

# A Continuation of Advantages, by a Reference to the Example of Those Who Have Lived Holy Lives

by Phoebe Palmer

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of examples in the Christian life, highlighting the lives of those who have lived holy lives and professed their faith, and encouraging others to follow their example.*

**Scripture:** Daniel 12:3, John 15:5, 1 Corinthians 10:11, Philippians 3:14, Hebrews 12:1

**Topics:** "Christian Testimony", "Holiness Movement"

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## Description

Phoebe Palmer preaches about the importance of looking to the examples of those who, despite facing trials and challenges, have lived a life of faith and obedience, ultimately shining as bright lights for God. She highlights the lives of various individuals, such as Hester Ann Rogers, the Wesleys, Lady Maxwell, and others, who have left a lasting impact through their pursuit of holiness and dedication to God. Their testimonies serve as beacons of inspiration for believers, encouraging them to seek after God's righteousness and to turn many to righteousness, just as these exemplary individuals did.

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## Transcript

As a great portion of the Holy Bible is historical, and by this provision of Divine wisdom in the economy of grace matters of experience are brought to assume a tangibility in the mind that could not otherwise be attained, no objection can therefore with plausibility be urged against the propriety of directing attention to the example of those who, with no unusual advantages of intellect, or other capabilities, have witnessed a good confession. Many who have lived among us, of like passions with ourselves, exposed, from outward circumstances, to the same temptations, have finished their course with joy, and have gone to receive the reward of the righteous, and are now beyond being influenced by the praise or censure of men.

Let us trace out the example of one familiarly known to our reader; one who perhaps, from outward circumstances of persecution, privation, debility of body, domestic cares, etc., was placed in circumstances of peculiar trial, yet was at last gathered home as a ripe shock, in the midst of life and usefulness. Shall we, that the most feeble, and those placed in the most disadvantageous circumstances, may not be discouraged, select such a one from the galaxy of burning and shining lights by which she is surrounded? Look, then, at Hester Ann Rogers; how truly, with respect to privation, toil, and bodily sufferings, was she as one with thousands who think, from the unfavorable circumstances in which they

are placed, they can do but little. In order to gain a more thorough knowledge of the principle that propelled her onward in her shining path upward, let us take a glance at the manner of her first setting out in her Christian course, and trace her luminous example.

When in the midst of gay fashionable society, though not led by religious associates, or ministrations of the Clergy, to see the necessity of coming out and being separate from the world, the Spirit assured her, notwithstanding the gaiety of professing Christians by whom she was surrounded, that it was her duty to obey these requirements. At once she obeyed the injunction, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God;" she ran home, and ripped up all those things that might, through the medium of the eye, tempt the heart to mingle again with those gay associations. The Lord received her as a member of the "household of faith." Persecution raged abroad, and the charge of "carrying matters too far" ran from circle to circle. At home, where she might have been at ease, she submitted to take the place of a menial, for Christ's sake. Yet, though going on from strength to strength from the time that she received the Spirit of adoption, still she felt that there were roots of bitterness not yet destroyed; and, as may be observed most evidently, by referring to her diary, through the Spirit's urging, she most decidedly fixed her aspiring eye as resolutely on the prize of holiness as she had before done on adoption. After an earnest struggle, the direct witness of holiness was given, clear as the sun shining in his strength. This gave permanency to that energy of action which had characterized her former course, and a still deeper and more thorough vitality to all the spiritual energies of the soul. From this time her confidence was -

"Firm as an iron pillar strong, Impregnable to earth and hell."

Those who read the record of her daily walk, as she was accomplishing her pilgrimage on earth, tell us that her path was most eminently that of the just, "that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Hundreds, as Dr. Coke tells us, were presumed to have been brought into the Society through her instrumentality during her life, and numbers also were brought into the enjoyment of perfect love through her example, prayers, and writings. But though she passed through earth as one of the Lord's "peculiar people," and, through the power of the Spirit, was indeed eminently successful in turning many to righteousness, yet how greatly, beyond comparison, has the amount of good been augmented since she ceased to exist among men!

What a blessed illustration does her history furnish of the text, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever!" Ever since she accomplished her mission on earth, the eyes of hundreds have been fixed upon her as a star of the first magnitude. Hundreds, doubtless, in each generation that has lived since her dismissal from earth, have been animated by her example to obey the voice of the Spirit saying to them, "Go, and do likewise."

Look also at the blessed Wesleys, whom God "thrust out to raise a holy people"; and the heavenly-minded Fletcher, who lived in the atmosphere of holy love, and whose breathings have passed down with a sweet, hallowing perfume, through each succeeding generation, and are even now, at this remote period, mingling with our associations, inclining, by their persuasive influence, to a holy life. And then there is Mrs. Fletcher, the early devoted Miss Bosanquet, the mother in Israel. And then the lowly disciple that sank down to the unutterable depths of humble, holy love, Lady Maxwell; the "elect lady," where, in the order of God, titled honors, wealth, loveliness of person, dignity of carriage, were combined and brought to bear on one point, "holiness to the Lord." And still, as by a heavenly attraction, the eye passes on to yet another, and another, in this glorious constellation. Behold the zealous Nelson! The devoted Bramwell, who, like

his Master, spent whole nights in prayer, carrying about with him the flame of holiness wherever he went! The flaming herald, mighty in prayer, "instant in season and out of season," John Smith! And yet another, the simple-hearted, unassuming, meteor-like Ann Cutler! And still another, whose redeemed, purified spirit but a short time since returned to the God that gave it, the holy, persevering Carvosso, strong in faith, mighty in effort, serving his generation by every possible endeavor, according to the will of God! Time would fail us to tell of the many luminaries, for ever enshrined in memory -- Asbury, George, McKendree, Fisk, J. B. Taylor, Abbott, etc. -- who were all witnesses for God of this blessed state of grace, and died in the faith.

It is indeed easy to imagine the process that the gracious Spirit takes to stamp the eternal truth with power on the heart, "that the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance," with such examples before us as we are now beholding. And Oh! it is not a heartless remembrance, but a spirit-stirring power, imparting energy to the soul, a lively remembrance, inciting to corresponding action.

Thousands have already been arrested in their course of cold-hearted profession, by the burning zeal of those whose names have been enumerated, as forming, with others, a constellation which the eye delights to rest upon, the heart to contemplate, and the spirit to imitate. And after the heart has indeed been made better, through these attractive influences, how can it be otherwise than that they should for ever be enshrined "as stars in memory?" Yes! for ever and ever! We gaze and adore the power that made them shine!

God secures all the glory to Himself, in that man that truly enjoys the witness of holiness. O, how deeply is that lesson engraven, "Without Me ye can do nothing!" and when he beholds the power of grace, either in himself or in others, he gives GOD ALL THE GLORY.

And now, what an important advantage has been gained to succeeding generations, by those whose names we have mentioned professing to enjoy the witness of holiness! Not infrequently we hear it said, "I do not know but that I enjoy the blessing of holiness, but I have never professed it." And in allusion to others we hear it said, "I should certainly suppose this and that individual to be living in the enjoyment of holiness, but I never heard them profess it." Could the same have been said of the individuals whose names we have enumerated, where would have been the numbers who have believed through their conjoined and individual testimony?

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