

The Disappointment

by Phoebe Palmer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of making a conscious decision to live a life that is separate from the world and the consequences of delaying that decision.

Scripture: Matthew 7:21, Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 6:17, James 1:22

Topics: "Genuine Faith", "True Devotion"

Description

Phoebe Palmer preaches about the danger of outward conformity to the world while lacking true devotion to God, using the story of a friend who held liberal views on religious appearance but faced a terrifying end. Despite her friend's peaceful facade, her true inner turmoil was revealed at the moment of death, emphasizing the importance of genuine faith and surrender to God before it's too late.

Transcript

"And ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us." -- Saviour

E____ had a friend who did not believe that the injunctions, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate," "Be not conformed to this world," and kindred passages, have anything to do with the external appearance of the Christian. She was united in church-fellowship with a denomination which does not recognize these things as important; and she had been heard to speak contemptuously of those contracted views that would induce one, in coming out in a religious profession, to make such a change in external appearance and habits, as to excite observation.

We should be far from favoring an intimation that E____'s friend was hypocritical; she was only what would be termed "a liberal-minded professor;" and was not more insincere than are thousands who stand on what would be termed "an ordinary eminence in religious profession."

The wasting consumption gradually preyed upon the vitals of this friend, and E____, who lives in a distant city, went to see her. E____ though not at the time so fully devoted herself as she might have been was concerned to find her friend as much engaged with the vanities of the world, and as much interested about conforming to its customs, as ever; and she ventured to say, "I did not suppose you would think so much about these things now."

Her friend felt somewhat indignant at the remark, and observed, "I do not know that I am more conformed to the world than yourself: the denomination to which you belong regards these things as wrong; but our

people do not think religion has anything to do with these little matters."

The hand of withering disease continued relentlessly laid on E____'s friend; and as she drew nearer eternity her blissful hopes of immortality and eternal life seemed to gather yet greater brightness. Again and yet again her friends gathered around her dying couch, to hear her glowing expressions, and to witness her peaceful departure. Such was her composure, that she desired her shroud might be in readiness; so that she might, before the mirror, behold her body arrayed for its peaceful resting-place.

Her friend E____ was forced to leave for the city a day or two before her dissolution, and called to take her final farewell. "We shall not meet again on earth," said the dying one; "but doubtless we shall meet in Heaven. On my own part, I have no more doubt than if I were already there; and I cannot but hope that you will be faithful unto death. We shall then meet." They then bade each other a last adieu.

The moment at last came when death was permitted to do his fearful work. The devoted friends had again gathered around the bed of the dying fair one, to witness her peaceful exit. Respiration grew shorter and shorter, and at last ceased; and they deemed the spirit already in the embrace of blissful messengers, who were winging it to paradise. A fearful shriek! and in a moment they beheld her that they had looked upon as the departed, sitting upright before them, with every feature distorted.

Horror and disappointment had transformed that placid countenance; so that it exhibited an expression indescribably fiendish. "I can't die!" vociferated the terrified disappointed one. "I won't die!" At that moment the door opened, and her Minister entered. "Out of the door, thou deceiver of men!" she again vociferated; fell back and was no more!

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