

had to be restrained till totally extirpated by the Holy Sanctifier.

A *sincere spirit of legalism*, more than anything else, trammelled my faith, and prevented the Holy Spirit from "perfecting that which was 'lacking' in my faith." It was not theoretical, but practical legalism. I did not, for a moment, trust to anything I had done, but under cover of vows and covenants to be holy, I was really trusting to what I was going to do. To the best of my knowledge, I presented my body, my whole being, on God's altar, and worked myself nearly to death trying to be holy. I was often "blest" and comforted, and hoped, at the moment, that I had found the pearl of perfect love, but soon perceived I was mistaken. I had been "justified by faith," kept in a justified relation to God by faith; my ministry from its commencement had been attended by the soul-saving power of Jesus, and why I failed to cross over into the promised land of perfect love was a profound puzzle to me, but I was getting light and gathering strength in the struggle.

In the month of August, 1845, I attended a camp meeting on Fincastle Circuit, the old camp where my Presiding Elder, three years before, appointed me to the work of an itinerant minister. On my way to the camp-meeting, I saw that in connection with an entire consecration of my whole being to God, which I had been sincerely trying to do from the beginning, I should pay no particular attention to my emotional sensibilities, nor to their changes, nor to the "great blessings" I was daily receiving in answer to prayer, but should simply accept the Bible record of God's provisions and promises as an adequate basis of faith, and on the evidences contained in these divine credentials, *receive and trust* the Divine Saviour for all that He had come to do for me, and nothing less. I was then and there enabled to establish two essential facts: (1) To be true to Jesus Christ; (2) to receive and trust Him to be true to me. So there, on my horse in the road, I began to say more emphatically than ever before, "I belong to God. Every fibre of my being I consecrate to Him. I consent to perfect obedience. I have no power to do anything toward saving myself, but, in utter helplessness, I receive and trust Jesus for full salvation."

Then the tempter, wearing a garb of pious caution, said: "Take care, don't go too fast: there may be reservations in your consecration you don't think of."

I replied: "I surrender everything I can

think of, and everything I can't think of. I accept a principle of obedience that covers all possibilities in the will of God."

"But you don't feel anything different from your ordinary experience?"

"The word of God is sure. On the evidence it contains I *receive and trust* the Blessor without any stipulation as to the 'blessing' or the joyful feelings it may bring."

I went on to the camp-meeting, maintaining my two facts, as the Lord gave me power to do, without the aid of joyous emotional sensibility or "feeling."

My dear father was there as an earnest worker. I was delighted to be with him, for beside being a kind father, he was in Jesus a brother to me. I met many old friends at that meeting, for it was on the circuit I served the year preceding, and found many sources of real pleasure, but my struggle within was so severe, that I had but little enjoyment of any sort.

In conversation, one evening at that meeting, with "Aunt Eleanor Goodwin," a saintly woman, I said: "In the years of my unbelief and apostasy, I acquired such a habit of doubting, that I have never yet been able to fully conquer it."

Instantly the taunt of the tempter rang with an echo, through the domain of my spirit nature—"Can't, can't; you can't do it."

I saw that I had inadvertently made a concession, which Satan was using to defeat my faith, and I said: "Aunt Eleanor, in saying that 'I have not been able to conquer my old habit of doubting,' I see I have made a mistake. God commands us to believe and be saved. He don't command impossibilities, so in regard to believing—receiving Christ—for all that He has engaged to do for me, I have said 'I can't believe,' for the last time. *I can do whatsoever He commands*: for He hath said: 'My grace is sufficient for thee.'" So I at once revised my spiritual vocabulary, and ignored all the 'can'ts,' 'ifs' and 'buts,' as used by doubters, in regard to the grand possibilities of the grace of God. That was a victory for my faith, but I felt no special cleansing power within.

At the close of the camp-meeting I returned to my circuit, steadily maintaining my facts. Through the series of my special services in Sweet Springs Valley, at Dan Wickline's, where we had the blessed work described in a previous chapter, and the series at Jake Wickline's on the mountain, and in the series of Sheriff C.'s neighborhood, I stood by my two facts, as Abraham stood by his offered sacrifice, in spite of