

Married to Thee

by Phoebe Palmer

Phoebe Palmer encourages listeners to enter into a covenant with God, surrendering their hearts and lives to Him, and committing to a lifelong relationship with Christ.

Scripture: Psalm 37:4, Psalm 89:34, Isaiah 43:25, Jeremiah 32:40, Mark 6:56

Topics: "Spiritual Marriage", "Christian Devotion"

Description

Phoebe Palmer preaches about the importance of entering into a perpetual covenant with God, using the analogy of a marriage ceremony to illustrate the depth of commitment and love required. She emphasizes the need for believers to surrender their whole being to Christ, entering into an eternal union with Him, and allowing their affections and interests to be centered on Him alone. Palmer encourages listeners to consider the blessedness of an enduring relationship with Jesus, highlighting the beauty of being captivated by His infinite love and loveliness.

Transcript

Covenant with God Contemplated

"Come and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." -- Jer. i. 5

It is said of the beloved Summerfield, that on one occasion, before a large audience, he announced a marriage ceremony about to be performed. The excited assembly, almost breathless suspense, waited the introduction of the parties concerned, when the devoted one announced himself as one of the parties, and observed, in a manner as solemn as eternity, that he was now about to be united in marriage covenant. He then, with a solemnity never to be forgotten, brought himself under bonds of eternal allegiance GO Christ; to take Him as the bridegroom of his soul, the only and supreme object of his heart's adoration; and to have all his interests for time and for eternity in prominent, entire and perpetual oneness with Christ.

"I have made a covenant with my chosen," says the High and Holy One to His servant David. And now, precious lover of Jesus, thy Saviour only waits for thy well-considered decision, and an avowal of perpetual and all-absorbing love on thy part, as preparatory to entering into covenant with thee. He is even now waiting for an entire surrender of thy whole being to Him, for an explicit avowal of thy purposes, in order to verify before all the hierarchy of His vast dominions the explicit declaration on His part, "I am married to Thee."

You may say, "I am fearful of thus solemnly engaging myself, lest in an unguarded moment, I should violate my pledge; and is it not better to remain unpledged than to vow and not perform?" Can you conceive yourself so won with the loveliness of a fellow being as to venture in marriage covenant, without fearful forebodings of inconstancy? Were I, on this principle, to dissuade you from entering into the solemnities of the marriage contract with one worthy of your love, would you not reproachfully repel the suggestion, with the persuasion that I had but little knowledge of the strength of your affection, or the exceeding amiability of your friend? Would you not rather contemplate the blessedness of an enduring relationship, in confident expectation that a ripper knowledge would but heighten your estimation, and increase the ardor of your love?

And now can you not, in expectation of corresponding results, contemplate an ever-during union with the Altogether Lovely? If thus taken into entire oneness in interest and design with Christ, may you not conclude that, looking upon Him, your mind will become absorbed in the contemplation of His infinite and ineffable attractions, and your spirit so captivated with new and ceaseless revelations of loveliness daily, that you will evermore be enabled to testify to the glory of your Saviour?:

"His loveliness my soul has prepossess'd, And left no room for any other guest."

"But may I not in affection and interest be as truly in oneness with the Saviour without taking upon me the responsibilities of a solemn covenant engagement?" On the same principle as in the alliance before referred to, I say No! You unhesitatingly concede that you would not wish to be left in this state of indefiniteness and irresponsibility relative to a union with one to whom your earthly affections were devoted; and do you not need the same restraints in order to have your affections centered on the Saviour with permanency and definiteness, and beyond the reach of casualty?

Will you not now contemplate the blessedness of an avowed and eternal union with Jesus, and take upon yourself, through His grace, the responsibilities of an everlasting covenant, to be wholly His for time and for eternity? I do not ask that you assume the infinitely important obligations implied, without the most careful circumspection. Let it not be other than "a covenant in all things ordered and sure;" so that in future your heart may not be tempted to say, "This and the other sacrifice were not contemplated." But why do we thus imagine, when it is to the embrace of infinite love, wisdom, and power, that the surrender is made? Can you anticipate requirements with which your spirit would hesitate to comply?

Rather do you say, "Can it be that my condescending Lord will deign to enter into covenant with one so unworthy? May I, after permitting the eye of my mind to rest on other objects which have in part usurped the place where my Saviour only should have stood, presume that He will look favorably upon me? Will He not chidingly reprove, if now I venture to lay hold upon His strength to make covenant with Him? Other gods have had dominion over me, and has He not declared Himself a jealous God?" True; but He also says, "I, even I, am He that blot out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isaiah xliii. 25). Come, then, this moment with decisive feeling and action. He has promised not only to forgive, but to love you freely.

Surrender that heart in perpetual keeping to Him, and by the infinite virtue there is even in the touch (Mark vi. 56) of Jesus, the defilement of sin is taken away. Resting in His embrace, the hidden springs of the heart are so turned, that the tide of its affections flows out to Him, and through Him upon such objects only as His own compassionate heart would love and cherish. Thus alone can you be brought to love just what God loves; and by this process only can you, in heart and action, be brought to fall in spontaneously with

all His designs, so that your interests will all be united with the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom.

If you ever thus take Christ as the Bridegroom of your soul, the decisive hour must arrive for the consummation of that union. It has only been delayed for want of an entire acquiescence on your part. The Heavenly Bridegroom even now is waiting with glorious attendants from the upper world to hear your decision, to bring on the consummation, and to ratify and record on the pages of eternity the infinitely responsible act. He now presents the terms of the covenant, and invites you in His strength to lay hold upon it. Will you keep Him longer waiting, and subject yourself to the fearful probability of His taking a final departure? or will you signalize this eventful, solemn hour on the annals of eternity, as the specific period when you subscribed your name to a covenant which brought you under obligations never to be annulled, to a perpetual surrender of your being to Him?

"Oh, happy day that fix'd my choice On Thee, my Saviour and my God! Well may this glowing heart rejoice, And tell its raptures all abroad."

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