, you have nothing to do with your breathing, you awake in the morning, you had nothing to do with it.”



“Yes, yes, I see it.”



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

“Oh!” I said, “I see it.” And somehow I seemed to sink down out of sight of myself, and then rise; it was all in a moment. I seemed to go two ways at once, down and up. Just then such a wave came over me, and such a welling up in my heart and these words rang through me like a bell: “God in you, God in you,” and I thought doing what? Ruling every ambition and desire, and bringing every thought unto captivity and obedience to His will. How I have lived through it I do not know, but the blessedness of the love and the peace and power I can never describe. Oh, what glory filled my soul! The great vacuum in my soul began to fill up; it was like a pleasant draft of cool water, and I felt it. I wanted to shout Glory to Jesus! but Satan said, “Now if you make a noise they will put you out.”





CHAPTER SEVEN

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

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

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

Halleluiah! Hallelujah! Amen.

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

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

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

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

“God can do it,” I said, “in the twinkling of an eye,” and as quick as the spark from smitten steel I felt the touch of God from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, and the welling up came, and I felt I must shout but, Satan still resisted me like he did Joshua. The Captain





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

of the Lord's house stood close by and said, "Take off the filthy garments from him," and Satan was mad.

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

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

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

Just then Satan said: "They will not believe you because you did not get the blessing there."

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





CHAPTER SEVEN

“Lord, what shall I do,” and a voice seemed to whisper in my left ear, for Satan stood at my right, and would whisper his suggestions: “Pray for strength to stand up.” I took hold of the pew in front of me and trembling from head to foot I stood up but held on to the pew. Just as I got fairly on my feet they struck the last verse of the hymn:

“Oh! bear my longing heart to Him,

Who bled and died for me.

Whose blood now cleanseth from all sin,

And gives me victory.”

And when they sang these words, “Whose blood now cleanseth,” what a wave of glory swept over my soul! I shouted glory to Jesus. Brother Inskip answered, “Amen, Glory to God.” O, what a triumph for our King Emmanuel. I don’t know just how I looked, but I felt so wonderfully strange, yet I felt glorious. One of the good official brothers at the door said as I was passing out, “Well, auntie, how did you like that sermon?” But I could not speak; if I had, I should have shouted, but I simply nodded my head. Just as I put my foot on the top step I seemed to feel a hand, the touch of which I could not describe. It seemed to press me gently on the top of my head, and I felt something part and roll down and cover me like a great cloak! I felt it distinctly; it was done in a moment and oh what a mighty peace and power took possession of me!

I started up Green Street. The streets were full of people coming from the different churches in all directions. Just ahead of me were three of the leading sisters in our church. I would sooner have met anybody else than them. I was afraid of them. Well, I don’t know why, but they were the ones who made you feel that wisdom dwelt in them. They were old leading sisters, and I have found that the colored churches were not the only ones that have these leading consequential sisters in them. Well, as I drew near, I saw them say something to each other, and they looked very dignified. Now, the





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

Devil was not so close to me as before; he seemed to be quite behind me, but he shouted after me, “You will not tell them you are sanctified.”

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

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

“Of victory now o’er Satan’s power,

Let all the ransomed sing,

And triumph in the dying hour

Through Christ the Lord our King.”

“Oh! it was love,

‘Twas wondrous love,

The love of God to me,

That brought my Saviour from above,

To die on Calvary.”

Somehow I always had a fear of white people. I was not afraid of them in the sense of doing me harm, or anything like that, but a kind of fear because they were white. They were there, and I was Black and was here! But that morning on Green Street, as I stood on my feet





CHAPTER SEVEN

trembling, I heard these words distinctly. They seemed to come from the northeast corner of the church, slowly, but clearly: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus,” (Galatians 3:28). I never understood that text before. But now the Holy Ghost had made it clear to me. And as I looked at white people that I had always seemed to be afraid of, now they looked so small. The great mountain had become a molehill. “Therefore, if the Son shall make you free, then are you free, indeed.” All praise to my victorious Christ!

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

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

“No.”

“Has Will slept all right?”

“Yes, he has not woke up at all.”

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

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





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

my favor. Brother Scott was “on the fence,” sometimes he would seem to believe in it and talk as though he had it, at another time he would oppose it bitterly, so you never knew just when he would turn on you. When I went in that morning, I said: “Pop Scott, the Lord has sanctified my soul this morning.”

He raised himself up and said: “Did, did He? ” he stammered a little. I did not wait for anymore, I began to sing an old hymn that I had often heard sung in our love feasts and class meetings in the old days, which seemed to be the real song of my soul. I had never felt such soul union with Jesus before in my life; so I sang:

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

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

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

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

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





CHAPTER SEVEN

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

“Believeth,” seemed to be so powerfully emphasized, and I said, “Lord, I do believe that Thou hast sanctified my soul,” and the power of God came upon me so that my knees buckled under me and I dropped as though I were shot, right on Sixth Avenue. The people were passing and looked at me and said nothing. I suppose they thought I was a little gone in the head, but God had turned my captivity and my mouth was filled with laughter. I scrambled up as best I could, for I did not fall prostrate, my knees gave way and I dropped on my hands, and every time I said the word which the Lord put in my mouth: “It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth,” another wave of power came upon me. Down I went again, and so three times, before I got home, I fell under the mighty power of God. Hallelujah! It is to-day the same, “The power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth,” and I do believe God, and He has kept me saved magnificently. Hallelujah! There is a big triumph in my soul. I don’t know where the Devil went, but I heard no more of him for a week, then he called on me and said, “When people get sanctified, everything gets better around them.”

“Yes,” said I.

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

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

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





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

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

After a short prayer, I waited for a moment in silence, and said, “Now, Lord, I wait till Thou shalt speak to me Thyself,” and a moment passed and these words came: “Ask for the conversion of Miss Chapel.” I said, “Lord, for a real evidence that Thou hast sanctified my soul, I ask that Thou will convert Miss Chapel between now and Sunday morning.”

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

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

“Well, yes, I would like to go, but then it is two miles away, and I am afraid Will might wake up and cry.” But the enemy urged me,

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

Miss Chapel, was a very nice young woman, though not a Christian. She was a very upright, moral person. She was taken ill, and her sister, a very earnest Christian, was very anxious about her state and asked me and others to come and pray with her. One day I went,





CHAPTER SEVEN

and met Mother Jones and several others. We sang and prayed with her and left her. And now a week had passed and I had not heard from her, and I had thought that was why the enemy attacked me so fiercely on Friday. Sun day morning came and I had persisted in believing and praising God, according to His word: "If thou canst believe all things are possible to him that believeth." I went to church, and as I sat in my pew after the sermon was over, and the collection was being taken up. Sister Jones, who sat in the opposite pew, got up and came over to me, and said: "Smith, Chapel has got the blessing." I said, "Praise the Lord, when did she get it?" She said, "Yesterday afternoon." Then these words were spoken to my heart in power: "Now that is your evidence," and I said, "Oh Lord, I do thank Thee, Thou hast answered my prayer and given me this distinct witness that Thou hast sanctified my soul." Many times since then my faith has been tried sorely, and I have had much to contend with, and the fiery darts of Satan at times have been sore, but he has never, from that day, had the impudence to tell me that God had not done this blessed work. Hallelujah! what a Saviour!



Everybody does not have a direct witness to their sanctification or to their justification in that way, but it is their privilege to have the clear, distinct witness of the Spirit to both justification and sanctification. As a rule, persons who do not get this distinct witness are unsettled in their Christian life, often waver and falter, and are more easily turned aside to new isms and doctrines. But, thank God, He has kept me in perfect peace while my mind has been stayed on Him and I have trusted in Him. Praise His name forever!

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

"Oh well," he said, "If you have got something you can't talk about, I don't believe in it."





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

“Well,” I said, “I have told you all I can and I cannot argue.” Oh, how he tantalized me in every way, but God kept me so still in my soul, and my poor husband was so annoyed because I would not argue. I knew what it meant, but praise God He saved me. I could only weep and pray.

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

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

Now, when I was convicted for purity or sanctification, it was a deep conviction of want an indescribable want; not condemnation. But, oh! that deep heart want. Like, after you have eaten a good hearty breakfast, and have worked hard all day, and get very hungry for your dinner or supper. Well, my heart cried out and longed as one that “Longeth for the morning.” And yet I had no means, no words to express just what I wanted. One day a friend came in to see me. I was then living at Colonel McGraw’s, in Lancaster. She was quite a high-toned colored lady, for everyone knew the Porter family, and they were always considered one of the leading families among the colored





CHAPTER SEVEN

people. The father was a large farmer in Kent County, and the sons were all fine young men, and pretty well educated, as was also the daughter. She had been a school teacher for many years but was now married to Rev. Lewis Hood, who was pastor of the Union Church in Lancaster. So I thought I could open my heart to her, and she would be able to help me. So I said to her, "Sister Hood, I don't know what's the matter with me. Somehow I feel like I wanted something, but I can't tell just what. I pray, but I do not get help just as I want."

"Well," she said, "What's the matter with you? Aren't you converted?"

"Oh! yes," I said, "It isn't that."

"Well, haven't you got the witness of the Spirit?"

"Oh! yes; it isn't that."

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

Then I was frightened, and said, "Oh! She does not understand me, and now if she tells anybody what I said they will not understand it and will think I have backslidden. Here I am leading a class and the leader of the female prayer meeting."

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

Several days after this I was reading my Bible, and I turned to the forty-second Psalm, first verse, "As the heart panteth after the water brook, so panteth my soul after the living God." My heart leaped. "Oh!" I said, "That's what I wanted, God! Now if anyone asked me what I wanted, as Sister Hood did, I could tell them it was God I wanted." The more I read my Bible, and fasted and prayed, the deeper my hunger became. One day I went to George James, I generally called him "Father James" he was a tall, elderly man, very dignified in





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

manner, but was kind. He was very black, his hair was white, and he was a fading local preacher, and deacon of the A. M. E. Church, in Lancaster, at that time, where I belonged. So I went to him, and I said: "Father James, I have been reading the Bible to-day, and I see this: 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' What does that mean?"

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

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

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

"Well, perhaps so," I said.

"Then, you know, Father James said that the Bible did not mean that." But somehow my better judgment said he was wrong. "I believe what the Bible says, and there must be some way that this grace can be obtained, or God never would have left it on record." But how to get hold of it I still did not know. I would read my Bible, and pray, and pray on. No light only the deep hunger. Of course, I had comfort in doing my duty attending my class meeting and prayer meetings, and I would go about and pray with the sick and dying, and work in revival meetings, and in all ways I could. After working hard all day many times I would be called up at twelve or one o'clock at night to go and pray with somebody that was sick or dying. I never refused to go, rain or shine, cold or warm; I felt it was my duty, and I was always glad to do it. Then I would come home, sometimes at three o'clock and have but very little sleep, and up and off to work again next morning when I did not have work in the house. My meat and drink was to see souls





CHAPTER SEVEN

coming to Christ. I had no fear to go into a congregation and speak to men or women, young or old. I hardly ever went for persons in a congregation, in a time of extra meetings, but what they went forward, and many of them were converted. Praise God forever!

But at times, my spirit was vacillating. Sometimes high on the mountain. When I would tell of the rapture and joy I felt, sometimes the older brethren and sisters said, "Ah, child, I was that way, too, when I first got converted; but you wait till the Devil shoots a few bombshells at you and you will not have so much joy." Poor me! I tried to look out for these bombshells. Oh! why didn't they tell me of the land of corn and wine and oil, and that the God of Caleb and Joshua was able, and would bring me in if I would only trust in Him? But, dear souls, they did not know it themselves, so could not help me. So one day I felt I must go and talk with Father James, for I had been reading the fourth chapter of second Thessalonians and third verse, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." So I said, "Father James, I have been reading the Bible to-day, and I see this." Then I quoted the text.

"Oh!" he said, "my child, don't you know when people die very happy?"

"Yes," I said.

"Well, you know, God does not sanctify you until just before you are ready to die. Of course, you could not go to heaven unless you were holy, and sanctification makes you holy, and you could not live in this sinful world if you were holy. So if you were sanctified you would die."

"Yes," I said. "Well, if it is going to kill me, I don't want it. I don't want to die. The Lord has done a great deal for me. I can do a little for Him; so I will just go on and do the best I can." So on I went.





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

Some time after this I was reading the fifth chapter of Mathew, and when I got to the eleventh and twelfth verses I said, “My experience does not come up to this: Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven. I cannot rejoice when anyone lies on me; it’s no use; I can’t do it.” Then came up all my good works. “I go to church; I attend to all my duties; I do not go about meddling with other people’s affairs; I mind my own business; and when anybody says anything about me that is not true, I must have satisfaction. I am not going to stand it.” I had not read, “They that love God in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”

But, Oh! Haven’t I learned it since then. One day one of the dearest friends I had, as I thought, told a real lie on me. It made quite a stir. I wondered where all the coolness came about in different directions but did not know the real cause. So I made up my mind I would go and ask the parties what the matter was. So I got down and prayed that the Lord would give me the right spirit, and not let me get vexed, and not let the parties get vexed, and make them tell me what the matter was. So off I started a little after nine o’clock in the morning. I walked till about two o’clock in the afternoon and found myself about as near the truth when I stopped as when I started. The first place I called I said to the friend, calling her by name, “I hear so and so; I came to ask you what about it?”

“All I know,” she replied, “is what John B. said that Mary said that you said that I said that she said,” and so on.

Well, I went to the next parties. They said the same thing: “Well, all I know about it is Ann So and So said that you said that she said, that I said that they said, etc.” I went the round, then started home, so ashamed and disgusted. As soon as I got home I took off my wraps, went down into the cellar and got down on my knees, where I always went to settle hard difficulties, and I said, “Oh! Lord, if you will help me, I will never, while I live, go after another lie.” And thank God I





CHAPTER SEVEN

never have, though sometimes I have been tempted: but the Lord has always delivered me. Praise His dear name! Amen.

Some months after this I got interested in the subject of baptism, and I thought if I were immersed it would help me to see the way better. So I went to Father James and told him I would like to be immersed. My father and mother had all of us children baptized, as the discipline of the Methodist Church required; but I thought if I could answer for myself it would be better. Then if I came up to all that the Bible said as far as I knew, the Lord would be obliged to give me the great blessing I sought. Father James did not discourage me in this but rather was favorable. So this helped me to think that I was on the right track now. There were four or five others who wanted to be immersed also; so I went around to see them, and it was decided to send to Philadelphia for a good brother and local preacher in the African Methodist Church, a sanctified man named Brother Jones. Some years before there was a great revival in Columbia, and some six or eight of the converts wanted to be baptized. So they sent to Philadelphia and got Rev. Bob Collins, who was a powerful preacher in his day, and a leading minister in the A. M. E. Church. It was in the dead of winter.

The Susquehanna River was frozen over, and they cut the ice, and Brother Collins baptized eight, I think it was. And they shouted and sang. They stood on the shore and all around on the ice by hundreds. It was six o'clock in the morning. Oh! what a time! Of course, all the Baptists believed in that, and they were out and rejoiced with them that did rejoice. Our minister at that time was Rev. Sanford. His wife's sister, Henney Johnson, had been very sick, and she had got converted. But she leaned toward the Baptists. So to save her to her church, she was baptized that Sunday, and she got well after that, which was a great wonder to many. Sister Harriet N. Baker was one of the strong members of the church. She was baptized the same Sunday morning. Lancaster was only twelve miles from Columbia so that we in Lancaster got water struck! For most all the colored people in Lancaster would go to Columbia to quarterly meeting. Oh! how I have





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

seen the power of God displayed in the salvation of souls. What men and women they were to pray in those days. How I remember Candes Watson, Sarah Henderson, Chris Stokes, Simon Morris, John Morris, Jake Snively, and a host of others. How they come before me now, as I think it all over. But all these have gone, though it seems but as yesterday.

But to return to my story. After I had seen the parties I went to Father James and asked him to write to Brother Jones and find out what the cost would be. He replied that we were to pay him twenty dollars and his traveling expenses from Philadelphia and back. I was willing to pay him a month's wages, which was six dollars if the others would make up the balance. So they were to try. A few weeks passed, then one of the leading ones in the number, Sister Maxwell, was taken sick, and her husband would not let her go into the water. Brother Williams went away. I had got my dress ready, but the others all backed out. Then Father James was taken sick. So he said that March was a bad month to go into the water, so if I would wait until April or May he would perform the ceremony. But alas! Poor man! About the first of April, I stood by his bedside and saw him die, and heard his last words.

It was Sunday evening, and after I had come from church, I went to sit with Sister James, his wife. It was about half-past ten or eleven o'clock p. M. and the old man seemed to be sleeping quietly. All at once he roused up and coughed and made a noise as though something was in his throat. I said, "Father James, what is the matter? Do you want a drink of water?"

"No," he said, there seemed to be a big Black man standing by me running red hot irons down my throat.

Oh! how disappointed I was. For I wanted him to get sanctified a few minutes before he died, as he had taught me. But now all was over, and I had no one to go and talk to, but must wander on in darkness. Not a ray of light could I see.





CHAPTER SEVEN

After a year or two, I went to Philadelphia. There I was married to my second husband, James Smith. Then I had given up seeking the blessing definitely, and so went on. Several years later on, we moved to New York; and, after many more trials, that I have already referred to, I was deeply convicted again for the need of heart purity. And again I began to seek it by works. I read in the Bible, "If I, your Lord and Master, wash your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet," John, 13:15. There were four of us sisters who had united in a band to pray for mutual help to each other; Sister Scott, Sister Bangs, Sister Brown, and myself. I told them what the Bible said about it, and they all agreed. I did not tell them I was seeking the blessing of holiness. I was afraid they might say something to turn me aside, and I was so hungry.

So I got ready, and I thought as there were only four of us, and we were trying to help each other, that it would be right for all four of us to be together at this time. But now I praise the Lord that He did not allow this to come to pass, though I did not know then that He was hindering them, as I do now. I was the only one that had a small baby. Sister Bangs and Sister Brown had no families, and Sister Scott's children were all grown. So I had them come and meet at my house every Mon day afternoon. Sister Scott always came. Sister Bangs would be there one afternoon, and Sister Brown would not be there. Then when Sister Brown was there, Sister Bangs wouldn't be there. So they were never all there at once. Still I held on and thought it was best not to have this feet-washing done unless we were all together.

I told the sisters and they agreed with me that the four, ought to be together. We did not try to get up a society of this kind, but just we four united for our own mutual help. After three or four weeks went on, and we were defeated every time, I decided not to do it. I prayed about it, and it seemed to come to me that I was not to do it. So that is how the Lord saved me from the mistake of seeking salvation by works. How I ever praise Him for His lovingkindness, and for His tender mercy, and for His great patience and forbearance with me. I see now that if I had not been hindered as I was, that I should have





THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

gone about teaching that immersion, and the washing of feet, were necessary in order to be sanctified, which would have been a great mistake, but the Lord saved me from it. Praise His name. Amen.

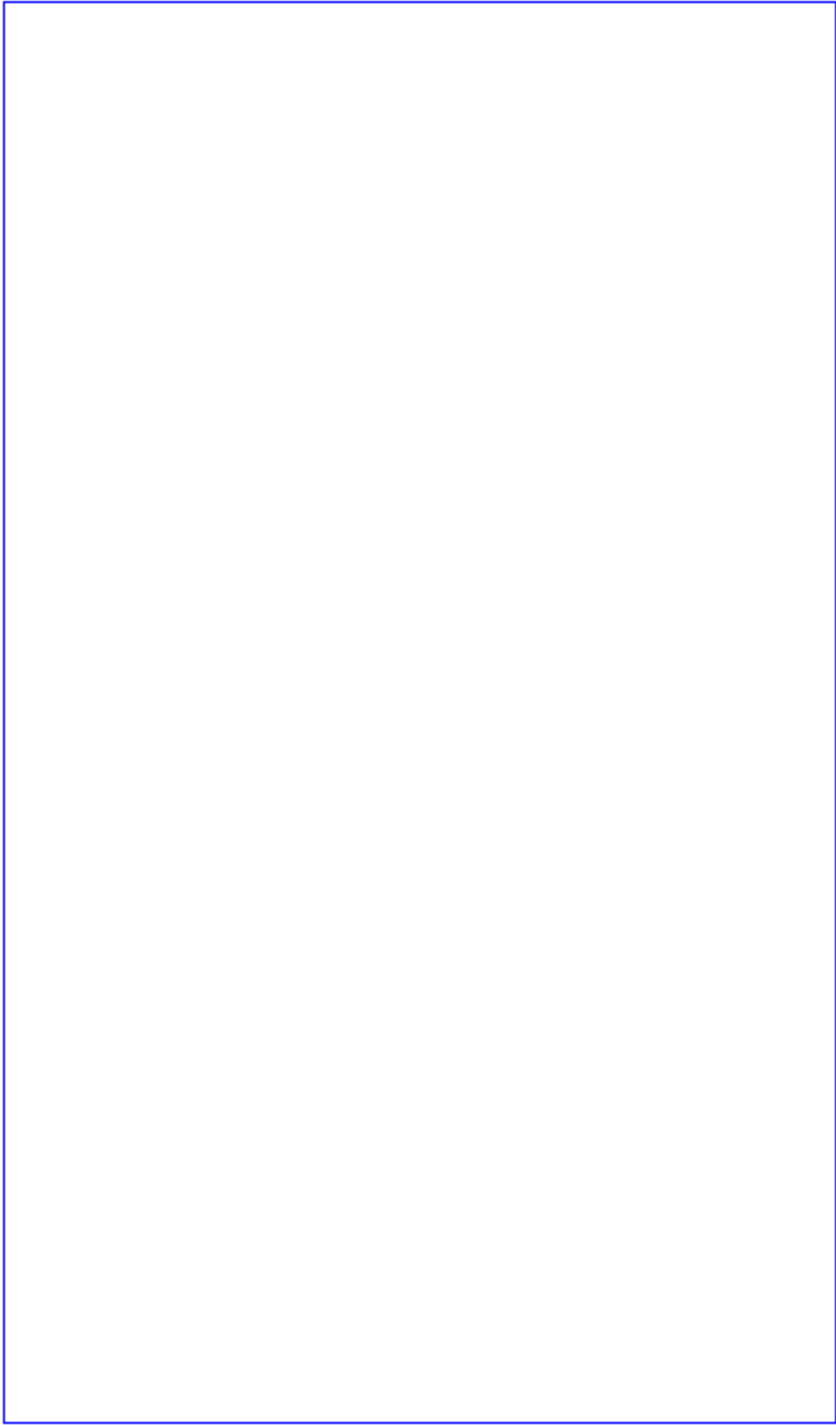




CHAPTER SEVEN



CHAPTER SEVEN



THE BLESSING ABOUT SEEKING SANCTIFICATION BY WORKS

