

My Conversion, an Autobiographical Sketch of Ellen G. White

Joyful in Christ

It seemed to me that everyone must be at peace with God and animated by His Spirit. Everything that my eyes rested upon seemed to have undergone a change. The trees were more beautiful, and the birds sang more sweetly than ever before; they seemed to be praising the Creator in their songs. I did not care to talk, for fear this happiness might pass away, and I should lose the precious evidence of Jesus' love for me.

As we neared our home in Portland, we passed men at work upon the street. They were conversing with one another upon ordinary topics, but my ears were deaf to everything but the praise of God, and their words came to me as grateful thanks and glad hosannas. Turning to my mother, I said: "Why, these men are all praising God, and *they* haven't been to the camp meeting." I did not then understand why the tears gathered in my mother's eyes, and a tender smile lit up her face, as she listened to my simple words that recalled a similar experience of her own.

My mother was a lover of flowers and took much pleasure in cultivating them and thus making her home attractive and pleasant for her children. But our garden had never before looked so lovely to me as upon the day of our return. I recognized an expression of the love of Jesus in every shrub, bud, and flower. These things of beauty seemed to speak in mute language of the love of God.

There was a beautiful pink flower in the garden called the rose of Sharon. I remember approaching it and touching the delicate petals reverently; they seemed to possess a sacredness in my eyes. My heart overflowed with tenderness and love for these beautiful creations of God. I could see divine perfection in the flowers that adorned the earth. God tended them, and His all-seeing eye was upon them. He had made them and called them good.

"Ah," thought I, "if He so loves and cares for the flowers that He has decked with beauty, how much more tenderly will He guard the children who are formed in His image." I repeated softly to myself: "I am a child of God; His loving care is around me. I will be obedient and in no way displease Him but will praise His dear name and love Him always."

My life appeared to me in a different light. The affliction that had darkened my childhood seemed to have been dealt me in mercy for my good, to turn my heart away from the world and its unsatisfying pleasures and incline it toward the enduring attractions of heaven.



The Rose of Sharon—*Norman Wals*

Baptism

Soon after our return from the camp meeting, I, with several others, was taken into the church on probation. My mind was very much exercised on the subject of baptism. Young as I was, I could see but one mode of baptism authorized by the Scriptures, and that was immersion. Some of my Methodist sisters tried in vain to convince me that sprinkling was Bible baptism. The Methodist minister consented to immerse the candidates if they conscientiously preferred that method, although he intimated that sprinkling would be equally acceptable with God.

Finally, the time was appointed for us to receive this solemn ordinance. It was a windy day when we, twelve in number, went down into the sea to be baptized. The waves ran high and dashed upon the shore; but as I took up this heavy cross, my peace was like a river. When I arose from the water, my strength was nearly gone, for the power of the Lord rested upon me. I felt that henceforth I was not of this world but had risen from the watery grave into a newness of life.

The same day in the afternoon I was received into the church in full membership.