

Callused To Righteousness

In Ezekiel 23:38-39, the people of Jerusalem were so callused to holy matters that they could, in one moment, sacrifice their children to idols, and, in the next moment, enter God's house for Sabbath worship.

We could refer to this as hypocrisy today. A "hypocrite" denotes someone acting out the part of a character in a play. In Greek drama the actors held over their faces oversized masks painted to represent the character they were portraying. In life, the hypocrite is a person who masks his real self while he plays a part for his audience. Famous instances of hypocrisy include Jacob's sons (Genesis 37:29-35), the false prophets (Ezekiel 13:1-23), the Pharisees (Matthew 22:15-22), and Peter (Galatians 2:11-14).

The condemnation of hypocrisy is plain. Isaiah 9:17 said, *"Therefore the Lord shall have no joy in their young men, neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows: for every one is an hypocrite and an evildoer, and every mouth speaketh folly. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still."* Jesus pronounced woe after woe on the scribes and Pharisees because of their hypocrisy (Matthew 23:2-33). Philippians 3:18-19 described many who walked who were in reality *enemies of the cross of Christ.* The punishment of hypocrisy is being "cut off" from God and spiritual death (Job 8:13-15; Psalm 101:7; Matthew 24:50-51; Romans 1:18).

Are you full of "secret" sins or deceit? Be warned! The Lord knows your sin, and you will be punished (Numbers 32:23; 2 Chronicles 16:9; John 2:24-25)!

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