

HOW A MISSIONARY FOUND VICTORY.

By Mrs. Rosalind Goforth.

I do not remember the time when I did not have in some degree a love for the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour. When not quite twelve years of age, at a revival meeting, I publicly accepted and confessed Christ as my Lord and Master. From that time there grew up in my heart a deep yearning to know Christ in a more real way, for he seemed so unreal, so far away and visionary. One night when still quite young I remember going out under the trees in my parents' garden with intense longing to feel Christ near me. As I knelt down there on the grass, alone with God, Job's cry became mine, "Oh that I knew where I might find him!" Could I have borne it had I known then that almost forty years would pass before that yearning would be satisfied?

With the longing to know Christ literally to "find" him, came a passionate desire to serve him. But, oh, what a terrible nature I had! Passionate, proud, self-willed, indeed just full was I of those things that I knew were unlike Christ.

The following years of half-hearted conflict with sinful self must be passed over till about the fifth year of our missionary work in China. I grieve to say that the new life in a foreign land with its trying climate, provoking servants, and altogether irritating conditions, seemed to have developed rather than subdued my natural disposition.

One day (I can never forget it), as I sat inside the house by a paper window at dusk, two Chinese Christian women sat down on the other side. They began talking about me, and (wrongly, no doubt) I listened. One said, "Yes, she is a hard worker, a zealous preacher, and—yes, she nearly loves us; but, oh, what a temper she has! If she would only live more as she preaches!"

Then followed a full and true delineation of my life and character. So true, indeed, was it, as to crush out all sense of annoyance and leave me humbled to the dust. I saw then how useless, how worse than useless, was it for me to come to China to preach Christ and not live Christ. But how could I live Christ? I knew some (including my dear husband) who had a peace and a power—yes, and a something I could not define that I had not; and often I longed to know the secret.

Was it possible, with such a nature as mine, ever to become patient and gentle?

Was it possible that I could ever really stop worrying?

Could I, in a word, ever hope to be able to live Christ as well as preach him?

I knew I loved Christ; and again and again I had proved my willingness to give up all for his sake. But I knew, too, that one hot flash of temper with the Chinese, or with the children before the Chinese, would largely undo weeks, perhaps months, of self-sacrificing service.

The years that followed led often through the furnace. The Lord knew that nothing but fire could destroy the dross and subdue my stubborn will. "Fighting (not finding), following, keeping, struggling." Yes, and failing! Sometimes in

the depths of despair over these failures; then going on determined to do my best—and what a poor best it was!

In the year 1905 and later, as I witnessed the wonderful way the Lord was leading my husband, and saw the Holy Spirit's power in his life and message, I came to seek very definitely for the fullness of the Holy Spirit. It was a time of deep heart-searching. The heinousness of sin was revealed as never before. Many, many things had to be set right towards man and God. I learned then what "paying the price" meant. Those were times of wonderful mountain-top experiences, and I came to honor the Holy Spirit and seek his power for the overcoming of sin in a new way. But Christ still remained, as before, distant, afar off, and I longed increasingly to know—to find him. Although I had much more power over besetting sins, yet there were times of great darkness and defeat.

It was during one of these latter times that we were forced to return to Canada, in June of 1916. My husband's health prevented him from public speaking, and it seemed that this duty for us both was to fall on me. But I dreaded facing the Home Church without some spiritual uplift—a fresh vision for myself. The Lord saw this heart-hunger, and in his own glorious way he fulfilled literally the promise, "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Psa. 107: 9, . V.)

A spiritual conference was to be held the latter part of June at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, and to this I was led. One day I went to the meeting rather against my inclination, for it was so lovely under the trees by the beautiful lake. The speaker was a stranger to me, but from almost the first his message gripped me. Victory over Sin! Why, this was what I had fought for, had hungered for, all my life! Was it possible?

The speaker went on to describe very simply an ordinary Christian life experience—sometimes on the mountain top, with visions of God; then again would come again the sagging, and dimming of vision, coldness, discouragement, and perhaps definite disobedience and a time of down-grade experience. Then perhaps a sorrow, or even some special mercy, would bring the wanderer back to his Lord.

The speaker asked for all those who felt this to be a picture of their experience to raise the hand. I was sitting in the front seat, and shame only kept me from raising my hand at once. But I did so want to get all God had for me, and I determined to be true; and after a struggle I raised my hand. Wondering if others were like myself I ventured to glance back and saw many hands were raised, though the audience was composed almost entirely of Christian workers, ministers and missionaries.

The leader then went on to say that life which he had described was not the life God had planned or wished for His children. He described the higher life of peace, rest in the Lord, of power and freedom from struggle, work, care. As I listened I could scarcely believe it could be true, yet my whole soul was moved so

that it was with the greatest difficulty I could control my emotion. I saw then, though dimly, that I was nearing the goal for which I had been aiming all my life. I saw the possibility of Victory.

Early the next morning, soon after day-break, I went over on my knees carefully and prayerfully all the passages on the Victorious Life that were given in a little yellow leaflet that the speaker had distributed. What a comfort and strength it was to see how clear God's Word was that Victory, not Defeat, was his will for his children, and to see what wonderful provision he had made! Later, during the days that followed, clearer light came. I did what I was asked to do—I quietly but definitely accepted Christ as my Saviour from the power of sin as I had so long before accepted him as my Saviour from the deadly penalty of sin. And on this I rested.

I left Niagara, realizing, however, there was still something I had not got. I felt much as the blind man must have felt when he said, "I see men as trees, walking" (A. V.) I had begun to see light, but dimly.

The day after reaching home I picked up a little booklet, "The Life that Wins," which I had not read before, and going to my son's bedside I told him it was the personal testimony of one whom God had used to bring great blessing into my life. I then read it aloud till I came to the words, "At last I realized that Jesus Christ was actually and literally within me." I stopped amazed. The sun seemed suddenly to come from under a cloud and flood my whole soul with light. How blind I had been! I saw at last the secret of Victory—it was simply Jesus Christ Himself—his own life lived out in the believer. But the thought of victory was for the moment lost sight of in the inexpressible joy of realizing Christ's Indwelling Presence! Like a tired, worn-out wanderer finding home at last I just rested in Him. Rested in His love—in Himself. And, oh, the peace and joy that came flooding my life! A restfulness and quietness of spirit I never thought could be mine took possession of me so naturally. Literally a new life began for me, or rather in me. It was just "the Life that is Christ."

The first step I took in this new life was to get standing on God's own Word, and not merely on man's teaching or even on a personal experience. And as I studied especially the truth of Christ's indwelling, victory over sin, and God's bountiful provision, the Word was fairly illumined with new light.

The year that has passed has been one of blessed fellowship with Christ and of joy in his service. A friend asked me not long ago if I could give in a sentence the after result in my life of what I said had come to me a year ago, and I replied, "Yes, it can be all summed up in one word: Resting."

Some have asked, "But have you never sinned?" Yes, I grieve to say I have. Sin is the one thing I abhor—for it is the one thing that can, if unrepented of, separate us, not from Christ, but from the consciousness of his presence. But I have

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