

A Witness of the Power of God

By Florence Crawford



I was brought up in a home of unbelief. I never knew what it was to hear my mother pray and I never laid my hand on a Bible until I was a grown woman, but God looked down into my heart and saw that I wanted something real.

One night as I was dancing in a ballroom I heard a voice speak out of Heaven and say "Daughter, give Me thine heart." I did not know it was the voice of God so I went on dancing. Again the voice spoke. It seemed my feet became heavy and the place was no longer beautiful to me. Again the voice spoke much louder, " Daughter, give Me thine heart!" The music died away and I left the ballroom; and for three days and nights I prayed and wept, wrestling against the powers of atheism and darkness. The enemy would tell me there was no God, and that the Bible was a myth. I could hardly eat or sleep, and it seemed there was no hope for me, but I thought: Why did God speak out of Heaven if there were no hope?

At last I remembered a woman I knew was a Christian, and I went to her home. When she opened the door and looked at my face she said, "You want God." I said, "I want Him more than anything else in the world." Right there I fell on my knees, and as she prayed for me, God came into my heart.

Oh, the rest, the peace, the quietness that flooded my soul was wonderful! As I wept for joy, I said, "I must go and tell the others." I went to the home where some friends were waiting for me to join them in a card game. They had cards on the table and were ready to play; but I told them, "No cards for me; I have found Jesus!" They saw the light of another world on my face, and the cards were put away.

What a change God made in my heart! Everything I had loved that was of the world was taken out of my heart; but, oh! how I loved lost souls. Often I wept as I saw those who looked sad, and many times I would stop and tell them the story of Jesus.

When I heard that God could sanctify wholly, I sought that experience. For years I went from place to place where they taught sanctification, willing to kneel at any altar, no matter how humble, if only I could find satisfaction for my hungry soul. When evangelists came to the city, I found a way to get a private interview with them, if possible, and told of my hunger. When they heard how earnestly I had sought and consecrated my life, they would say, "You are sanctified," but I knew I was not. There was a hunger, a craving, a thirst in my heart. While I was living a consecrated life, the fire had not yet fallen on the sacrifice.

How I thank God that when I heard of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, He led me to a little mission. It was not a fine hall, but just an old barn-like building with an old board laid on two chairs for an altar. The floor was carpeted with sawdust; the walls and beams blackened by smoke. I looked around to see if anybody saw me go in, but I would not have cared if the whole world saw me go out. I had found a people who had the experience I wanted. The first "Hallelujah" I heard echoed down in my soul. When I went out of there that day, the only thing I wondered was: Can I ever get it?

From Monday till Friday I sought God and read my Bible at every possible moment between my duties. That Friday afternoon at the mission, the preacher stopped and said, "Somebody in this place wants something from God." I pushed the chairs away in front of me and fell at the altar, and there the fire fell and God sanctified me.

Three days later, a great hunger seized me for the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. God showed me that my heart was clean, and that the Holy Ghost could come only on clean vessels. I consecrated again, deeper and deeper, and sought for the power to tell the world what great things God had done for me. I sought till the following Friday.

As I sat in my chair in the mission, the Holy Ghost fell from Heaven and a rushing mighty wind filled the room. My tongue that had never spoken a word but English began to magnify and praise God in Chinese. The power of God shook my being, and rivers of joy and divine love flooded my soul. It was wonderful, but the greatest joy to my heart was that I had received the power to witness to lost souls so they could find Jesus.

I had many afflictions on my body, but I never once thought of praying for the healing of my body until God baptized me with the Holy Ghost and fire. I had worn glasses for years. Three attacks of spinal meningitis early in my life had left my head and eyes so affected that I could not leave the glasses off. I went to the mission that afternoon and told what wonderful things the Lord had done for me. As I had them pray; the healing power of the Son of God flowed through my eyes, and my eyes were perfect.

I had lung trouble for years and had to live in southern California for my health, but God healed me of that. I was thin, diseased, broken down in every part of my body, but when I had paid the full price and in simple, childlike faith prayed that I might get my health back again and be a witness for Him in this world, the healing streams began to flow.

As I lay on my bed at night I would open my soul to God, and every avenue of my life to the heavenly streams that seemed to flow through every fiber of my being. And when I would awake, I would renew my consecration, and tell God He knew my heart and knew that my life was in His hands; that all I had or ever expected to have was at His disposal. Everything that I had given Him in all the deep consecrations that He required of me when I was seeking my sanctification and baptism, was all on the altar and was His, and what He gave me was not mine but only lent to me; it was His.

When a girl, I had been thrown from a carriage onto a jagged stump, and for some time had been at the point of death as a result of that accident. Later in life I had to wear a brace with straps and a metal plate because of that early injury, and I had not walked for eleven years without that brace. One night the prayer of faith was prayed for me, and God instantly healed me. I walked twenty-three blocks that night and had no pain. From that day to this, I have never had a tinge of pain from that problem.

The healing of my body was complete. An internal trouble the doctors said could not be cured without an operation was perfectly healed. Once diseased from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, I was made sound and well through the Blood of Jesus. The Christ of Calvary touched my body and made me whole. Oh, how I praise Him! How I worship Him for His great love to me!

Florence Crawford was the founder of the Apostolic Faith work with headquarters in Portland, Oregon. After being saved and then receiving her sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost in the Azusa Street revival at the turn of the century, she became an undaunted leader whose message and ministry reached hearts and lives the world over. She led the Apostolic Faith work from 1907 until her passing on June 20, 1936.