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Evening Service

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## **Formalism: The Hallmark of Hypocrisy.**

God promises in Psalm 50 to come persecute false worship in His church with consuming flames of judgment. But God is as much gracious as He is just and tells us how to identify this sin in our lives in order that we may repent and avoid His wrath. He also tells us that He is patient, and won't immediately come to judgment against us.

We can see in the text, that the root of formalism is hypocrisy. A hypocrisy that seeks self satisfaction, spurns discipleship, and puts personal emotion above everything else. We see that these hypocrites associated with criminals and would slander their own brother for personal gain. Even through all of this, they still considered themselves to be good standing members of the Covenant. They quoted the scriptures, went to worship, and dutifully performed all of the rituals. They mistook God's patience as acceptance. They rationalized that God had accepted their hollow offerings. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Nothing we do as fallen men can put us in good standing with the Lord. We are sanctified through faith that is alive in us and causing us to grow in grace. There is no song, ritual, good deed, or ceremony that we can do please God. It pleases the Lord to give us unmerited grace, and install in us a true living faith. Our duty as Christians is to protect God's gifts by learning discernment, and avoiding the influences of hypocrites.

### **Notes**

The text shows us the extreme danger of judgment a hypocrite places himself in. It also gives us traits to look out for in ourselves and those we associate with;

- Dislike discipline – They have no need of Biblical guidance as they already have the answers figured out.
- Emotionalism – Their beliefs and actions sway with their moods. There is no solid foundation for their world view.
- Lack of Discernment – They do not seek after godly wisdom, instead they seek to find and/or create like minds.
- Poor Associations – They do not seek to walk with wise men who seek after Godly wisdom.

Fortunately our merciful God has left us wonderful instructions in his Word to show us how we can avoid this hypocrisy and discern the tactics of hypocrites. God is patient, but will not be tested. If we do not incline our ear to His Word, we will suffer the consequences.

## **Application**

As you listen to the sermon. Have the following questions in mind.

Where and how do I seek after God?

Do I cry out to God for discernment and understanding? If not, what do I cry out for and why?

Is Christ my chief treasure, would I give everything up for Him?

Who are the wise people I walk with?

## **Scripture References**

**Psalms 50:1-23 A Psalm of Asaph.** The Mighty One, God, the LORD, has spoken, And summoned the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. (2) Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shone forth. (3) May our God come and not keep silence; Fire devours before Him, And it is very tempestuous around Him. (4) He summons the heavens above, And the earth, to judge His people: (5) "Gather My godly ones to Me, Those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." (6) And the heavens declare His righteousness, For God Himself is judge. Selah. (7) "Hear, O My people, and I will speak; O Israel, I will testify against you; I am God, your God. (8) "I do not reprove you for your sacrifices, And your burnt offerings are continually before Me. (9) "I shall take no young bull out of your house Nor male goats out of your folds. (10) "For every beast of the forest is Mine, The cattle on a thousand hills. (11) "I know every bird of the mountains, And everything that moves in the field is Mine. (12) "If I were hungry I would not tell you, For the world is Mine, and all it contains. (13) "Shall I eat the flesh of bulls Or drink the blood of male goats? (14) "Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving And pay your vows to the Most High; (15) Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me." (16) But to the wicked God says, "What right have you to tell of My statutes And to take My covenant in your mouth? (17) "For you hate discipline, And you cast My words behind you. (18) "When you see a thief, you are pleased with him, And you associate with adulterers. (19) "You let your mouth loose in evil And your tongue frames deceit. (20) "You sit and speak against your brother; You slander your own mother's son. (21) "These things you have done and I kept silence; You thought that I was just like you; I will reprove you and state *the case* in order before your eyes. (22) "Now consider this, you who forget God, Or I will tear *you* in pieces, and there will be none to deliver. (23) "He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me; And to him who orders *his way aright* I shall show the salvation of God."

**Proverbs 2:1-3** My son, if you will receive my words And treasure my commandments within you, (2) Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding; (3) For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding;

We are glad you have chosen to listen to this sermon and pray that it gives you strength, the want for obedience, and a desire to have God's abundant Grace mortify sin in your life. If you have any questions or comments please email [chuck\\_ezell@yahoo.com](mailto:chuck_ezell@yahoo.com).