

# TOUCHSTONE OF SINCERITY

THOMAS BROOKS

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# Touchstone of Sincerity

by Thomas Brooks (1608 - 1680)

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## Introduction

The first great work which men are to attend to in this world—is the eternal safety and security of their souls. Their next great work is to *know*, to be *assured*—that it shall go well with their souls forever.

A man may have grace—and yet, for a time, not know it; he may have a saving work of God upon his soul—and yet not discern it; he may have the root of the matter in him—and yet not be able to evidence it.

Many, whose graces are weak and much buried under fears, doubts, strong passions, prevailing corruptions, or diabolic suggestions—are inclined to suspect their weak grace, fearing that on account of the deceitfulness of their hearts they will be found to be insincere before God; but the weakest Christian may turn to the clear and well-bottomed evidences in this treatise, and throw the gauntlet to Satan and bid him prove if he can, that ever any profane person, any self-flatterer, any cunning hypocrite had such evidences, or such fair certificates to show for heaven as he has to show.

Several have observed how far a hypocrite may go; but my design in this treatise is to show how far a hypocrite can not go. Some have showed what a hypocrite is, and I shall now show what he is not. Some have showed the several rounds in Jacob's ladder that a hypocrite may climb up to—but my business and work in this treatise is to show you the several rounds in Jacob's ladder that no hypocrite under heaven can climb up to.

## **1. A hypocrite's inside is never answerable to his outside.**

A hypocrite's inside is one thing, and his outside another thing; a hypocrite is outwardly clean—but inwardly unclean; he is outwardly glorious—but inwardly inglorious. Hypocrites are like apothecaries' gally-pots, having without the title of some excellent preservative—but within they are full of some deadly poison. They are like the Egyptian temples, which were beautiful without—but within there was nothing to be found but serpents and crocodiles, and other venomous creatures.

Hypocrites trade more for a good name, than for a good heart; for a good report, than for a good conscience; they are like fiddlers, more careful in tuning their instruments than in watching their spirits. Hypocrites are like white silver—but they draw black lines; they have a seeming sanctified outside—but stuffed within with malice, worldliness, pride, envy, etc. Like window cushions, made up of velvet and richly embroidered—but stuffed within with hay. A hypocrite may offer sacrifice with Cain, and fast with Jezebel, and humble himself with Ahab, and lament with the tears of Esau, and

kiss Christ with Judas, and follow Christ with Demas, and appear committed with Simon Magus; and yet for all this his inside is as bad as any of theirs.

A hypocrite is a Jacob without and an Esau within; a David without and a Saul within; a Peter without and a Judas within; a saint without and a Satan within; an angel without and a devil within. A hypocrite is a Jew outwardly—but an atheist, a pagan, a Turk inwardly. I have read of certain images, which on the outside were covered with gold and pearl, resembling Jupiter and Neptune—but within were nothing but spiders and cobwebs; a fit resemblance of hypocrites.

That monk hit it, who said, 'To be a monk in outward show was easy—but to be a monk in inward reality was hard.' To be a Christian in outward show is easy—but to be a Christian inwardly and really is very hard. A hypocrite's inside never echoes or answers to his outside; his inside is wicked, and his outside is religious. But let all such hypocrites know, that pretend sanctity is double iniquity, and accordingly at last they shall be dealt with.

## **2. No hypocrite is totally divorced from the love and liking of every known sin.**

There is still some secret lust or other, which as a sweet morsel he rolls under his tongue, and will not spit it out. Every hypocrite tolerates some evil or other in himself, and takes liberty to transgress. A hypocrite will do hard work to daub up his conscience, and to secure himself from the checks thereof. After once the bag was committed to Judas' custody, after once he was chosen into that

sweet office, he quickly put conscience out of office, and never left stealing and licking his fingers, while there was any money in his bag to finger.

Herod knew much, and heard John the Baptist, and had some temporary affections, and did many good things. But yet he kept Herodias his brother's wife, he took away the life of John the Baptist, he sets Jesus Christ at naught, and rejected him. As fair as Herod seemed to behave, yet he lived in a known notorious sin, and unjustly murdered the messenger of God, and mocked and rejected Jesus Christ as a vile person. Some sin or other always reigns without control in a hypocritical heart.

A hypocrite always reserves one *nest-egg* or another in his heart or life, for Satan to sit and brood on. Jehu did many brave things—but yet he kept up the worship of his golden calves. Naaman promises high—but yet he is for bowing in the house of Rimmon. The pharisees were very devout—but yet they loved the praises of men, and the uppermost seats in the synagogues. *There is never a hypocrite in the world—but will do what he can to save the life of his sin, though it be with the loss of his soul.*

O sirs! Satan is contented that hypocrites should yield to God in *many* things, provided they will be but true to him in some *one* thing; for he very well knows that one sin lived in and allowed, gives him as much advantage against the soul as more. Satan can hold a man fast enough by one sin, as the fowler can hold the bird fast enough by one claw. Satan knows that one sin lived in and allowed, will mar all a man's sweetest duties and services; as one dead fly will mar the whole box of precious ointment, and as one jarring string will bring the sweetest music out of tune.

It is said of Naaman the Syrian, that he was a valiant man, and a victorious man, and an honorable man, and a great favorite with his prince—but a leper. So it may be said of many hypocrites, they have such and such excellencies, and they perform such and such glorious duties—but they live and allow themselves in this or that sin, and that mars the beauty of all their services. Satan knows that one sin lived in and allowed, will as certainly damn a man as many sins; as one disease, one ulcerous part, may as certainly kill a man as many diseases. Satan knows that one sin lived in and allowed, will render a man as unclean in the eye of God, as many sins. If the leper in the law had the *spot* of leprosy in any one part of his body, he was accounted a leper, although all the rest of his body were sound and whole. So he who has the *spot* of the leprosy of sin allowed in any one part of his soul, he is a spiritual leper in the eye of God; he is unclean, though in other parts he may not be unclean.

Satan knows that *one* sin lived in and allowed, will as effectually keep Christ and the soul asunder as many, as one stone in the pipe will as effectually keep out the water as many. Satan knows that one sin lived in and allowed, will make way for many, as one thief can open the door to let in many more. Satan knows, that one sin lived in and allowed, will as certainly shut the soul out of heaven as many. One enemy may shut the door upon a man as well as many; and what difference is there between that man that is shut out of heaven for living in many sins, and he who is shut out of heaven for living but in one sin? One sin lived in and allowed, will arm conscience against a man, as well as many. If there be but one crack in the honey glass, there the wasps will be buzzing. One sin allowed and countenanced, will spoil the music of conscience. One sin lived in and allowed, will make death as terrible and as formidable to the soul as many.



Now, all this Satan knows, and therefore he labors mightily to engage hypocrites to live in the allowance of some one sin. O sirs! remember that as one hole in a ship will sink it, and as one stab at the heart will kill a man, and as one glass of poison will poison a man, and as one act of treason will make a man a traitor—so one sin lived in and allowed will damn a man forever. One wound strikes Goliath dead, as well as twenty-three did Caesar; one Delilah will do Samson as much mischief as all the Philistines; one vein's bleeding will let out all the vitals as well as more; one bitter herb will spoil all the pottage. One Achan was a trouble to all Israel; one Jonah was too heavy for a whole ship; so one sin lived in and allowed, is enough to make a man miserable forever. One millstone will sink a man to the bottom of the sea as well as a hundred; so *one sin lived in and indulged will sink a man to the bottom of hell as well as a hundred.*

I have read of a great Roman captain, who, as he was riding in his triumphant chariot through Rome, had his eyes never off a beautiful woman who walked along the street, which made one say, 'Behold how this great captain, who has conquered such and such armies, is himself conquered by one silly woman!' There is never a hypocrite in the world—but lies under the conquest of one base lust or another—but lives under the reign and dominion of one sin or another. That soul that can in sincerity of heart appeal to a heart-searching God, that it is otherwise with him, namely, that he does not live nor allow himself in any one sinful way or practice, that soul, I dare assure in the Lord's name, is no hypocrite.

**3. As a hypocrite's heart is never thoroughly subdued to a willingness to**

**part with every lust, so neither is his heart thoroughly subdued to a willingness to perform all known duties.**

Sometimes he is all for public duties—but makes no conscience of closet-duties, or of family-duties; sometimes he is all for the duties of the first table—but makes no conscience of the duties of the second table; and sometimes he is all for the duties of the second table—but makes no conscience of the duties of the first table. If he obeys one command, he willingly lives in the neglect of another; if he does one duty, he will be sure to cast off another; as he is not willing to fall out with every sin, so he is not willing to fall in with every duty. A hypocrite's obedience is always partial, it is never universal; he still baulks or boggles with those commands which cross his lusts.

The pharisees fasted, prayed, gave alms, and paid tithes—but they omitted "the weightier matters of the law—judgment, mercy, and faith," Matt 6; and they were unnatural to parents; and under a pretense of praying, they made a prey of widows' houses; under a pretense of piety, they exercised the greatest covetousness; unrighteousness, and cruelty, and that upon widows, who are usually the greatest objects of pity and charity; they made no bones of robbing the widow, under a pretense of honoring God. So Judas, under a pretense of laying up for the poor, robbed the poor; he pretended to lay up for the poor—but he intended only to lay up for himself, and to provide against a rainy day. It is probable that he had no great mind to stay long with his Lord, and therefore he was resolved to make the best market he could for himself. Judas being willing to set up for himself, under a cloak of holiness, he practices the greatest unfaithfulness. Though the eagle soars high, yet still her eye is upon her prey; so though Judas did soar high in profession; yet

his eye was still upon his prey, upon his bags; and so that he might have it, he cared not who went without it; so that he might be rich, he did not care though his Lord and his retinue grew ever so poor. Judas under all his shows and sanctity, had not so much as common honesty in him.

Counterfeit holiness is often made a stalking-horse to much righteousness; but certainly it were better to have honesty without religion, than to have religion without honesty. A hypocrite may exercise himself in some outward, easy, ordinary duties of religion; but when shall you see a hypocrite laying the axe to the root of the tree, or searching and trying his own heart, or severely judging his bosom sins, or humbly mourning and lamenting over secret corruptions, or doubling his guards about his own soul, or rejoicing in the graces, services, or excellencies of others, or striving or pressing after the highest pitches of grace, holiness, and communion with God, or endeavoring more to cast out the beam out of his own eye, than the mote out of his brother's eye, or to be more severe against his own sins than against the sins of others? Alas! a hypocrite is so far from practicing these duties, that he thinks them either superfluous or impossible.

A hypocrite's obedience is always a *limited* and *stinted* obedience. It is either limited to such commands which are most suitable to his ease, safety, honor, profit, pleasure, etc., or else it is limited to the outward part of the command, and never extends itself to the inward and spiritual part of the command; as you may see in the scribes and pharisees. Their obedience was all outward; they had no regard at all to the inward and spiritual part of any command. They did not murder, they did not commit adultery, they had an eye to the outward part of the command; but Christ charges them with unjust and adulterous thoughts, unchaste glances, contemplative

wickedness, speculative uncleanness, etc., they having no regard at all to the inward and spiritual part of any command.

Common grace looks only to some particular duties—but saving grace looks to all. Renewing grace comes off to positives as well as negatives; it teaches us to cease to do evil, and it teaches us also to do good. It "teaches us to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and also to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." These words contain the sum of a Christian's duty. To live soberly toward ourselves, righteously toward our neighbors, and godly toward God, is true godliness indeed, and the whole duty of man.

There is never a hypocrite in the world that can sincerely appeal to God, and say, "Lord! you know that my heart is subdued to a willingness to perform all known duties; I would willingly do the best I can to observe all your royal laws; Lord! I sincerely desire, and really endeavor to have an eye upon every command of yours, and to live up to every command of yours; and it is the real grief of my heart, and the daily burden of my soul when I violate any of your blessed laws." He who can sincerely thus appeal to God, shall never miscarry in the eternal world.

**4. There is never a hypocrite in the world, who makes God, or Christ, or holiness, or his doing or receiving good in his station, relation, or generation—his grand end, his highest end, his ultimate end of living in the world.**

Pleasures, profits and prestige, are the hypocrite's trinity, which he adores and serves, and sacrifices himself to. They are all that he aims at in this world. A hypocrite's ends are corrupt and selfish. Self is his highest end; for he who was never truly cast out of himself, can have no higher end than himself. A hypocrite is all for his own glory; he acts for himself, and from himself. That he may have the profit, the credit, the glory, the applause—is the desire of an unsound heart. A hypocrite will seem to be very godly when he can make a gain of godliness; he will seem to be very holy when holiness is the way to outward greatness and happiness; but his *religious wickedness will double-damn the hypocrite at last.*

Selfish ends are the operative ingredients in all a hypocrite does; self is the chief engine, self is the great wheel which sets all a hypocrite's wheels going. When hypocrites take up religion, it is only to serve their own interests, to bring about their own carnal ends; they serve not the Lord, but their own bellies. They use religion only as a stream to turn about their own mill, and the more neatly to effect their own carnal projects. Simon Magus will needs be baptized, and he is very desirous to have power to give the Holy Spirit to others; but his aim being only to get a name, and to get money, Peter tells him to his face that his heart was not right in the sight of God.

No man can go higher than his principles, and therefore a hypocrite having no higher principles than himself, all he does must needs be terminated in himself. As all the rivers which come from the sea do return back again to the sea from whence they come, so all those duties which arise from a man's self, must needs center in a man's self. A hypocrite always makes himself the end of all his service; but let such hypocrites know, that though their profession be ever so glorious, and their duties ever so abundant, yet their ends being

selfish and carnal, all their pious pretensions and performances are but *splendid abominations* in the sight of God.

A hypocrite has always a squint eye, and squint-eyed aims and squint-eyed ends in all he does. Balaam spoke very piously, and he multiplied altars and sacrifices; but the thing he had in his eye was the wages of unrighteousness. Jehu destroyed bloody Ahab's house, he executed the vengeance of God upon that wicked family; he readily, resolutely, and effectually destroyed all the worshipers of Baal—but his ends were to secure the kingdom to himself. Ahab and the Ninevites fasted in sackcloth—but it was merely that they might not feel the heavy judgments that they feared would overtake them. The Jews in Babylon fasted and mourned, and mourned and fasted seventy years—but it was more to get off their chains than their sins, it was more to be rid of their captivity than it was to be rid of their iniquity. As the eagle has an eye upon her prey when she flies highest, so these Jews in all their fasting, praying, mourning; they had only an eye to their own ease, deliverance, freedom, etc.; in all their religious duties they were acted from evil principles, and carried on by self-respects; and therefore Daniel denies that in all that seventy years' captivity they had prayed to any purpose. "All this disaster has come upon us, yet we have not sought the favor of the Lord our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth," Dan 9:13.

It is the *end* which dignifies or debases the action, which rectifies it or adulterates it, which sets a crown of honor or a crown of shame upon the head of it. He who commonly, habitually, in all his duties and services, proposes to himself no higher ends than the praises of men, or rewards of men, or the stopping the mouth of natural conscience, or only to avoid a smarting rod, or merely to secure himself from wrath to come—he is a hypocrite. The ends of a man's

actions are always a great discovery either of sincerity or hypocrisy. A hypocrite's ends are always below God; they are always below glorifying of God, exalting of God, walking with God, and enjoying communion with God. A hypocrite, in all he does, still proposes to himself some poor, ignoble, selfish end or other.

But now mark, a sincere Christian, if he prays or hears, or gives or fasts, or repents or obeys, etc., God's glory is the main end of all. The glory of God is his highest end, his ultimate end. A sincere Christian can be content to be trampled upon and vilified, so that God's name is glorified. The bent of such a heart is for God and his glory, nothing but sincerity can carry a soul so high, as in all acts natural, civil and religious, to intend God's glory. A sincere Christian ascribes the praise of all to God; he sets the crown on Christ's head alone; he will set God upon the throne, and make all things else his servants, or his footstool. All must bow the knee to God, or be trodden in the dirt. He will love nothing, he will embrace nothing but what sets God higher, or brings God nearer to his heart. The glory of God is the mark, the target, which the sincere Christian has in his eye. The sincere Christian lives not to himself—but to him who lives forever; he lives not to his own will, or lusts, or greatness, or glory in this world—but he lives to his glory, whose glory is dearer to him than his own life. As bright shining golden vessels do not retain the beams of the sun which they receive—but reflect them back again upon the sun; so the sincere Christian returns and reflects back again upon the Sun of righteousness, the praise and glory of all the gifts, graces, and virtues which he has received from God. The daily language of sincere souls is this: 'Not unto us, Lord, not unto us, Lord—but to your name be all the glory.'

A sincere Christian makes conscience of giving men their dues; how much more, then, does he make conscience of giving God his due.

Now glory is God's due, and God desires nothing more than that we give him the glory due unto his name, as you may see in Psalm 29:1, 2. There are three *gives* in those two verses: "*Give* unto the Lord, *give* unto the Lord, *give* unto the Lord the glory that is due unto his name." Glory is God's right, and he stands upon his right; and this the sincere Christian knows, and therefore he gives him his right, he gives him the honor and the glory that is due unto his name.

But please do not mistake me: I do not say that such as are really sincere do actually eye the glory of Christ in *all* their actions. Oh no! That is a happiness desirable on earth—but shall never be attained until we come to heaven. Selfish and base ends and aims will be still ready to creep into the best hearts—but all sincere hearts sigh and groan under them. They complain to God of them, and they cry out for justice, justice upon them; and it is the earnest desires and daily endeavors of their souls to be rid of them; and therefore they shall not be imputed to them, nor keep good things from them.

But take a sincere Christian in his ordinary, usual, and habitual course—and you shall find that his aims and ends in all his actions and undertakings are to glorify God, to exalt God, and to lift up God in the world. If the hypocrite did in good earnest aim at the glory of God in what he does, then the glory of God would swallow up his selfish aims and carnal ends, as Aaron's rod swallowed up the magicians' rods.

He who sets up the glory of God as his chief end, will find that his chief end will by degrees eat out all low and selfish ends. As Pharaoh's lean cows ate up the fat, so the glory of God will eat up all those fat and worldly ends which crowd in upon the soul in pious work. Where the glory of God is kept up as a man's greatest end, there all selfish and base ends will be kept under.



By what has been said, it is most evident that a hypocrite in all his transactions looks at himself, and designs the advance and advantage of himself. A hypocrite is as well able to make a world—as he is able to make the glory of God, the exaltation of God, his highest end, his utmost aim, in what he does.

## **5. No hypocrite can live wholly and only upon the righteousness of Christ, the satisfaction of Christ, the merits of Christ, for justification and salvation.**

The hypocritical scribes and pharisees prayed and fasted, and kept the Sabbath, and gave alms, etc., and in this legal righteousness they rested and trusted. Upon the performance of these and such like duties they laid the weight of their souls and the stress of their salvation, and so perished forever. A hypocrite rests upon what he does, and never looks so high as the righteousness of Christ. He looks upon his duties as so much good money laid out for heaven; he weaves a web of righteousness to clothe himself with; he never looks out for a more glorious righteousness to be justified by than his own, and so puts a slight upon the righteousness of Christ: Rom 10:3, "For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." The first step to salvation is to renounce our own righteousness; the next step is to embrace the righteousness of Christ, which is freely offered to sinners in the gospel; but these things the hypocrite minds not, regards not.

The righteousness of a hypocrite is not only imperfect—but impure, a rag, a filthy rag, and therefore he who rests upon such a righteousness must needs miscarry to all eternity. O sirs who will say that that man needs a savior, who can fly to heaven upon the wings of his own duties and services? If a man's duties can pacify an infinite wrath, and satisfy an infinite justice, then farewell Christ, and welcome duties. He who will rest upon his own righteousness for life and justification, must sit down short of salvation; he who rests upon his duties, and who rests upon a gift of knowledge, a gift of utterance, a gift of memory, or a gift of prayer, though he may come near to heaven, and bid fair for heaven, yet he will never be able to get into heaven. Now, how sad it is for a man to lose himself and his soul in a wilderness of duties, when he is upon the borders, yes, the very brink of the holy land. He who rests upon anything in himself, or done by himself, as a means to procure the favor of God, or the salvation of his soul, will put such a cheat upon himself as will undo him forever.

Non-submission to the righteousness of Christ, keeps Christ and the hypocrite asunder. Christ will never love nor like to put the fine, clean, white linen of his own righteousness upon the old filthy garment, the old rags of a hypocrite's duties; neither will Christ ever delight to put his new wine into such old bottles. *A hypocrite's confidence in his own righteousness, turns his righteousness into filthiness!* But a sincere Christian renounces his own righteousness, he renounces all confidence in the flesh; he looks upon his own righteousness as dung, yes, as dogs' meat, as some interpret the word in Phil 3:8. He will no more say to his duties, to the works of his hands, "You are my gods," Hos 14:3. When they look upon the holiness of God's nature, the righteousness of his government, the severity of his law, the terror of his wrath—they see an absolute and

indispensable necessity of a more glorious righteousness than their own to appear before God in.

A sincere Christian sets the highest price and value upon the righteousness of Christ; Psalm 71:16, "I will make mention of your righteousness, even of yours alone." Mark the emphasis doubled, "of yours," and "yours alone." A sincere Christian is convinced of the nature, worth, and excellency of the righteousness of Christ, and therefore he cries out, "I will make mention of your righteousness, of yours alone."

A sincere Christian rejoices in the righteousness of Christ *above all*: Isa 61:10, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels." A sincere Christian rests on the righteousness of Christ as on *a sure foundation*: Isa 45:24, "Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength." It was a very sweet and golden expression of one, when he thought himself to be at the point of death: "I confess," said he, "I am not worthy; I have no merits of my own to obtain heaven by; but my Lord had a double right thereunto; a hereditary right as a Son, and a meritorious right as a sacrifice; he was contented with the one right himself, the other right he has given unto me, by the virtue of which gift I do rightly lay claim unto it, and am not confounded."

A sincere Christian looks upon the righteousness of Christ as that which renders him most splendid and glorious in the eyes of God: Phil 3:9, "And be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law—but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." A sincere

Christian looks upon the righteousness of Christ as his only security against wrath to come. Wrath to come is the *greatest* wrath, wrath to come is the *purest* wrath, wrath to come is *infinite* wrath, wrath to come is *everlasting* wrath. Now the sincere Christian knows no way under heaven to secure himself from wrath to come—but by putting on the robe of Christ's righteousness.

For a close remember this, there is never a hypocrite who is more pleased, satisfied, delighted and contented with the righteousness of Christ, than with his own. Though a hypocrite may be much in duties, yet he never lives above his duties; he works for life, and he rests in his work, and this proves his mortal wound.

## **6. A hypocrite never embraces a whole Christ;**

He can never take up his full and everlasting rest, satisfaction, and contentment in the person of Christ, in the merits of Christ, in the enjoyment of Christ alone.

No hypocrite did ever long and mourn after the enjoyment of Christ, as the best thing in all the world. No hypocrite did ever prize Christ for a Sanctifier as well as a Savior. No hypocrite did ever look upon Christ, or long for Christ to deliver him from the power of his sins, as much or as well as to deliver him from wrath to come. No hypocrite can really love the person of Christ, or take the satisfaction in the person of Christ. The rays and beams of Christ's glory have never warmed his heart; he never knew what bosom communion with Christ meant. A hypocrite may love to be healed by Christ and to be pardoned by Christ, and to be saved by Christ, etc.—but he can never

take any delight in the person of Christ; his heart never seriously works after communion with Christ. The love of a sincere Christian runs much out to the person of Christ. Heaven itself without Christ would be to such a soul but a poor thing, a low thing, a little thing, an uncomfortable thing, an empty thing. It is the person of Christ, which is the sparkling diamond in the ring of glory.

No hypocrite in the world is sincerely willing to receive Christ in all his offices, and to close with him upon gospel terms. The terms upon which God offers Christ in the gospel are these, namely, that we shall accept of a whole Christ with a whole heart. Now, mark, a whole Christ includes all his offices, and a whole heart includes all our faculties. Christ as mediator is prophet, priest, and king; and so God the Father in the gospel offers him. Salvation was too great and too glorious a work to be perfected and completed by any one office of Christ.

Christ as a prophet instructs us, and as a priest redeems us and intercedes for us, and as king sanctifies and rules us. The apostle hit it when he said, "He is made to us—wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," 1 Cor 1:30. Consider Christ as our prophet, and so he is made wisdom to us; consider him as our priest, and so he is made righteousness and redemption to us; consider him as our king, and so he is made sanctification and holiness to us. A hypocrite may be willing to embrace Christ as a priest to save him from wrath, from the curse, from hell, from everlasting burning—but he is never sincerely willing to embrace Christ as a prophet to teach and instruct him, and as a king to rule and reign over him. Many hypocrites are willing to embrace a *saving* Christ—but they are not willing to embrace a *ruling* Christ, a *commanding* Christ. "But those enemies of Mine who did not want

Me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of Me!" Luke 19:27.

A hypocrite is willing to receive Christ in one office—but not in every office; and this is that stumbling stone at which hypocrites stumble and fall, and are broken in pieces. Certainly Christ is as precious and as lovely, as desirable and delightful, as eminent and excellent in one office as he is in another; and therefore it is a just and righteous thing with God, that hypocrites who won't receive him in every office, should have no benefit by any one of his offices.

Christ and his offices may be *distinguished*—but Christ and his offices can never be *divided*. While many have been laboring to divide one office of Christ from another, they have wholly stripped themselves of any advantage or benefit by Christ. Hypocrites love to share with Christ in his happiness—but they don't love to share with Christ in his holiness. They are willing to be redeemed by Christ—but they, are not cordially willing to submit to the laws and government of Christ. They are willing to be saved by his blood—but they are not willing to submit to his scepter. Hypocrites love the privileges of the gospel—but they don't love the services of the gospel, especially those that are most inward and spiritual.

But a sincere Christian owns Christ in all his offices, he receives Christ in all his offices, and he closes with Christ in all his offices. He accepts of him, not only as a Christ Jesus—but also as a *Lord* Jesus; he embraces him, not only as a saving Christ—but also as a ruling Christ. The Colossians received him as Christ Jesus the Lord; they received a *Lord* Christ as well as a *saving* Christ; they received Christ as a king upon his throne, as well as a sin-atoning sacrifice upon his cross.

God the Father in the gospel offers a whole Christ. We preach Christ Jesus the Lord, and accordingly a sincere Christian receives a whole Christ, he receives Christ Jesus the Lord; he says with Thomas, "My Lord and my God," John 20:28; he takes Christ for his wisdom as well as for his righteousness, and he takes him for his sanctification as well as for his redemption. A hypocrite is all for a saving Christ, for a sin-pardoning Christ, for a soul-saving Christ—but regards not a ruling Christ, a reigning Christ, a commanding Christ, a sanctifying Christ, and this at last will prove his damning sin.

## **7. A hypocrite cannot mourn for sin as sin, nor grieve for sin as sin, nor hate sin as sin, nor make head against sin as sin.**

Mark—to hate sin is not merely to refrain from sin, for so Balaam did. To hate sin is not merely to confess sin, for so Pharaoh and Judas did. To hate sin is not merely to be afraid to sin, for this may be where there is no hatred of sin. To hate sin is not merely to mourn because of the dreadful effects and fruits that sin may produce, for so Ahab did, and the Ninevites did, etc. He who fears sin for hell, fears not to sin—but to burn.

He hates sin indeed—who hates sin as hell itself. It was a saying of one of the ancients, that if hell and sin were before him, he would rather fall into hell than fall into sin. Here was a true hatred of sin indeed.

A hypocrite may be troubled for sin, as it blots his reputation, and wounds his conscience, and brings a scourge, and destroys his soul, and shuts him out of heaven, and throws him to hell; but he is never troubled for sin, he never mourns for sin, he never hates sin because

it is contrary to the nature of God, the being of God, the law of God, the glory of God, the design of God, or because of the evil which is in the nature of sin, or because of the defiling and polluting power of sin.

True hatred of sin is universal; it extends to all sins. He who hates a toad because it is a toad, hates every toad; and he who hates a man because he is holy, hates every holy man; and so he who hates sin because it is sin, hates every sin: Psalm 119:128, "I hate every false way." True hatred is ever against the whole kind of a thing.

Every sincere Christian has in him a general hatred of every false way, and dares not allow himself in the least sin. "What I do I allow not," Rom 7:15: Rom 12:9, "*Abhor* that which is evil." The Greek word for *abhor* is very significant. The simple verb imports extreme detestation. The word signifies to hate evil as hell itself. Though a hypocrite may hate some sins—"You abhor idols," Rom 2:22—yet that is out of some peculiar and particular indisposition to a particular sin; but this hatred of this or that particular sin, arises not from an inward nature or gracious principle, as it does in him who is a sincere Christian; and the reason is this, because that contrariety to sin which is in a real Christian arising from this inward gracious nature, is to the whole species of sin, and is irreconcilable to any sin whatever. As contrarieties of nature are to the whole kind, as light is contrary to all darkness, and fire to all water; so this contrariety to sin arising from the inward man, is universal to all sin. Though a sincere Christian has not a universal victory over all sin, yet there is in him a universal contrariety to all sin. Victory argues strength, contrariety argues nature. Hence it is that a hypocrite may hate one sin and love another, because there is not a gracious nature in him which would be contrary to all sin.



The inward nature of a Christian is to be judged by the universal contrariety of his inward man to all sin. Now this universal contrariety to all sin will beget a universal conflict with all sin. O sirs! remember this: Universal contrariety to sin can be found in no man but he who is sincere; and this universal contrariety to sin argues an inward nature of grace, and this is that which differences a real Christian from a hypocrite, who may oppose some sins out of other principles and reasons. A hypocrite may be angry with this sin and that, which brings the smarting rod, and wounds his conscience, and disturbs his peace, and embitters his mercies and strangles his comforts and which lays him open to wrath, and which brings him even to the gates of hell—but he can never hate sin as sin.

A hypocrite hates *some* sins but likes others, he loathes some but loves others, he opposes some but practices others, like the angel of the church of Ephesus, that hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans—but loved lukewarmness. Many men detest theft—who love covetousness, abhor whoredom—who like impiety, etc. There is no hypocrite under heaven who can truly say, I hate every false way; but a sincere Christian hates all sinful ways—but his own first and most. An upright heart leaves no *nest-egg* for Satan to sit on—but the hypocrite always does. Mark, in true hatred for sin, there are five things observable:

**a. True hatred for sin, includes an extreme detestation.** Every dislike is not hatred—but true hatred is an extreme loathing: "You will throw them away like a menstrual cloth and say to them—Away with you!" Isa 30:22; "On that day people will throw their silver and gold idols, which they made to worship, to the moles and the bats," Isa 2:20. Their detestation should be so great that they should cast their most costly idols of silver and gold to the most dark, nasty, dusty corners. To testify the sincerity of their

conversion to God, they should hate and abhor, abandon and abolish their gold and silver idols which they valued above all others.

**b. True hatred for sin, includes earnest separation.** He who hates his sin would gladly be separated from his sin; "For we that are in this tabernacle do *groan* being burdened," 2 Cor 5:4. A sincere Christian finds no burden to lie so heavy and weighty upon his spirit as sin, and therefore he groans to be delivered from it. In the law, he who hated his wife gave her a bill of divorce. He who truly hates sin, puts in many a request into the court of heaven, that he may be forever divorced from his sin.

**c. True hatred for sin, includes an irreconcilable alienation.** He who hates sin has his heart forever alienated from sin; he who hates sin can never be at peace with sin. Two *angry* men may be made friends; but if two men *hate* each other, all friendship is everlastingly broken between them. A man may be angry with sin, and yet made friends with sin again; but if once he comes to hate his sin, then all friendship with sin is everlastingly broken. When Christ and the soul come to be really one, then sin and the soul come to be everlastingly two, etc.

**d. True hatred for sin, includes a constant and perpetual conflict.** "The flesh will be still warring against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh." Though sin and grace were not born together, and though sin and grace shall never die together, yet while a believer lives in this world, they must live together; and while sin and grace do cohabit together, they will still be opposing and conflicting one with another. That man who truly hates sin, will everlastingly conflict with sin. He will die fighting against his sins, as one of the dukes of Venice died fighting against his enemies with his weapons in his hand. Well, Christians, remember this, though to

be *kept* from sin brings most peace and comfort to us, yet for us to *oppose* sin, and for God to pardon sin—that brings most glory to God.

**e. True hatred for sin, includes a deadly intention and destruction, for nothing satisfies hatred but death and ruin.** Saul hated David, and sought his life; he hunted him up and down as a partridge in the mountains; he left no stone unturned, nor any means unattempted, whereby he might revenge himself upon David. Haman hated Mordecai, and nothing would satisfy him but to bring him to a shameful death, to see him hanged on the high gallows, which was designed, says Lyra, to put Mordecai to the greater shame, for he hanging high, everyone might see him and point to him. Now when there was but one night between Mordecai and a shameful death, divine providence opportunely intervened, and saved him from Haman's malice, and caused the mischief which he had plotted against Mordecai suddenly to fall upon his own head; for he who highly feasted with the king one day, was made a feast for the crows the next day.

Absalom hated Amnon and killed him. Julian the apostate hated the Christians with a deadly hatred. He put many thousands of them to death and threatened and vowed that at his return from fighting against the Persians, he would put all the Christians in his empire to the sword; but God prevented him by cutting him off in that expedition. A Christian who hates sin, can't be satisfied but in the death and destruction of it. In all his duties the language of his soul is, "Lord, let my sins be destroyed; whoever escapes, let not my sins escape the hand of your revenging justice!" And in all ordinances the language of his soul is, "O Lord! when shall my sins be subdued and mortified? when shall my cursed corruptions be fully destroyed? yes,

when shall they all be drowned in the Red Sea of my Savior's blood?" etc.

To wind up all, ask your heart what it is—that you abhor as the superlative evil? What is that—which you would have separated as far from you as heaven is from hell? What is that—against which your soul rises, and with which, as Israel with Amalek, you will have war forever? What is that—which you will be avenged of, and daily endeavor the mortifying and crucifying of? What is that—which you set your heart against in the comprehensive latitude thereof, whether great or little, open or secret? If it is sin, if it is your sins, if it is all your sins—then assuredly here is a true hatred of sin, and assuredly here is a most distinguishing character of a child of God, of a sound conversion, and of a saving change. It was not always so with you, nor is this true hatred of sin ever found in any hypocrite, or in any unconverted person upon the face of the earth.

Sin was once to you as Delilah to Samson; but now it is to you as Tamar to Amnon. Once it was a sweet morsel which you held fast and would not let it go; but now it is the menstruous cloth which you cast away, saying, "Away with you!" Now with Ephraim you cry out, "What have I to do any more with idols?" Hosea 14:8. Oh, if it be indeed so with you, then you have cause forever to be much in blessing and in admiring of the Lord for his distinguishing grace and favor towards you. O sirs! the world is full of baits, snares, and temptations; but while the hatred of sin burns in your breasts, you may throw the gauntlet to the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Remember this forever, there are three things a hypocrite can never do:

1. He can never *mourn for sin as sin*.
2. He can never mourn for the sins of *others* as well as his own.

Moses, Lot, David, Jeremiah, Paul, and those in Ezek 9:4,6, mourned for others' sins as well as their own; but Pharaoh, Ahab, Judas, Demas; Simon Magus never did.

3. He can never *hate sin as sin*.

## **8. No hypocrite is habitually low or little in his own eyes.**

No hypocrite regularly has humble thoughts of himself, or a poor esteem of himself. No hypocrite loves to lessen himself to greatness Christ, to debase himself to exalt Christ. No hypocrite loves to be outshined; all hypocrites love to write an "I" upon what they do. The pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: "God, I thank you that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican; I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess," Luke 18:11, 12. All hypocrites stand much upon their *negative righteousness* and their *comparative goodness*. There is no hypocrite in the world but sets down his penny for a pound, and always prizes himself above the market: 2 Kings 10:16, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord." Jehu's words were for the Lord—but his project was for the kingdom. Jehu made a great blaze—but he was but a comet.

A hypocrite always loves the praise of men more than the praise of God. He loves more to be honored by men than to be honored by God: "How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?" John 5:44. Nothing below that power which raised Christ from the grave can make a hypocrite purely *nothing* in his own eyes.

A hypocrite is always a *great* thing in his own eyes; and when he is nothing, a great nothing in others' eyes; he cannot bear it.

A hypocrite cannot endure to be outshined in gifts, in graces, in experiences, in duties, in communion with God, in spiritual enjoyments. A hypocrite's heart is full of pride—when his deportment is most humble. He always thinks best of himself, and worst of others; he looks upon his own vices as graces, and he looks upon other men's graces as vices, or at least as no true current coin. A proud spirit will cast disgrace upon that excellency which he himself lacks. The emptiest barrels make the loudest sound, the worst metal the greatest noise, and the lightest ears of corn hold their heads highest.

But sincere Christians are men of another spirit, of another temper, of another metal, of another mind; their hearts lie low when their gifts and graces and spiritual enjoyments are high. Abraham is but "dust and ashes" in his own eyes. The higher any man is in his communion with God, the lower that man will be in his own eyes. Dust and ashes are poor, base, vile, worthless things—and such things as these was Abraham in his own eyes.

So Jacob was a plain man, an upright man, and lo! what a low esteem had he of himself: "I am not worthy of all the faithfulness and unfailing love you have shown to me, your servant," Gen 32:10. In the Hebrew it is, "I am little before your mercies." When Jacob had to do with Laban, he pleads his merits; but when he has to do with God, he pleads nothing but grace, setting a very low esteem upon himself. He looks upon himself as worthy of less than the least of mercies, and as worse than the worst of creatures. "The least of my mercies are greater than I deserve, and the greatest of my troubles are less than I deserve," says Jacob. The language of a plain-hearted

Jacob is this: "O Lord, I might with Job have been stripped of all my comforts and enjoyments at once, and set upon an ash-heap; I might with Lazarus have been begging my bread from door to door; or I might have been getting my bread with the peril of my life, because of the sword of the wilderness, or I might have been with Dives in hell a-crying out for a drop of water to cool my tongue!"

A sincere Christian cannot tell how to speak good enough of God, nor bad enough of himself. Agur was one of the wisest and holiest men on earth, and see how greatly he debases himself, "Surely, I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man," Prov 30:1-2. Agur had seen Ithiel, *God with me*, and Ucal, *God Almighty*, and this made him so vile and base in his own eyes; this made him vilify, yes, revile himself to the utmost.

You know no man ever received a fairer or a more valuable certificate under the hand of God, or the broad seal of heaven, for his being a soul famous in uprightness and holiness, than Job, as you may see, Job 1:8, "And the Lord said unto Satan—Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth—a man of complete integrity. He fears God and will have nothing to do with evil." Job was *high in worth* and *humble in heart*: Job 42:5-6, "I have heard of you by the hearing of the ear—but now my eye sees you, I abhor myself in dust and ashes." This expression is the deepest act of abhorrency. Abhorrency strictly taken is hatred wound up to the height: "I abhor myself." The Hebrew word that is rendered abhor signifies to reject, to disdain, to condemn, to cast off. "Ah!" says Job, "I abhor myself, I reject myself, I disdain myself, I cast off myself, I have a very vile and base esteem of myself!"

**David** was a man of great integrity, a man after God's own heart, and yet he looks upon himself as a *flea*; and what is more

contemptible than a flea? And as he looks upon himself as a flea, so he looks upon himself as a *worm*: "I am a worm, and no man," Psalm 22:6. The Hebrew word that is here rendered a worm, signifies a *very little worm*—a worm that is so little that a man can hardly perceive it. A worm is the most despicable creature in the world, trampled under foot by man and beasts. He who was in God's eye a *man after his own heart*, is in his own eye but a despicable worm. A sincere Christian is a *little nothing* in his own eyes.

So **Paul**, who had been caught up into the third heaven, and learned his divinity among the angels, as one speaks, and had such glorious revelations as could not be uttered, yet he accounts himself less than the least of all saints: Eph 3:8, "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints." The Greek signifies lesser than the least, if lesser might be; not that anything can be less than the least. The original word being a double diminutive, his meaning is that he was as little as could be; therefore he put himself down so little as to be less than the least. Here you have *the greatest apostle descending down to the lowest step of humility*. Great Paul sees himself as least of saints, and greatest of sinners.

So **Peter**, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," Luke 5:8, or as the Greek runs, "a man, a sinner," *a mixture and compound of dirt and sin*; a mere bundle of vice and vanity, of folly and iniquity. So Luther, "I have no other name than *sinner*; sinner is my name, sinner is my surname; this is the name by which I shall be always known." "I have sinned, I do sin, I shall sin," says Luther, speaking vilely and basely of himself. "Lord, I am hell and you are heaven," said blessed Hooper. "I am a most hypocritical wretch, not worthy that the earth should bear me," said blessed Bradford. Thus you see by these several instances that sincere Christians do as it were, take a *holy pleasure and delight to debase, humble, and vilify themselves*.



But this is a work which hypocrites are mere strangers to. There is not a hypocrite under heaven, who loves to debase himself, or who makes it his duty conscientiously to vilify and lessen himself that Christ may be set up above all. Humility is a grace rarely attained unto. "Many," says Augustine, "can more easily give all they have to the poor, than themselves become poor in spirit."

## **9. No hypocrite will long hold out in the work and ways of the Lord, in the absence of outward encouragements, and in the face of outward discouragements.**

A hypocrite is a veiled apostate; and an apostate is a unveiled hypocrite. Job 27:8. "For what hope does the godless man have when he is cut off, when God takes away his life?" Job 27:10, "Will he delight in the Almighty? Will he call on God at all times?" Or, as the Hebrew runs, "Will he in every time call upon God?"

Sometimes when the rod is upon them, then they will pour out a prayer to God, "In their affliction they will seek me early," Isa 26:16; Hos 5:15. "When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned and inquired after God," Psalm 78:34. But this was not the habitual frame of their hearts: Psalm 78:36, "Nevertheless, they flattered him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues." Psalm 78:37, "For their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant."

When Pharaoh was upon the rack, he could roar a confession, and earnestly cry out for a prayer—but when the judgment was removed,

Pharaoh was as proud, and hard, and blind as ever. When Adonijah was in danger of death, then he could hang on the horns of the altar. When Ahab was threatened with utter desolation, then he could fast and lie in sackcloth; and so did the Ninevites. But all this was but like Ephraim and Judah's goodness, which as a morning cloud and as the early dew—shortly passes away.

Will the hypocrite always, or in every time, call upon God? Will the hypocrite call upon God as often as providence calls him to call upon God? Will he call upon God as often as judgments call him to call upon God? Will he call upon God as often as conscience calls him to call upon God? Will he call upon God as often as it is his duty to call upon God? Will he call upon God as often as others call upon him to call upon God? Oh no! The hypocrite will not always call upon God; he will not persevere in prayer; he will not hold on nor hold out in prayer; he is short-spirited; he cannot always pray and not faint. He shrinks back as sluggards do in work, or cowards in war.

A hypocrite, for lack of an inward principle of grace, can neither delight in God, nor always call upon God. If God comes not at his call, if he opens not as soon as he knocks—he is out of patience, and ready to say with that proud profane prince, "Why should I wait for him any longer?" 2 Kings 6:33. If a hypocrite obtains the mercy he desires, then he will throw off prayer, as he said, "Take away the net, the fish is caught." If he obtains not the mercy, then he will grow weary of his duty. "You have been weary of me, O Israel," Isa 43:22.

Prayer is too hard and too high a work for an unsound heart to hold on in. Prayer is heart-work, and that proves heavy work to him. The soul of prayer lies in the pouring out of the soul before God, and this is a work that a hypocrite has no skill in. It was a profane and blasphemous speech of that atheistical wretch, who told God he was

no common beggar, he never troubled him before with prayer, and if he would but hear him that one time, he would never trouble God again. Even such a spirit and such principle lie lurking in every hypocrite's bosom. Doubtless he hit it on the head, who said, "How can you expect that God should hear you, when you will not hear yourself? or that God should give you a return in prayer, when you are not mindful what you ask in prayer?"

A sincere Christian will go on in prayer, whether he succeeds or not. If he prevails, he will love prayer the better all his days; if he does not for the present prevail, he will be so much the more importunate with God in prayer. It is as natural for a bird to live without air, and for a fish to live without water, and for a man to live without food—as it is for a sincere Christian to live without prayer. "Oh," says Chrysostom, "It is more bitter than death to be robbed of prayer." And hereupon, as he observes, Daniel chose rather to run the hazard of his life, than to lose or give over his private prayers.

Prayer is the key of heaven, and a sincere Christian loves much to be handling that key, though he should die for it. A hypocrite will never hold out to the end. Let but outward encouragements fail him, and his heart will quickly fail him in a way of duty. Hypocrites are like blazing comets, which, as long as they are fed with vapors, shine as if they were fixed stars; but let the vapors dry up, and presently they vanish and disappear. Let but the eye, the ear, the applause of men, fail the hypocrite, and he will be ready to give up all. If a hypocrite cannot make some gain of his godliness, some profit of his profession, some advantage of his religion—he will be ready with Demas to turn his back upon all religious duties and services.

As a lame horse will go well enough for a short time—but eventually will come to a halt; even so a hypocrite, though for a time he may go

on fairly in his way, yet in the end he will halt downright, and bid farewell, if not defiance, to all religious duties and services. *Profit and applause are usually the baits that hypocrites bite at*, and if they miss these baits—then farewell profession, farewell religion, farewell all! John 6:66, "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." Many hypocrites who had given up their names to Christ, and who for a time had been followers of Christ, at last deserted him and turned their backs forever upon him.

Matt 13:5,6 "Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil;" (not much care to receive, not much understanding to apprehend, not much faith to believe, not much will to obey, or not much love to retain it), "and they sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root." This second ground goes beyond the former: for it receives the seed immediately; with joy it brings up the seed sown. It sprung up to mixed degrees: to external obedience and reformation in many things; to an outward profession; to a kind of faith; but when the sun of persecution beat hot upon them, they withered and fell away; not all at once; but little by little, as a leaf loses its flourish and greenness, and withers by degrees.

In the Palatinate, when the sun of persecution began to scorch them, scarcely one professor of twenty persevered in the truth—but most fell to popery as fast as leaves in autumn. The crystal looks like diamond until it comes to the *hammering*; so a hypocrite looks like a Christian, and in many things acts like a Christian, until he comes to be hammered by sufferings, by persecutions, and then he discovers himself in his true colors; and with Hymenaeus and Alexander, he makes shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. In suffering times,

hypocrites labor mightily to put out that light which shines in their bosoms, and when they have quenched that light, then farewell profession, farewell a good conscience, farewell all!

The wolf, though he often sneaks in, and closely disguises his nature, yet cannot always do so; for at one time or other he will show himself to be a wolf; so though a hypocrite may disguise himself for a time, yet he will one time or other discover himself to be a hypocrite.

A sincere Christian will hold on and hold out in the ways of the Lord, in the absence of all outward encouragements, and in the face of all multiplied discouragements. When the eye of men, the favor of men, the bounty of men, and all other encouragement from men fails, yet then a sincere Christian will hold up, and hold on in his work and way. "The righteous shall hold on his way, and he who has clean hands shall be stronger and stronger," Job 17:9. The righteous man shall go on in a way of righteousness to the end; no multiplied calamities or miseries shall ever work him to decline the way of righteousness. From this way a sincere Christian will never be withdrawn, either by any hopes or advantages on the one hand, or by any fears or dangers on the other. Sincere Christians have not taken up religion on such slight grounds—as either to be flattered or frightened out of it.

Sincere Christians reckon upon afflictions, temptations, crosses, losses, reproaches on the one hand; and they reckon upon a crown of life, a crown of righteousness, a crown of glory on the other hand; and hereupon they set up their staff, fully resolving never to depart from the good old way wherein they have found rest to their souls. Sincere Christians take Christ and his ways for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in prosperity and adversity; they resolve to stand or fall, to suffer and reign, to live and die with him. When all outward

encouragements from God shall fail, yet a sincere Christian will keep close to his God, and close to his duty. "Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vine; even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty, yet I will rejoice in the Lord! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation." Habakkuk 3:17-18.

When all necessary and delightful mercies fail, yet he will not fail in his duty. Though God withholds his blessings, yet the sincere Christian will not withhold his service; in the absence of a livelihood, he will be lively in his duty; when he has nothing to subsist on, yet then he will live upon his God, and joy in his God, and keep close to his God. Though war and want come, yet he will not be wanting in his duty. Mark, there are three things in a sincere Christian which will strongly incline him to keep close to the Lord, and close to his ways in the lack of all outward encouragements, and in the face of all outward discouragements. The first is a forcible principle—divine love; the second is a mighty aid—the Spirit of God; and the third is a high aim—the glory of God.

As Ruth kept close to her mother-in-law in the absence of all outward encouragements, and in the face of all outward discouragements, saying, "Where you go I will go; and where you lodge I will lodge, and nothing but death shall part you and me," so says a sincere Christian, "I will take my lot with Christ wherever it falls; I will keep close to the Lord, and close to my duty, in the absence of all outward encouragements, and in the face of all outward discouragements." Though outward encouragements are sometimes as a favorable wind, or as oil, or as chariot wheels—means to move a Christian to go on more sweetly, easily, and comfortably in the ways of God; yet when this wind shall fail, and these chariot wheels shall be knocked off—a

sincere Christian will keep close to the Lord and his ways. "All this has come upon us; yet have we not forgotten you, neither have we dealt falsely in your covenant. Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from your ways," Psalm 44:17-18.

That is a great word of the prophet Micah: "All the nations may walk in the name of their gods; we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever." Micah 4:5. This absolute and decided resolution to be really the Lord's, and forever the Lord's, is of the essence of true conversion. It is not the world's *flatteries* which can bribe off a sincere Christian from the ways of God; nor it is the world's *frowns* which can beat off a sincere Christian from the ways of God! But a hypocrite will never, a hypocrite can never persevere to the end. His ground tackle will never hold when the storm beats strong upon him. A hypocrite may start well—but soon tires and gives in.

## **10. No hypocrite ever makes it his business, his work—to bring his heart into religious duties and services.**

He never makes conscience of bringing his heart into his work. A hypocrite is heartless in all he does. "Whenever God slew them, they would seek him; they eagerly turned to him again. But then they would flatter him with their mouths, lying to him with their tongues; their hearts were not loyal to him, they were not faithful to his covenant." Psalm 78:34,36,37. All lip-labor is but lost labor. When men's hearts are not in their devotion, their devotion is mere deception. These hypocrites sought God, and inquired early after

God—but it was still with *old* hearts, which are *no* hearts in the account of God. They made *lip* work of it, and *head* work of it—but their *hearts* not being in their work—all was lost: their seeking lost, their inquiring lost, their God lost, their souls lost, and eternity lost!

Hosea 7:14, "And they have not cried unto me with their hearts, when they howled upon their beds." When men's hearts are not in their prayers, all their praying is but as a hideous howling in the account of God. The cry of the heart is the only cry which God likes, loves, and looks for. He accepts of no cry, he delights in no cry, he rewards no cry—but the cry of the heart. Hypocrites are heartless in their cries, and therefore they cry and howl, and howl and cry—and all to no purpose with God. They cry and murmur, and they howl and repine; they cry and blaspheme, and they howl and rebel; and therefore they meet with nothing from heaven but frowns, and blows, and disappointments: Isa 29:13, "Therefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me—but have removed their heart far from me."

Ezek 33:31, "And they come unto you as the people come, and they sit before you as my people, and they hear your words—but they will not do them: for with their *mouth* they show much love—but their *heart* goes after their covetousness." Though this people flocked to the prophet in troops, as men and women do to places of pleasure; and though they behaved before the prophet as if they were saints, as if they were the people of God, as if they were sincerely affected with what they heard, as if they were resolved to live out what the prophet should speak out to them—yet their hearts ran after their covetousness! Though these hypocrites professed much love and kindness to the prophet, and paid him homage with smooth words, and seemed to be much affected, delighted, ravished, and pleased



with his person, voice, and doctrine—yet they made no conscience of bringing their hearts into their duties.

A hypocrite may look at some outward, easy, ordinary duties of religion—but he never makes conscience of bringing his heart into any duties of religion. When did you ever see a hypocrite searching his heart, or sitting in judgment upon the corruptions of his soul, or lamenting and mourning over the vileness and wickedness of his spirit? *It is only the sincere Christian who is affected, afflicted, and wounded with the corruptions of his heart!* When one told blessed Bradford that he did all out of hypocrisy, because he would have the people applaud him, he answered, "It is true, the seeds of hypocrisy and vainglory are in you and me too, and will be in us long as we live in this world; but I thank God that I mourn under and strive against it." How seriously and deeply did good Hezekiah humble himself for the pride of his heart! "Out of the eater came meat," out of his pride he got humility, 2 Chron 32:25.

O sirs! a sincere Christian makes it his great business to get his heart into all his religious duties and services, to get his heart into every way and work of God. Rom 1:9, "For God is my witness, whom I serve with my *spirit* in the gospel of his Son." Paul's very *spirit*, his very *soul*, was in his service. Phil 3:3, "For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the *spirit*, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Rom 7:22, "I delight in the law of God after the *inward* man." Rom 7:25, "With the *mind* I myself serve the law of God." A sincere Christian is always best when his heart is in his work. And when he cannot get his heart into his duties, Oh! how does he sigh, and groan, and complain, and mourn at the foot of God—"Lord, my tongue has been at work, and my head has been at work, and my parts have been at work, and my eyes and hands have been at work—but where has my heart been this day? Oh! it is and must be a

sore and sad lamentation, that I have had so little of my heart in that service that I have offered to you!" This is the daily language of an upright heart.

But all the work of a hypocrite is to get his golden parts into his duties, and his silver tongue into his duties, and his nimble head into his duties; but he never makes conscience of getting his heart into his duties. Hypocrites are always heartless in all the sacrifices they offer to God, and this will one day prove appalling and damnatory to them.

## **11. A hypocrite never performs religious duties from spiritual principles, nor in a spiritual manner.**

A hypocrite is never inclined, moved, and carried to God, to Christ, to holy duties—by the power of a new and inward principle of grace working a suitableness between his heart and the things of God. A hypocrite rests satisfied in the mere external acts of religion, though he never feels anything of the power of religion in his own soul. A hypocrite looks to his words in prayer, and to his voice in prayer, and to his gestures in prayer—but he never looks to the frame of his heart in prayer. A hypocrite's heart is never touched with the words his tongue utters; a hypocrite's soul is never divinely affected, delighted, or graciously warmed with any duty he performs.

A hypocrite's spiritual performances never flow from spiritual principles, nor from a sanctified heart. Though his works may be new, yet his heart remains old; his new practices always spring from

old principles; and this will prove the hypocrite's bane, as you may see in Isa 1:15, "When you make many prayers, I will not hear, for your hands are full of blood." These were unsanctified ones; their practices were new—but their hearts were old still.

The same you may see in the scribes and pharisees, who fasted, prayed and gave alms—but their hearts were not changed, renewed, sanctified, nor principled from above; and this proved their eternal bane. Nicodemus was a man of great note, name, and fame among the pharisees, and he fasted, and prayed, and gave alms, and paid tithes, etc., and yet was a total stranger to the new birth; regeneration was a paradox to him. "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" John 3:4. This great doctor was so great a dunce, that he understood no more of the doctrine of regeneration, than a mere child does the darkest precepts of astronomy. As water can rise no higher than the spring from whence it came, so the natural man can rise no higher than nature.

A hypocrite may know much, and pray much, and hear much, and fast much, and **give** much, and obey much—and all to no purpose, because he never manages anything he does in a right manner; he never carries on his work from inward principles of faith, fervency, life, love, delight, etc. Will the hypocrite delight himself in the Almighty? Answer: No! He cannot delight himself in the Almighty.

To delight in God is one of the highest acts of grace; and how can a hypocrite put forth one of the highest acts of grace—who has no grace? A hypocrite may know much of God, and talk much of God, and make a great profession of God, and be verbally thankful to God;

but he can never love God, nor trust in God, nor delight in God, nor take up his rest in God, etc.

A hypocrite knows not God; and how then can he delight in that God whom he does not know? A hypocrite has no inward, saving, transforming, experimental, affectionate, practical knowledge of God; and therefore he can never take any pleasure or delight in God.

There is no suitableness between a hypocrite and God; and how then can a hypocrite delight himself in God? There is the greatest contrariety imaginable between God and a hypocrite. God is light, and the hypocrite is darkness; God is holiness, and he filthiness; God is righteousness and he unrighteousness; God is fullness, and he emptiness. Now what delight can there be where there is such an utter contrariety?

Every hypocrite's heart is full of enmity against God; and how then can he delight himself in God? "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," Rom 8:7. The best part of a hypocrite is not only averse to God—but utterly hostile to God and all goodness. The eagle has a continual enmity with the serpent. Just so, a hypocrite's heart is still full of enmity against the Lord; and therefore he can never delight himself in the Lord.

The stream, cream, and strength of a hypocrite's delight—runs out to himself, and to this lust or that, or this relation or that, to this creature-comfort or that, to this worldly enjoyment or that; or else to arts, parts, gifts, privileges, etc. And therefore, how can he delight himself in the Almighty? A hypocrite always terminates his delight in something short of God, Christ, and heaven. As the apricot tree, though it leans against the wall, yet is fast rooted in the *earth*—so though a hypocrite may lean towards God, and towards Christ, and

towards heaven; yet his delight is still rooted fast in one creature-comfort or another. Neither God nor Christ is ever the complete object of a hypocrite's delight. A hypocrite is never principled to delight himself in a holy God, neither can he cordially, divinely, habitually delight himself in holy duties. A hypocrite may reform many evil things, and he may do many good duties, and yet all this while it is only in his *practices*—for his *heart* and *principles* are not changed and altered.

Though a hypocrite has nothing in himself which is *essential* to a Christian; yet he may resemble a Christian in all those things which are *not essential* to a Christian. A hypocrite, in all the externals of religion, may be the complete picture of a Christian; but if you look to his principles, and the manner of his managing of holy duties, there you will find him lame and defective, and as much unlike a sincere Christian as ever Michal's idol was unlike to the living David; and this will prove the great flaw, the great breakneck of hypocrites at last.

O sirs! Consider that outward motives and natural principles have carried many heathens to do many great and glorious things in the world. Did not Sisera do as great things as Gideon? The difference only lies here—that the great things which Gideon did, he did from more spiritual principles and lofty considerations, than any principles which Sisera acted by. And did not Diogenes trample under his feet the great and glorious things of this world, as well as Moses? The difference only lies in this—that Moses trampled under his feet the mirthful and gallant things of this world, from inward gracious principles, namely, faith, love, etc., whereas Diogenes only trampled upon them from poor, selfish principles, and from mere outward, carnal, external considerations. The favor of men, the eye of men, the commendations of men, the applause of men, and a great

name among men—are *golden apples*, great things among mere moralists. The application is easy.

A sincere Christian looks to the manner as well as to the matter of his duties. He acts and performs duties, not only from strength of nature and acquired abilities—but from strength of grace and infused principles; he acts from God and for God; he acts from a new heart; he acts from the law written in his heart; he acts from the love of God shed abroad in his heart; he acts from the divine nature communicated to him; he acts from the Spirit's indwelling in his heart; he acts from the fear of God established in his heart. These are the springs and principles of a sincere Christian's spiritual life and actions; and where they act and bear rule, it is no wonder if there are such motions and performances as the world may admire, but not imitate.

Paul's life, after his conversion, was a kind of constant miracle. So much he did, and so much he suffered, and so much he denied himself—that if he lived in these days, his life would be a miracle! But yet if we consider the new infused principles by which he acted, the great wonder will be, not that he did so much—but that he did no more. "For," says he, "Christ lives in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me," Gal 2:20.

It was a great saying of blessed Bradford, that he could not leave a duty until he had found communion with Christ in the duty, until he had brought his heart into a duty-frame. He could not leave *confession* until he had found his heart touched, broken, and humbled for sin; nor *petition* until he had found his heart pleased with the beauties of the things desired; nor could he leave *thanksgiving* until he had found his spirit enlarged and his soul

quicken in the return of praises. And it was a great saying of another, that he could never be quiet until he found God in every duty, and enjoyed communion with God in every prayer. "O Lord," said he, "I never come to you but *by* you; I never go from you *without* you."

**A sincere Christian is enamored with Christ above all.** He cannot be satisfied nor contented with duties or ordinances, without enjoying Christ in them, who is the life, soul, and substance of them. But when hypocrites do duties—all they do is from common principles, from natural principles, and from an unsanctified heart—and that mars all. Hypocrites make a great profession and are much in the outward actions of religion; they make a very fair show, they hear, they read, they pray, they fast, they sing psalms, and they give alms; but these duties being not performed from a principle of divine love, nor from a principle of spiritual life, nor from a sanctified frame of heart—are all lost, and the authors of them are undone forever and ever. "If anyone does not love the Lord, that person is cursed!" 1 Corinthians 16:22.

**12. No hypocrite in the world loves the WORD, or delights in the word, or prizes the word—as it is a holy word, a spiritual word, a beautiful word, a pure word, a clean word.**

Psalm 119:140, "Your word is very pure—therefore your servant loves it." Only those men whose hearts are after God's own heart—can love the word and delight in the word and embrace the word—for its

holiness, purity, and spirituality. Witness Paul: Rom 7:12, "Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Well, and what then? "Why," says he, Rom 7:22, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." But is this all? "No!" says he, Rom 7:25, "With the mind I myself serve the law of God." Holy Paul delights in the law as holy, and serves the law as holy, just, and good.

A sincere heart is the only heart which is interested in the word for its spirituality, purity, and heavenly beauty. None can joy in the word as it is a holy word, nor can any taste the sweetness in the word as it is a pure word—but sincere Christians: Psalm 19:8-10, "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean" (that is, the doctrine of the word which teaches the true fear of God), "enduring forever. The Judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether; more to be desired are they than gold, yes, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb;" or, as the Hebrew has it, "sweeter than the droppings of honeycombs." The word of God, as it is a pure word, a spiritual word, a clean word, a holy word; so it rejoices a sincere heart, and so it is sweeter than the very droppings of honeycombs.

The word, as it is a pure word, a holy word—is more sweet to a sincere Christian than those drops which drop immediately and naturally without any force or manipulation—which is counted the purest and sweetest honey. There is no profit, nor pleasure, nor joy comparable to that which the purity of the word yields to a sincere heart: Psalm 119:48, "I will lift up my hands to Your commandments, which I love, and will meditate on Your statutes." Sometimes the lifting up of hands betokens admiration. When men are astonished and ravished, they lift up their hands. "I will lift up my hands to your commandments;" that is, I will admire the goodness, spiritualness,



holiness, righteousness, purity, and excellency of your commandments.

Luther took such sweet pleasure and excellent delight in Scripture, that he would not take all the world, for one leaf of it. King Edward the Sixth was trying to lay hold on something which was just above his reach; one who stood by, seeing a Bible lying on the table, offered to lay it under the king's feet to heighten him; but the good young king disliked the notion, and instead of treading it under his feet, he laid it to his heart, to express the joy and delight that he took in the holy word.

Never did any hypocrites, since there was one in the world, ever love God as a holy God, or love his people as a holy people, or love his ways as holy ways, or love his word as a holy word. There is no hypocrite in the world who can truly say with David, "Your word is very pure—therefore your servant loves it." Saul could never say so; nor could Ahab ever say so; nor could Simon Magus ever say so; nor could the scribes and pharisees ever say so; nor could the stony ground hearers ever say so; nor could Isaiah's hypocrites ever say so. It is true, some of these did rejoice in the word, and delight in the word—but not as it was a holy word a pure word; for the whole word of God, every part of God's word is pure and holy.

Hypocrites are sometimes affected and delighted with the word, as it is dressed up with fine learned notions, which are but *mysterious nothings*; they are pleased with the word, as it is clothed with arts, parts, and elegance of fine language; they are pleased with the word, as it is appareled with silken expressions, or with some smooth elocution: Ezek 33:32, "You are very entertaining to them, like someone who sings love songs with a beautiful voice or plays fine music on an instrument." These hypocrites looked upon the

solemnity and majesty of the word but as a dry jest. The prophet being eloquent, and having a pleasing delivery, they were much pleased with it, and it was as sweet and delightful to them as sweet music; but they were not at all pleased or delighted with the spirituality, purity, and holiness of the word, as is evident in Ezek 33:31, "So they come pretending to be sincere and sit before you listening. But they have no intention of doing what I tell them. They express love with their mouths, but their hearts seek only after money."

It was a very sharp reproof of Chrysostom to his hearers, "This is that which is likely to undo your souls; you hear your ministers as so many minstrels—to please the ear, not to pierce the conscience." Augustine confesses that the delight which he took before his conversion in Ambrose's sermons was more for the eloquence of the words than the substance of the matter.

Hypocrites are pleased more with the wit, eloquence of speech, action, sharpness of imagination, smoothness of style, neatness of expression, and rareness of learned notion—than they are with the spirituality, purity, and holiness of the word, which they either hear or read. These hypocrites are like those children who are more pleased with the fine flowers which are strewn about the dish, than they are with the meat which is on the dish; and who are more pleased with the pretty weeds which grow in the field, than they are with the good corn which grows there.

But as the prudent farmer is pleased more with a few handfuls of good corn than he is with all the pretty weeds which are in the field, so a sincere Christian is more pleased with a few sound truths in a sermon—than he is pleased with all the lofty lines, and high strains, and flourishes of wit; or than he is pleased with some new-coined

phrases, or some quaint expressions, or some seraphical notions—with which a sermon may be decked or dressed up.

Some are pleased with the word, because the profession of it brings in customers into their shops, and keeps up their credit in the world. Others are pleased with the word as it seems to tickle their ears and please their fancies. Some are pleased with sermons because of the elegance of the style, delicacy of the words, smoothness of the language, and gracefulness of the delivery. And these deal with sermons as many do with their bouquets, which are made up of many sweet flowers, who, after they have enjoyed them for a while, cast them into a corner, and never mind them any more. So these, after they have commended a sermon, after they have highly applauded a sermon—they say, "It is sweet, it is sweet!" and shortly they throw it aside, as a withered flower, and of no further use. But a sincere heart savors the word, and relishes the word and is affected and pleased with the word as it is a holy word, a spiritual word, a pure word—which the most refined hypocrite under heaven never was affected or pleased with, nor can be, while hypocrisy keeps the throne in his soul.

### **13. A hypocrite cannot endure to be tried and searched and laid open to examination.**

A hypocrite hates the light, and would rather *go to hell in the dark*—than come to be weighed in the balance of the sanctuary. A soul-searching ministry is to a hypocrite, a tormenting ministry. That is no preacher for him—who will never let his conscience alone. He

knows that he looks good on the outside—but is rotten within. He knows he is like a whited sepulcher, glorious on the outside—but dead bones within; and therefore his heart rises and swells against such a man and such a ministry—which is all for the anatomizing and laying him open—to himself and to the world.

But as pure gold fears neither fire nor furnace, neither test nor touchstone, neither one balance nor another—so a sincere heart dares venture itself upon trial, yes, upon the very trial of God himself: Psalm 139:23, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts." A sincere Christian begs his friends to search him, and he prays for soul-searching ministers to search him; but above all, he begs hard for God to search him: "Search me, O God." The Hebrew word is in the *imperative* mood; he *commands* God to search him. The original word signifies a strict, thorough, diligent search.

A sincere Christian is very willing and desirous that God should thoroughly search him, that God should search into every corner and cranny of his heart: Psalm 26:2, "Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my thoughts and my heart." Every word here has its weight: "Examine me, O Lord." The Hebrew word signifies to melt, and so to make the most intrinsic and exact discovery. O Lord, let my heart and thoughts be melted, that it may be known what metal they are made of, whether gold or tin. "Prove me." The Hebrew word signifies to view, as when a man gets upon some high tower or hill to see all from thence. "Mount aloft, O Lord, take the high tower, take the hill, that you may see what is in me." "Try me, and know my thoughts." The Hebrew word properly signifies to take away. "Lord," says the psalmist, "if, upon searching and examining of me, you shall find any sin, any creature, any comfort, any enjoyment which lies in your room—take it away that you may be all in all to me!"

A sincere Christian knows that God never brings a pair of *scales* to weigh his graces—but only a *touchstone* to try the *reality* of his graces. He knows if his gold, his grace, is real, though it be ever so little, it will pass for current with God, and therefore he is free to venture upon the closest search by God. As bankrupts care not for casting up their accounts, because they know all is bad, very bad, yes, stark bankruptcy with them; just so hypocrites—they care not to come to the trial, to the test, because they know all is bad, yes, worse than bad with them. They have no desire to cast up their spiritual estates, because at the bottom of the account they must be forced to read the summary—"Undone, undone!" And therefore, as old deformed women cannot endure to look into the looking-glass, lest they should see wrinkles and deformity; so hypocrites cannot endure to look into the looking-glass of the gospel, lest their deformities, impieties, and wickednesses should be discovered and detected!

I have read of the elephant, how when he is forced to go into the water—he purposely muddies it, lest by the clearness of the stream he should discern his own deformity; so hypocrites are very unwilling to look into their own hearts, or into the clear streams of the Scriptures, lest their soul's deformity and ugliness should appear—to their own terror and bewilderment.

O sirs! as it is a hopeful evidence that the client's cause is good when he is ready and willing to enter upon a trial; and as it is a hopeful sign that a man's gold is true gold, when he is willing to bring it to the touchstone; and that a man is thriving when he is willing to cast up his account books; so it is a hopeful evidence that a man is sincere with God when he is ready and willing to venture upon the trial of God, when he is willing to cast up his books, his accounts—that he may see what he is worth for the eternal world.

Augustine speaks of a wise person, who said that he prized that little time which he constantly set apart every day for the examination of his conscience, far more than all the other part of the day. Of all the duties of religion, a hypocrite dreads most, that duty of self-examination, and that of venturing himself upon the search and trial of God.

Though a hypocrite may deceive all the world, yet the great God will not be deceived; for his eyes are sharp and piercing into all things, persons, and places. As the eyes of a well drawn picture are fastened on you whatever way you turn—so are the eyes of the Lord fastened on you, O hypocrite, whatever way you turn! It was a worthy saying of one, "If you cannot hide yourself from the sun, which is God's minister of light, how impossible will it be to hide yourself from him whose eyes are ten thousand times brighter than the sun!" The *eye of God* many times is very terrible to a hypocrite, which makes him very shy of venturing upon the trial of God. No hypocrite since the world stood, did ever love or delight to be searched and tried by God.

And thus I have showed you the several rounds or steps in Jacob's ladder, which no hypocrite under heaven can, while he remains a hypocrite, climb up to.

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