

The Age of Sham

by Ian Paisley

Ian Paisley's sermon, 'The Age of Sham,' warns against the dangers of false faith and emphasizes the necessity of true belief in Christ for salvation.

Duration: 41:14

Scripture: Matthew 7:21-23, Matthew 10:27-28, Matthew 25:41, 2 Corinthians 13:5-6

Topics: "False Religion", "True Repentance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that preaching the word of God can lead to bondage and the tyranny of an inward trend. He criticizes the character of the apostle, accusing him of pretending to have faith while his heart knows nothing of it. The preacher also highlights the importance of repentance and forgiveness, even for the vilest sinner. He warns against the dangers of delusion and false religious practices, urging listeners not to wait until it's too late to seek salvation. The sermon references biblical figures such as Peter, Isaiah, and the Lord Himself to support its message.

Transcript

Last night I was reading a sermon by that greatest of all preachers, C. H. Spurgeon, and he had this to say, With what indignation, then, must the Lord look down upon the apostate harlot called the Romish Church, when in all her sanctuaries there are pictures and images, relics and shrines, and poor infatuated beings are even taught to bow and worship a piece of bread? In this country, a pope's idolatry is not so bare-faced and naked as it is in other lands, but I have seen it, and my soul has been moved with indignation, like that of Paul on Mars Hill when he saw this city wholly given to idolatry. I have seen thousands adore the wafer, hundreds bow before the image of the Virgin, scores at prayer before a crucifix, companies of men and women adoring a rotten bone or a rusty nail because it was said to be the relic of a saint. It is vain for the Romanist to assert that he that worships, that he worships not the things themselves, but only the Lord through them.

For this, this second commandment expressly forbids, and it is upon this point that the Lord calls Himself a jealous God. How full is that cup which Babylon must drink! The day is hastening when the Lord shall avenge Himself upon her, because her iniquities have reached unto heaven, and she has blasphemously exalted her pope into the very throne of the Most High, and thrust her priests into the office of the Lamb. Purge yourselves, purge yourselves of this leaven.

I charge you before God, the Judge of the quick and the dead, that you not be partakers of our plagues come out from her more and more. And let your protests be increasingly vehement against this which exalted itself above all that is called God. Let all Protestant churches, which have too great a savor of potpourri in them, cleanse themselves of her fornications.

Bless the Lord, visit them with fire, and pour the plagues of Babylon upon them. Renounce, my brethren, every ceremony which has not Scripture for its warrant, and every doctrine which is not established by the plain testimony of the Word of God. Let us above all, never by any sign or word or deed of any complicity with this communion of devils, this gathering together of the sons of Belial, and since our God is a jealous God, let us not provoke Him by any affinity, gentleness, fellowship, or unity with the mother of harlots and the abominations of the earth.

We have seen in the last days the turning of the whole world to follow after the beast of Rome. God said through His servant John, the world wondered after the beast. And true are the Scriptures of truth.

If you have your Bible, turn with me to the sixteenth chapter of Matthew's Gospel. Matthew chapter sixteen, and at the verse sixteen, the profession of loyalty of Simon Peter to Christ. And he said there, thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Matthew sixteen, verse sixteen. I ask you, if you reject the Pope with all his false claims, I say they have produced a new sash for the Pope. The other Pope never wore it, a new sash.

There are upon that sash five crosses. And he says that shows that he is over the whole world, over the five continents of the world. I notice too that he announced that because the crown was too heavy, he wouldn't be wearing the crown.

That he asked them to give him instead the ring of a fisherman. How does he know what a fisherman's ring looked like? And how does he know the fisherman ever wore a ring? But they got him a fisherman's ring to put on his finger. For he says he is the successor of Peter.

Peter, of course, we know from history, never was in Rome. He died in Asia Minor. Read the New Testament, you'll find out where he lived.

It wasn't in Rome. But all this is part of the falsehood of Romanism. But if you believe in the true Christ, I want you to stand to your feet now.

And I want us all to repeat that verse. Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Let's stand and let's say it together.

Of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Let us say it a second time.

Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And let us say it a third time. Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Let us pray. Father in heaven, we worship thy Son as the only Savior of man. We thank thee that thou dost not sit in the Vatican this night, Lord Jesus.

Thou dost sit on the throne of God. Thou art King of kings and Lord of lords. And the angels are crying tonight, crown Him Lord of all.

And we are crying tonight, crown Him Lord of all. We thank thee for the privilege to pay our witness to our love for Christ. And to reject the falsehood.

Thank you for the reformers. Thank you for the great Protestant reformation. Thank you for those that gave us the Bible and the pure gospel of Christ.

And we pray that we may live lives that bring honor and glory to thy truth. For thy word is truth. And the people of God say it.

Amen. We're turning to Matthew's gospel, chapter 7. The seventh chapter of Matthew's gospel. You'll find authorized versions of the word of God here before you.

Pick up the Bible, the first book of the New Testament, the gospel according to Matthew. And we're just going to read three verses here. Verse 21, verse 22, and verse 23.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. But he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils.

And in thy name done many wonderful works. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

And God will stamp with his own divine seal of approval and blessing. This reading from his own holy and most precious works. I have for my subject this evening the age of sham.

Not every one that saith unto me, the Savior said, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. But he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say unto me on that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils.

And in thy name done many wonderful works. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Dr. John Ryland was a distinguished preacher in the days of the eighteenth century. He was a Baptist minister and he became in 1794 the president of the Bristol Baptist College. And continued in office as principal unto the year 1825.

He was a man of great simplicity. And one day his wife was very ill. And she said to her husband, John, I am going to die and I fear I will be sent to hell.

He looked at her and he said, why, I say, whatever would you do if you got to hell? I judged that you would want to sing one of the old favorite hymns such as, Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly. She looked at him and she said, well, John, I am sure I would sing his praise even if I was in hell. And I judge you would be praying there, he said.

Oh yes, she said, I couldn't give up praying. I'm sure out of the very belly of hell I would cry to God. Why, Bessie, he said, you would set all hell in an uproar.

For here Satan trembles when he sees that we could sit upon his knees. But they suppose they asked you at hell's gate whether you loved Jesus or not. What would you answer? She said, I would answer faithfully that I really did love Jesus.

Ah, well then, they would never let you in there. You would be no society for them. For all in that dark domain there is not one that loves Jesus.

And there's not one that ever can love Jesus. So that if you are not fit for heaven, you are certainly and utterly unfit for hell. So there remains only heaven for you.

You have nowhere else to go. And his dear wife saw the great truth that he was trying to teach her. And that great truth was the assurance of sins forgiven.

People can be absolutely sure, without a shadow of a doubt, that they're going to heaven singing washed in the blood of the Lamb. We, however, live in an age of shams. Everything is being counterfeited today.

There is sham furniture which claims to be of high class wood. But it's only veneered. It's not the real thing at all.

There are lots of good. Some of them claim to be made of gold. Some of them claim to be made of silver.

Some of them claim to be made of brass. But they're only face metals electroplated. After a short time, the face metals underneath the plating begin to show.

And they know and we know we were taken in. And this was counterfeit. This was a sham indeed.

The great day of judgment are going to be stripped naked of their deceitful and hypocritical roles. Many, not just a few, the great number of people at the judgment bar will go to hell through hypocrisy. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils.

And in thy name done many wonderful works. I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Self deception. Never let us forget it. Self deception is a very ancient religion.

Kim was a very religious man. But he was a sham. He sacrificed to the same true and living God as his brother evil did.

But his was a sham altar. A sham sacrifice and a sham religion. The word of God indicts Kim and says, Not as Kim who was of that wicked one and slew his brother.

And wherefore slew he him because his works were evil and his brother's works. The mixed multitude which left Egypt with the tribes of Israel from under the power of Pharaoh. They were not moved by godly fear.

They were moved by slavish fear. And when the words of the commandment of God came, Thou shalt have no other gods before me. And those words freshly were engraved on the tables of stone.

The mixed multitude left the children of Israel to break and violate God's just given commandment. Korah, Dathan and Abiram were religious but they were reprobates. They went down alive into the pit.

Suddenly the Lord opened the ground and cursed them to hell itself. Balaam was an eloquent religious prophet but he was a sham. He found himself in the same litter of pigs that were slaughtered in Beelpior.

The holy prophet Isaiah indicted the whole nation of Israel with their shamming. He said you draw near to God and honor him with your lips but your hearts are far from him. There is hypocrisy.

Or as much the Lord said that his people draw near with their mouth and their lips to honor me but have removed their heart far from me and their fear towards me is taught by the priest which is spoken by the Lord himself in my text. Gifts are not grace. Zeal is not of necessity fueled by true love of Christ.

Delusion can last for a lifetime. Delusion casts the majority of people who are in hell into the pit. Very religious man here in the judgment day Christ labels them as workers of iniquity.

A time will come dear sinner friend when it will be truly at an end. I remember years ago hearing a congregation sing these words When the harvest is past and the summer is gone And sermons and prayers shall be over When the beams cease to break of the blessed Lord's day morn And Jesus invites thee no more When the rich gales of mercy no longer shall blow The gospel no message declare Sinner how canst thou bear The deep wheelings of woe How suffer the night of despair When the holy have gone to the regions of peace To dwell in the mansions above When their harmony wakes in the fullness of bliss Their songs to the Savior they love Say oh sinner that liveth at rest and secure Who feareth no trouble to come Can thy spirit the swellings of sorrow endure Or bear the impenitence doomed When the harvest is past and the summer is over With the weak or the tares When the judgment appears Oh what shall it be evermore No wonder the apostle Paul In writing in his second epistle to the Corinthian church At chapter thirteen verses five and six says Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith Prove your own selves Know your own selves Or that Jesus Christ is in you Except ye be reprobate But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobate For if we would judge ourselves we should not be judged Let me point out to you That there is a similarity between the sham faith of the hypocrite And the saving faith of the holy person In both cases there is sorrow But the sorrow is entirely different The true sorrow brings repentance to the sinners heart A repentance not to be repented of It is the sorrow of one that has changed his direction And has genuinely said goodbye to sin and sinning And yes to the commandments of God who has saved him The false sorrow is not a sorrow of repentance at all It is a sorrow of remorse That a man has been found out in his sin It is the sorrow of one discovered in evil doing Not the sorrow of one who has given up his evil doing Peter went out and he wept bitterly Sobbing over the consequences of his awful denial of Christ With oaths and curses What was it that changed Peter?

If you read the gospel narrative you will find what it was The Lord turned and looked upon Peter It was the vision of the anguish of Christ In the day of his judgment When he saw one of the disciples that he loved so much And that loved disciple had denied him with oaths and cursing That anguish of heart of Christ reached the heart of Peter And he went out and he wept bitterly He had learned to hate the sin itself Not the fact that he had been found out in its committal There is a true repentance And there is a truth of sin The soul which is inspired by the Saviour's love and honour Can never be lost In both cases there is the attitude to Christ The true believer in Christ Believes in his person Believes in his passion Believes in his power Believes in his pardon And believes in the Saviour's prayer The Saviour's person, passion, power, pardon and prayers Are uttermost in the sinner's mind as he turns to Christ Christ is all and in all to the man that seeks him With his whole heart and his whole soul And his whole mind and his whole mind Christ to the true repenting sinner Is the chief object of that poor repenting sinner's love To the hypocrite, Christ is merely a dispenser of gifts Listen to this language, have you noticed it?

Have we not prophesied in thy name? In phycists themselves, not in the Saviour In thy name we have cast out devils The casting out of devils Magnifies the importance not of Christ as it should be But of those

that cast them out Have we not cast out devils? In thy name have we not done wonderful works? It's not God doing wonderful works It's them doing wonderful works Again, it's not the Lord that did these things These are the doings of self-righteous people Truly these have a name to live And they're truly dead Thirdly, let's notice The sham believer practices the same religious ordinances as the true believer Take the infamous Simon the sorcerer down there in Samaria And Philip came and had his great revival meeting And hundreds were converted The true converts were all baptized And the true converts, they held the miracles that John worked And they were true believers But it says also that Simon believed But his faith was entirely different from the faith of the true believers It was a sham faith Listen to these awful words And when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God And the name of Jesus Christ They were baptized, both men and women Then Simon himself believed also And when he was baptized He continued with Philip and wondered Beholding the miracles and signs that were done But when Peter came down And laid hands upon these Samaritan converts To receive the Holy Ghost Simon said, I'll give you money If you give to me the power to give people the Holy Ghost And Peter said unto him Thy money perish with thee Because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter For thy heart is not right with God But he had believed, he had been baptized He had practiced all that they converted His conversion was false His faith was false His language was false His repentance What did Peter say to him?

He said, repent therefore of this thy wickedness And pray God that perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee For I beseeveth thou art in the gall of bitterness And in the bond of iniquity Is that how God sees you tonight my friend?

Note that our Lord said of these hypocrites That they shall plead all their mighty deeds at heaven's locked door But that door will not be opened Unto them however was opened the gates of the pit of hell It was Professor Johnson who once said The sin of Simon is that of a money loving man His faith was in his money He believed that money answered all things Not only in reference to the world But in reference to the kingdom of God He is the type of a class There are those who secretly believe they can patronize the ministers of Christ And purchase for themselves an interest in the kingdom of God The power of wealth so subtly mingles with all Christian work And profusely used may so readily acquire For its possessor the reputation of sanctity But the immoral antipathy of the spirit of the

gospel As the free energy of the holy God in man's souls Casts off in one word of the apostle these vile counterfeits Which ever obtain currency side by side with true Christianity in the world The apostle whose word had been in the very act of healing Said silver and gold have I none Also said thy money perish A bosom sin, a hidden sin A secret sin will separate man from his God forever The kingdom of God is within It is a spiritual state And it has a spiritual system of motives He has no part or lot in it He does not see that it aims at the fulfillment of our life By subjugation of all the lower motives And the instigation of the heart of higher motives The motives of God Simon's heart was not split before God He was trying to juggle within him The power to let his lower passions Still

carry him forward in satisfaction And make even them a mask of false piety This is the type of the most deadly sin That we have seen occasioned As true Christianity has been preached in this world of ours As the shadow most certainly follows the sun So does hypocrisy follow close on the heels of genuine piety Insincerity is the sin of sin What filth is in the bodily habit Than on truth which is in the soul The man is aware of his sin It is no blindness of passion But the deliberate admission of an official lie In the feelings and thoughts of the ungodly It is a poison infusing its influence Into every part of the whole life of the mind It is bondage and no liberty And it brings about the tyranny of an inward treachery This is the character of

the imposter Exposed by the pure light of the

truth He seems to pretend a faith of which his heart knows nothing He regards the gift of the Holy Ghost as something he can buy And he knows no higher motive to repentance Than the slavish fear of punishment The spirit of the gospel is illustrated in the Apostle Peter By the strong language he uses He sternly points to the man's sins He tracks them to the source of the heart He chastises the sinner But at the same time Even the vilest sinner Is offered the duty of repentance And the hope of forgiveness And even Simon with all his wickedness Was offered that O cursed, cursed sin Traitor to God The ruiner of man The mother of woe And death And hell-wrecked wretchedness Yet seeking worse Polluted most Yet wallowing in the mire Most man Mad yet Drinking jury's giddy cup Death ever deepening

Darkness darkening still Sin gives you folly for your wisdom It gives you guilt for your innocence It gives you anguish for your rapture It gives you not hope But eternal destruction The soul is destroyed It is pained with tormenting It is unawed with wrath It is unreclaimed by mercy Things most unsightly Most forlorn Most sad Is thy time on earth O unrepenting sinner And soon you will meet with God And God will take war With your soul Finally let me say a word About the doom of the hypocrite The great profession of the great judge On the great judgment day Then I will profess unto you I never knew you How different when he says to others I know my sheep and am known of mine My sheep hear my voice And they follow me And I give unto them eternal life And they shall never perish Neither

shall any man pluck them out of my hand And yet he says to others I never knew you Is that what he's going to say to you On the dark morn of judgment He labels them for hell's flame He ties around their neck Workers of iniquity They boast that they were holy But they weren't, they were sinful They boast that they had done great works In the name of Jesus But they never did any of those great works They were liars They boasted that their works were wonderful But they were wonderfully sinful Wonderfully darkened with the darkness of hell And judgment They were workers of sinfulness, not holiness Workers of death, not life Workers of hell, not of heaven Workers of the devil and not of God And then finally Christ dismisses them Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting darkness Tell me, my

friend, are you a sham or a saint Are you a counterfeit or are you a Christian Your punishment in darkness Will be a punishment deeper than devils can incur Because you reject Christ's love Christ's love has never been offered to devils and never will But it's offered to sinners And you should accept it immediately And never get off your knees until you know in your heart You're a child of God And washed in the blood of the Lamb And if not Then sad, sad shall be your bitter wheel Almost but lost Amen Let us bow our heads Father in heaven We thank thee for thy word The solemn word of a solemn God We pray that hearts may be broken And souls may come to Christ this night That hypocrisy will be stripped away And men and women will seek the Lord while he may be found And call upon him while he

is near Hear this our cry For Jesus' sake Amen and Amen

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