

A Devil in an Angel's Garb!

by Thomas Brooks

The sermon warns against formalism, where people have a show of godliness but lack the power of godliness, and emphasizes the importance of living a life of true devotion and good works.

Scripture: Matthew 7:16, 2 Timothy 3:5

Topics: "True Holiness", "The Danger of Formalism"

Description

Thomas Brooks warns against the dangers of formalism in faith, emphasizing that many possess only a superficial appearance of godliness while lacking its true power and substance. He illustrates that formalists may appear devout through their words and actions, yet their hearts are devoid of genuine holiness, making them spiritually barren. Brooks compares them to a well-drawn picture that lacks life, highlighting that while the form of godliness is common, its true power is rare and transformative. He cautions that such individuals, despite their outward appearances, are ultimately unfruitful and face dire consequences if they do not seek true spiritual life.

Transcript

"Having a form of godliness but denying its power."

2 Timothy 3:5

All formalists have only a form, a show, a profession of holiness--but have nothing of the reality, spirit, life, or power of holiness in them. They have a face, a cloak, a mask, a show of godliness--but they have nothing of the pith, sap, life, or marrow of godliness. Their devotion, their godliness, lies in good words. If you hearken to their voice, you would think that they were men of much godliness; but if you look into their hearts and

lives, you will find them to be great renouncers and deniers of godliness. They have . . .
the semblance of godliness--but not the substance;
the lineaments of godliness--but not the life;
the face of godliness--but not the heart;
the form, the shadow of godliness--but not the power.

They are like a well-drawn picture, which has all the lineaments of a man--but lacks life, lacks a principle of motion and operation.

The form of godliness is common--but the power of godliness is rare. The form of godliness is easy--but the power of godliness is difficult. The form of godliness exists with secret and with open wickedness--as you see in Saul, Jehu, Judas, Simon Magus, Demas, and the Scribes and Pharisees--but the power of godliness will not. The power of godliness lays the axe to the very root of all sin, both secret and open.

Rachel was very fair and beautiful to the eye--but she was barren--and that marred all. Just so, the formalist, he is a very fair and beautiful professor to the eye--but he is barren Godwards, and Christwards, and heavenwards; he is fruitless, sapless, and lifeless--and that mars all.

A formalist is . . .
more light than life,
more notion than motion,
more head than heart,
more outside than inside,

more leaves than fruit,
more shadow than substance.

A formalist is . . .

a blazing comet,

a painted tomb,

a stage-player,

a white devil, or

a devil in an angel's garb!

What would such devils do in heaven? God has a
thunderbolt for every formalist, by which He will at
last certainly strike them down to the lowest hell.

A formalist is too loathsome a thing, too heavy a
burden, for heaven to bear.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/thomas-brooks/a-devil-in-an-angels-garb/>

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