

lighthouse that was well grounded and well built which could guide men to the harbor. The same is true of character that is founded and built upon Christ.

Let me say at the outset that to live the Christian life is not so easy. A man can make a sham even of a diamond for a short time. We have far too many of these quickly made Christians among us who have never brought forth fruits--meat for repentance--nor gone through the fire of trial, sorrow, and self sacrifice. Do not trust feelings or words in yourself or other people. Look at yourself! See whether there is a difference in the value.

There are many men like ponds of water--clear at the top and mud at the bottom, fair in their tongues but foul in their hearts. Like a beautiful flower full of color but without scent--so are those who are fruitless!

This entire chapter deals with dangers and directions.

Enter in at the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many there be that enter in."

He repeats by saying, "Beware of false prophets. Be sure that you enter the gate; be sure that you enter life; be sure that you are not mislead by false teachings. See to it that you are not content with profession without practice." He is

talking about destiny and security.

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter or get into the kingdom of heaven, but only those who practice doing the will of my Father in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, was it not in your name that we prophesied and in your name that we drove out demons and in your name that we did many wondrous works?' Then I will say to them openly, 'I never knew you at all. Go away from Me you who practiced doing wrong or worked iniquity'."

Notice the Son of God does not say that there will be a few souls deceived but many. When we look around us today and see the thousands of church members going on in the church through the forms of religion who have no more of the spirit of the lowly Christ than heathens then we can understand the word many.

They love the world. They love worldly pleasures of every kind and hate anything that looks like real Bible piety.

We do not like to be uncharitable as to say that these souls are all deceived because there are many--two or three thousand in one church sometimes--who do not believe that they can or that they are required to live without sin.

But the Bible is true. It certainly is. They are all deceived and are making rapid strides down to a world of woe.

that sayeth unto me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." There are certain people who say, "Lord, Lord, Lord."

Now, He is not criticising people for saying, "Lord, Lord" because everybody should say, "Lord, Lord, Lord," but He is saying this to people who say this but who do not recognize Him as the Christ, as the Son of God. No man can become a Christian unless he says, "Lord, Lord, Lord," to the Lord Jesus Christ. Unless we believe that Jesus indeed is the Son of God and recognize Him as the Eternal Son of God, then we cannot be Christians because the devil believes but he only trembles--he goes no farther.

We must believe in the spirit as Robert McChesney of whom it is said that he was such a man of God and such a Christian that when he entered the pulpit people would break down and weep. They felt that he had come straight from an audience with God and they were humbled by his very appearance. This is what he said in his diary one day, "Today I missed a fine opportunity for speaking a word for Christ. The Lord saw that I would have spoken as much for my own honor as for Him and therefore He shut my mouth. I see that a man cannot be a faithful, fervent minister until he preaches just what Christ says, until he gives up trying to attract people to himself but to attract them to the Christ, the Lord." He ends, "Give me this." Are we not all in danger of doing things in the flesh that we imagine are being done for the sake of Christ?

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 says, "Though I speak with the tongue of men and of angels and have not charity I am become as sounding brass or though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and have not love it profiteth me nothing." All is useless if I lack these qualities that really make a man a Christian. A man can prophesy and be outside. It is a very terrifying thought and I understand it can mean this--that at the day of judgment we shall have great surprises. We shall find people who have said, "Lord, Lord, Lord," but not only to those people who prophesy, but there were those who even could cast out devils. Have you noticed the repetition of "In thy name," and "In thy name have cast out devils." It is possible for people to do even that and still be outside the kingdom. To prove this is simple.

It is clear from the New Testament that even Judas had this power. Our Lord sent out His disciples to preach and to cast out devils. They came back and said unto Him in great excitement, "Even the devils are subject unto us." It is quite clear that that applied equally to Judas. Our Lord may have given His power to a man and yet the man himself may be lost. There are other kinds in which He can enable us to do remarkable things. You remember that on one occasion Jesus was charged with doing His miracles in the work and the power of the devil. This is also verified by the magicians of Egypt. You remember

Introduction

Abolition on Sin

We are convinced by this lesson that it is not only possible for people to live in the church deceived and die deceived, but it is also impossible for souls to go all the way to the judgment deceived. This is an alarming fact.

The description given us in our text is the character of those who make external professions of religion but walk unworthy of its precepts. They are connected in a way with it, and yet not within it. It is evident that a person may have much which bears or represents piety while he is far from feeling its genuine influence. The great truth explained here is that the religion of Christ is to be practiced, for the teachings of Jesus are understood as they are put into practice.

The teachings of Jesus are only honored when they are put into practice. The proof of sincerity is in the doing; it's not just mere emotion.

There is a story of a lighthouse that was built off the coast of England. The architect was confident that the structure was strong and laughed at the criticisms that people said about it. To show his confidence, he took up his abode in the building. In the midst of a fearful storm the structure was caught in the gale winds and shaken to pieces. There was another

Let us notice the class of people spoken of in the text-- not thieves, not gamblers, not men who beat their wives, but they seem to be a pretty good lot. The world thought that they were the real people of God, but their robes of outside righteousness was just about all they had. Let us notice some of the good works.

First, they prophesied which means to foretell events or to preach. They could talk well on religious subjects. How true it is today! A man's religion or piety is generally estimated by the way he can talk on the subject. So these people were spoken of in the text as people who could talk well. They could talk about religion and perhaps they were versed in a great deal of the Scripture. Perhaps they could hold people captive, but they failed to have holiness of heart.

Second, they cast out devils and men were converted under their ministry. Yet men who were real ungodly and deep died in sin were convicted under their teaching and really some of them were brought to God and were changed. It is to be remembered that God's Word will not fail to work effectively though a Devil preach it.

God will bless His word if He cannot bless the man that declares it.

when Moses was sent to deliver the children, he worked his miracles and the magicians of Egypt were able to counterfeit and repeat them up to a certain point. They did many marvelous works. We need not rely only upon that. Our Lord says, "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets and shall show great signs and wonders insomuch that if it were possible they would deceive the very elect." These are the words of Christ in Matt. 24:24.

Take the words of Paul in II Thessalonians 2:8 "Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming."

His coming is after the works of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders. These things are prophesied. In other words a man may be able to point to great results such as healing and so on and yet they may signify nothing. This is very surprising to us.

But the way to test yourself or any man is to look below the surface. Do not look at the apparent results; do not look at the wonders and the marvels but discover whether he conforms to the beautitudes--is this man poor in spirit; is he meek; is he humble; does he groan in his spirit as he sees this old world in sin; is he a holy man of God; is he grave; is he sober; does he say with Paul "We that are in this tabernacle do groan

Third, these people believed in Jesus for they cast out devils in His name. Their great mistake was that they believed without repenting just as millions of church members are doing today. They say that they believe on Jesus but are traveling the same road and same way that they have always traveled. They are still mixed up with the world and they are still in the middle of quarreling, cheating, lying, and so on. This is the devil's kind of belief--he believes and trembles but still he is the devil because he will not repent.

Fourth, they did wonderful works perhaps such as faith healing, writing books, leading religious movements, donating money to colleges or religious institutions. But there was something lacking and they were weighed in the balances and found wanting. These are the most solemn words ever uttered in this world (not by man) but by the Son of God. They are words spoken by Jesus and they demand earnest attention. They disturb us. These words are extremely solemn and they warn people against a false security. There is no message here that works will do at the expense of belief. Here is self deception--self delusion; here is false evidence upon which some people tend to rest and it's rather surprising. It is none else than some resting upon correct belief, but Jesus said "Not every one

along with that crowd and have never experienced the grace of God or salvation in their heart. They are that group of nominal Christians who have made a profession but have no possession. Of these the Bible says, "They are with us but they are not of us." They may have all the appearance of a good church member, but when the tests come, they are found wanting.

These folks would be greatly insulted if we should intimate that they are hypocrites. That is exactly what Jesus called them. The Pharisees in Jesus day were ritual; they were legal; some of them prayed, and some of them had a little piety. But it is not always easy to identify the mixed multitude and only the Lord can judge them. Jesus warned His disciples not to try to separate the tares from the wheat for He said sooner or later it would take place. As a result of these people who lusted after the flesh, God sent judgment upon them. They all looked alike; they assumed the same place and were with them many years. They acquired the same physical characteristics of the Egyptians because of the climate of the country.

They acted alike; they not only looked alike, but they acted alike. They were in the company of God's people; they were compelled to do as they did. They ate the same foods; they did not like it. Moreover these people were going to the same place; they were traveling in the same direction, but the

silence of the record gives us a clue that they never reached the Promised Land. They either went back to Egypt to die or died in the wilderness. One cannot fail to see this contrast of the mixed multitudes of those days and the same crowd today; the same two groups are present today--professors and possessors the true and the false--the tares and the wheat--those who say "Lord, Lord" and do not the things which He says.

Now then can we know and what is the difference between the true child of God and this mixed multitude? The difference is between the Christ and the new birth. There was the mixed multitude who aligned themselves with God's people and corrupted Israel. Identifying one's self with a group is easy.

To know whether or not you have salvation is the important thing.

Thus Jesus said that they prophesied; they cast out devils; they believed in Jesus to a certain extent; they were able to do wonderful works; they were just marvelous. But let us come next to see what His accusation against these people was summed up. Since they were not outbreking sinners, He said to them, "Ye that practice doing wrong; ye that work iniquity."

In reading the word we find that God speaks of iniquity as if it were a different grade of sin from that of the ordinary kind.

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"Who will rise up for me against the evil doers or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity." Psalm 94:16

"My transgressions are sealed up in a bag and thou sewest up mine iniquity." Job 14:17

"Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquities and cleanse me from my sins." Psalm 51:2

These were (not outrageous) sinners in the text but Jesus does not address them as such. He mentions their quiet piety; He mentions their good works; but He said, "Depart from me ye that work iniquity." In tracing up the word iniquity we find that it means "the least deviation from righteousness."

In other words it is the fine, spider-web sin--the finest line of wickedness--the sin that lies deep below the surface.

The (little) justified, (white washed, (excused sins) that only individuals and the scanning eye of God knows and sees. The

International Standard Bible Dictionary says, "Iniquity was the customary used word to explain the meaning of crookedness,

perverseness, evil regarded as that which was not straight or upright; moral distortions; to bend or make crooked; to go astray."

It primarily is not actions but the character of an action.

If we could understand that and distinguish it. It is not the action, but the character of that action. Thus it is a fine line like a spider-web.

being burdened." Those are the tests--the man's character, the man's nature; not the appearance only but the reality itself. Let us remember again that it is the Lord who says these things and it is He who will judge, so do not be deceived God knows your heart and these are the marks of a New Testament man.

These then are the tests that are made and may all be summed up in the phrase, "He that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven," and we need to face this terrifying truth.

There were also those in the Old Testament who were

caught in this spider-web. The Bible tells about the greatest exodus in history with a mixed multitude. Exodus 12:38, "And

a mixed multitude went up also with them." As they left Egypt the mixed multitude went with them. We hear no more of this

crowd until we read in Numbers 11, "And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a-lusting." Numbers 11:4 As a result the

children of God--Israel--were caused to fall into sin. There were two groups of people who left Egypt--first there were

the true Israelites--members of the Covenant, and then there was the mixed multitude of strangers. This is the picture

of Christendom today. The Bible has much to say about the mixed multitudes among God's people and warns us repeatedly

against those who compromise with the world, those who travel

spider-web sins, spider-web evils.

Let me mention a few of these just for our enlightenment and blessing.

First, secret heart rebellion. It is alarming the amount of people who profess to be Christians, and some profess to holiness, who manifest enough rebellion in their heart to damn a world. This rebellion is only visible to God and angels. People whom God's light is shining upon to take this or that course, to do this or to do that, to lay this aside or that aside.

But because of humility or self-sacrifice or seeming disadvantage they will squirm and contend and finally say no to God either by word or conduct.

But still they continue to profess religion, and they talk about it and live and die saying that they are going to heaven. But it is not true.

God hates rebellion more than any other sin mentioned in the Bible. Listen, I Samuel 15:23 "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness as iniquity and idolatry."

Second, hatred. How many thousands of people who are in the church have cherished feelings of ill will against this or that one for years. Yes, a little feeling of dislike. Of

course, they may speak; they may even shake hands, and they may smile, but deep down in the heart there is a cold spot. A little bitter feeling.

Perhaps they may teach a Sunday School class; they may sin at times, but after the excitement dies down they have that old feeling down in their heart still.

This kind of a person lives in the church all their lives. They are counted as Christians and when they die they are talked right into heaven by the preacher. But alas I wonder if that is true.

I John 3:15 says, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

3 Unbelief is another spider-web sin. There are thousands of Christians who are professing that they live without sin and pretend divine healing. But friends that is all you have to do-- is to disbelieve the Word.

Here is the class of people that are candidates for hell.

Rev. 21:8 says, "The fearful and the unbelieving,"

Jesus said, "He that believeth shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16:16

So friend, no matter what church you belong to or what

our own lives maybe if we looked at our own selves. "And he that sayeth 'I know Him' and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him." If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness we lie and do not the truth. There are people who are doing just that. They are saying, "I am a Christian. I am in fellowship with God. I am a believer," but they are living in sin--they are caught in the spider web. What am I doing; what is the thing that is in my heart; am I really for Christ; is my relationship with the church just something on the surface?

What does God want? The Scripture says that He wants your heart; He wants the inner man; He wants your submission; He wants more than just a profession or a zeal or a fervor--He wants you. God does not want just your offering, He wants your obedience. He wants us. Is it possible for a man to say the right things and to be real busy and yet not be surrendered unto the Lord. He said, "Depart from me."

You cannot do a better thing than to examine your own heart at this point.

What is your main concern? Man is a social being and it's the simplest thing in the world for him to get mixed up in organizations and things and say, "Lord, Lord it's wonderful to be a part of a social organization." There are people whose real and ultimate interest in the church is just social--

nothing more, not personal. Many people today confronted by the problems of the country go to scientists who say that maybe we need some more spiritual teaching. Even statesmen and politicians sometimes give understanding and say this is what we need but they never attend sessions of worship on Sunday. But the use the word religious or Christian. They seem to think that that is going to solve the problem. They are not active, practicing Christians and they are not giving personal obedience to the Lord, but they seem to think that Christianity can help in a general way. That's the main danger confronting us today.

Some people today advertise Christ or Communism. That's not the choice we face today; that's not the danger confronting the Christian church today. People are persuaded sometimes if they are anti-communist they must be Christian; but that in no way follows. We may be persuaded but we are deceiving ourselves. Thus we may substitute some of these things for the real thing even to the point of prophesy. Some people approach the Bible with just an intellectual viewpoint rather than a spiritual.

The thing to do with these spider-webs is what Dr. A. J. Cronin, who performed what should have been a successful operation on a little boy. He was called to the hospital in the middle of the night and found the little boy dead due to neglect

doctrinal position you may hold, if you do not believe the Word--the written Word and the whole of it--you are regarded by God as an unbeliever and you are on a rapid march for destruction.

Fourth, inordinate affection--that is unlawful love. How

much of this kind of business there is carried on among religious people. Having lost all affection for their own companion, they develop a burning forrest fire for somebody else. This is something that causes angels to weep and heaven to veil its face. No wonder Jesus said, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Spider-web evil!

Fifth, idolatrous love.

There are thousands of people who love some creature, some earthly object more than they do God, but it is only visible to the eye of God. However, it will be disclosed to men and devils at the judgment.

Six, covetousness--greed

lack of the right spirit, eagerness for gain, hoarding up. There are thousands who perish because of this. Besides there are millions of people who have never heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ and His power to save and we are covetousness of our money and out means. Failing to

other words frequently used were "worthlessness, vanity, mischievous." The condition of one without law is the meaning being conveyed--lawlessness, unrighteousness.

As we analyse this there were those in the early church who used the name of Jesus as a magic formula and they would say, "Lord, Lord." It brought them temporary peace; they cast out devils; they turned worship into a racket. The warning is that worship may become a substitute for worth and become "worthless--ascribed to worth in God". Religion becomes a profession that is something merely professed.

The will of God is not always clear especially in regards to the many things of daily conduct, but often the will is clear and we will have the direction. "Mere profession of a Christian life does more harm perhaps than undisguised wickedness. As someone said of a man once, "There goes the leader of our local atheistic society." It was spoken of a church member who had always professed but did not live and did not really have love for Christ.

It's like the moisture that does not get to the root of the plant. The plant will soon wither, and only real Christianity is going to survive. It was mixed good and evil then as it is today. How in the world is our church going to survive? We ask the question, "Are there reasons why it should survive?" but it survive. We find tracing the word iniquity that here are

by a nurse. Feeling that she could never be trusted again, Dr. Cronin wrote a letter to the Board of Health recommending her dismissal from the nursing profession. Calling the nurse to his office, he read the letter. Finally when she made no defense the Doctor asked her if there was anything she would like to say. She did not deny the charge; she offered no excuse; but finally she cried, "Give me another chance."

That's what we should all plead tonight, "God, give us another chance. We have broken thy laws, despised thy statutes; we have no defense. We plead not for justice but mercy. Give us another chance."

give God His rightful part. Yes, we need to plant the cross in every land.

Jesus said, your judgment is to part from me for I never knew you; really, I never acknowledged you or endorsed you. You will hang your head in shame because of this. He says that in that day--and keep this clearly in mind that He is talking about judgment--according to our Lord there is going to be astonishment in the day of judgment. They have assumed that they are going to be saved; that they were sure that they were upon solid ground because they had said, "Lord, Lord surely you know our record. Don't you remember all we said and did in your name." They had no doubt about themselves; they were perfectly happy. The possibility that they could be anything but Christians and save people never entered their minds.

There can be no doubt about it. The day of judgment is coming and it will be a day of surprises. How often does our Lord tell us that the kind of false judgements we make upon the world and not just--they are just carnal--because we have false assurance. The Scripture says, "He that believeth on me is not condemned. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

We need to make a self examination at this point. It's not popular today, but it would prove to be the salvation of

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