

## Articles and Sermons :: The hypocrite's hope shall perish ~ Gurnall

**The hypocrite's hope shall perish ~ Gurnall - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2009/10/20 14:15**

"The hypocrite's hope shall perish." — Job 8: 13.

SUCH a generation there ever was and shall be, that mingle themselves with the saints of God; who pretend heaven, with heavenly speeches, while their hearts are lined with hypocrisy, whereby they deceive others, and most of all themselves; such may be the world's saints, but devil's in Christ's account. "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" And truly, of all devils, none so bad as the professing devil, the preaching, praying devil.

Satan can live very peaceably, as a quiet neighbour, by the door of such as will content themselves with an empty name of profession; this alters not his property. Judas's profession, he knew, did not put him a step out of his way to hell; the devil can show a man a way to damnation through duties and ordinances of God's worship. That covetous, traitorous heart which Judas carried with him to hear Christ's sermon, and preach his own, held him fast enough to the devil; and therefore he gives him line enough, liberty enough to keep his credit a while with his fellow apostles; he cares not though others think him a disciple of Christ, so he knows him to be his own slave.

The hypocrite at first blush may be taken for a saint, by such as see only his outside, as he passeth by in his holiday dress, and therefore is fitly by one called the stranger's saint, but a devil to those who know him better.

The hypocrite can show a clear tongue, and yet have a foul heart; he that made that proverb, *Loquere ut te videam*, "Speak that I may see you," did not think of the hypocrite, who will speak that you shall not see him.

He that hath a false end in his profession will soon come to the end of his profession, when he is pinched on that toe where his corn is; I mean, called to deny that his naughty heart aimed at.

Many there are that have nothing to prove themselves Christians but a naked profession, of whom we may say as they do of the cinnamon tree, that the bark is more worth than all they have besides.

Many take up their saintship upon trust, and trade in religion with the credit they have gained from others' opinion of them. They believe themselves to be Christians, because others hope them to be such; and so their great business is, by a zeal in those exercises of religion that lie outermost, to keep up the credit they have abroad, but do not look to get a stock of solid grace within; and this proves their undoing at last. They say trees shoot as much in the root underground as in the branches above, and so doth true grace. Remember what was the perishing of the seed in stony ground! it lacked root; and why so but because it was stony? Be willing the plough should go deep enough to humble thee for sin, and rend thy heart from sin.

A hypocrite never got pardon in the disguise of a saint. He will call thee by thy own name, though thou comest to Him in the semblance of a penitent: "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam," said the prophet. Hypocrisy is too thin a veil to blind the eyes of the Almighty. Thou mayest put thy own eyes out, so as not to see Him, but thou canst never blind His eyes so that He should not see thee.

Speak, O ye hypocrites! can you show one tear that ever you shed in earnest for a wrong done to God? It is a good gloss Augustine hath upon Esau's tears (Heb. 12): "He wept that he lost the blessing, not that he sold it."

Time-serving. The hypocrite sets his watch, not by the sun, the Word I mean, but by the town clock; what most do, that he will do; *vox populi* is his *vox Dei*.

Self-righteousness. Take heed uprightness proves not a snare to thee. The young man in the gospel might have been better, had he not been so good. His honesty and moral uprightness was his undoing, or rather his conceit of them. Better he had been a publican, driven to Christ in the sense of his sin, than a Pharisee, kept from Him with an opinion of his integrity. May be thou art honest and upright in thy course. Bless God for it, but take heed of blessing thyself in it: there is the danger; this is one way of being "righteous over much." There is undoing in this over-doing, as well as in any under-doing.

What men do by themselves, they do for themselves; they devour the praise of what they do. The Christian only that doth all by Christ, doth all for Christ. Many souls do not only perish, praying, repenting, and believing after a sort, but they perish by their praying and repenting, while they carnally trust in these.

Few so bad indeed but seem to like religion in the notion; but living and walking holiness bites; the pharisees can lavish out their money on the prophets' tombs; but Christ is scorned and hated. What is the mystery of this? The reason was, these prophets are off the stage and Christ is on.

False zeal. Zeal without uprightness is of no service, nay, no one will go to hell with more shame than the false-hearted zealot, who mounts up towards heaven in his fiery chariot. Be not loth to be searched; there will need then no further search to prove thee unsound; if God's officers be denied entrance, all is not right within. If thy heart is sincere, it will delight in privacy. A false heart calls others to witness his zeal for God. It is the trick of the hypocrite to strain himself to the utmost in duty, when he hath spectators, and to be careless alone.

A false heart may seem very hot in praying against one sin, but can skip over another; a hypocrite will be favourable to one lust, and violent against another; whereas a sincere Christian abhors all sin: "Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me" (Ps. 119: 133).

The hypocrite seems hot in prayer, but you will find him cold enough at work; he prays very fiercely against his sins, as if he desired them to be all slain upon the place; but doth he set himself upon the work of mortification? Doth he withdraw the fuel that feeds them?

Hypocrisy in religion springs from the bitter fruit of some carnal affection unmortified. So long as thy prey lie below, thy eye will be on the earth, when thou seemest, like an eagle, to mount in thy prayers to heaven. God is in the hypocrite's mouth, but the world is in his heart, which he expects to gain through his good reputation. . . . No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. 12: 3). A man may say the words, without any special work of the Spirit, and so may a parrot: but to say Christ is Lord believingly, with thoughts and affections comporting with the greatness and sweetness thereof, requires the Spirit of God to be in his heart.

Knowledge without grace. An orthodox judgment with an unholy heart and ungodly life is as uncomely as a man's head would be on a beast's shoulders. That man hath little cause to boast that what he holds is truth, if what he doth be wicked.

Knowledge may make thee a scholar, but not a saint; orthodox, but not gracious. He that increaseth in knowledge, and doth not get grace with his knowledge, increaseth sorrow to himself, yea, eternal sorrow. It would be an ease to gospel sinners in hell, if they could erase the remembrance of the gospel out of their memories.

He that can venture on the appearance of evil under pretence of liberty, may, for ought I know, commit that which is more grossly evil, under some appearance of good; it is not hard, if a man will be at the cost, to put a good colour on rotten stuff and practice also. . . . It is possible a man may have a rotten body under a gaudy suit; and under fine language, a poor ragged conscience. Who had not rather be sincere with mean gifts, than rotten-hearted with great parts?

Hypocrisy exposed. The Christian, like a star in the heavens, wades through the cloud, that for a time hides his comfort; but the hypocrite, like a meteor in the air, blazeth a little, and then drops into some ditch or other, where it is quenched. "The light of the righteous rejoiceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out" (Prov. 13: 9.).

Sincerity enables the Christian to do two things in affliction which the hypocrite cannot— to speak good of God, and to expect good from God.

"Will he always call upon God?" (Job 27: 10). The hypocrite is often exposed here. An unsound heart will be meddling with prayer now and then, but grows weary of the work at last, especially if he be made to wait long for an answer. Saul prayed to God, and because he hears not from Him, goes at last to seek the devil.

One spot occasions the whole garment to be washed. David overcome with one sin, renews his repentance for all (Ps. 51). A good husband, when he seeth it raining at one place, sends for the workmen to look over all the house. This indeed, differenceth a sincere heart from an hypocrite, whose repentance is partial, soft in one plot and hard in another. Judas cries out of his treason, but not a word of his thievery and hypocrisy. The hole was no wider in his conscience than where the bullet went in; whereas true sorrow for one, breaks the heart into shivers for others also.

If profession would serve the turn, and flocking after sermons with some seeming joy at the word were enough to save, heaven would soon be full: but as you love your souls, do not try yourselves by this coarse sieve; that is, seek by an easy profession, and cheap religion, such as is hearing the word, performance of duties and the like; of this kind there are many that will come and walk about heaven's door, willing enough to enter, if they may do it without ruffling their pride in a crowd, or hazarding their present carnal interest by any contest and scuffle. Take Christians under the notion of "seekers," and, by Christ's own words, there are many; but consider them under the notion of "strivers," such as stand ready should with a holy resolution, to strive even to blood, if such trials meet them in the way to heaven, rather than not enter, and then the number of Christian soldiers will shrink, like Gideon's goodly host, to a little troop.

In this old age of England's withered profession, how great a rarity is a sincere convert! When we see a tree that used to stand thick with fruit, now bring forth but little, maybe an apple on this bough, and another on that, we look upon it as a dying tree. Those golden days of the gospel are over, when converts came flying as a cloud, as the doves to the window in flocks. Now gospel news grows stale, few are taken with it. Our old store of saints, the treasure of their times, wears away apace; what will become of us, if no new ones come in their room? Alas! when our burials are more than our births, we must needs be on the losing hand. There is a sad list of holy names taken away from us; but where are they which are born to God? If the good go, and those which are left continue bad, yea, become worse and worse, we have reason to fear that God is clearing the ground, and making way for a judgment.

None sink so far into hell as those that come nearest heaven, because they fall from the greatest height. None will have such a sad parting from Christ as those who went half way with Him, and then left Him.

**Re: The hypocrite's hope shall perish ~ Gurnall - posted by StarofG0D (), on: 2011/1/13 9:35**

bumping.