

**A Lesson on Hypocrisy**

- Pr & wife get invitd to home of fam/ch for supper one eve. Come to house; evone visiting in ktchn; Pr's wife notices fam calndr: "Pr/Mrs So/So over for dinner; dust off Bbbs." Funny. Later in wk, Pr dwntwn, making small talk w/smone nvr met; intrdcs self as Pr & invites man come ch. Man: "Rev, I don't go ch; don't want anythng do w/ch; ch full hyperts." W/o even cracking smirk, Pr: "We've always got room for one more." Funny. Same Pr: pretty well known in comnty; tchs classes & gives presntns on fam mattr; famous for parenting seminars & marg counslng – helped lot margs & fams get strngr. But it's later discvrd: for yrs, this Pr: affair w/lady fr cong. Not so funny.
- What is hypcsy – essntly, at core? Wrđ hypcrsy: Grk wrđ; comes fr lang/theater & stage. Means: behind the mask. Actors'd wear mask out on stage so ppl cldn't see who really were as playd part in musical or play. That's where wrds hypcsy/hypcrt come fr: theater; mean behind mask. Over time, those wrđ've come to have broader meaning than smone on stage. For us hypcrsy means: creating public imprssn that's dffrnt fr reality. Means: pretend, deceive, cover up truth so ppl see one thing, even if dffrnt fr reality. So, ppl who invited Pr/wife over: wearing mask; wanted them think read Bible all time. Or, man who thght ch full hycrts: just assumd evone wearing mask, all fake. And this Pr who had affair: wearing mask, living lie. That's hypcrsy: wearing mask.
- And when it comes right dwn to it: we all wear masks. There are things we don't want other ppl know re us, like: what we think re; whom we think re; what enjoy/desire/feel/hate; what we're really like – real you. Tell me: who knows real you? Spouse? Maybe/not. Who are you deep inside, and what masks do you wear to cover up what's deep inside? When: who you really are & what imprssn you want give don't line up, that's hypcrsy, wearing mask.
- Today is AW, and today in GW we find smone who's wearing mask – pretty famous prsn. This: whom Bible calls **"man after [God's] own hrt" (1 Sam 13:14; Ac 13:22)**. This is Dvd, kng/Isrl – whom God chose fr amng shphrds (yngst of his bros) be kng over land; hunted down by Kng Saul, and while Saul restng in cave, Dvd came, cut corner/robe, guilt-strckn; bravely fght Gol, when no one else wld, w/nthng but faith in hrt & slingshot in hand; wrote many Pss. Dvd: kng/Israel, Comndr/Chf army, sprtl leader of God's ppl – he's: honrbl, respcbtl, dignfd, godly man. Well, look at him now: a married man, checking out anthr woman. **"Dvd sent smone to find out re her. The man said, 'She is Bathshba, dghtr/Eliam & wife/Uriah Hittite'" (11:3)**. She: married woman & wife/respcd soldier. Shld've ended right there! How think unnamed mesngr felt re his godly king, man after God's hrt, when Dvd brght Bathshba into bedrm & made love. Prob thght: "Hypcrt!" Then, when Dvd finds out she's pregnant, concocts devilish plan have husb Uriah killed in battle. And get this: even sends private instrctns detailing this murderous plan to Joab (army comndr) w/Uriah himself; Uriah's carrying his own dth sentnc! And Joab follows orders; but how think felt re honrbl Com/Chf? Prob thght: "Hypcrt!" Were they right? Was Dvd hypcrt? Better believe it! Dvd put on the mask of piety & godly leadrshp to cover up wickedness on inside.
- When do you do exact same thing? When we wear a mask? We don't like admit it; but we want wrld see one thing, when really we're hiding smthng on inside. We want ppl look at us & see good prsn, so cover up secrets. We all wear masks, evone/us. Our masks may be dffrnt. I want you view me: godly Pr. You want fellow ch membs see you as faithfl, God-fearing, ch-going parshnr. When ppl look at us, what do we want them see? We want ppl see smone who's got life togthr: respnsbl, orgnzd, stable; has thngs under control – loving mother, super-mom; good dad, reliable captain/household; patient parent; has perf marg; mentally healthy & sprtly strong; strong faith, pure hrt; nvr doubting God; eager serve Lord; sinful, yeah, but pretty in-control of temptns. That's how we want ppl think re us. But is that always reality? Ever reality?! We put on masks all time; cover up truth, pretend, fake it to make it, conceal our secrets. But deep down, we know who we are; we know what's really on the inside. We lust same lusts as Dvd; plot same evil as Dvd. And even if we've nvr acted on those lusts or carried out those plots same way Dvd did, it's only bec we either nvr had opprtnty or didn't have guts. We have same sinful nature, same evil hrt as Dvd. But don't want ppl see it; so we cover it & put on mask.

- On AW, God calls us repent. To repent: turn away fr sin & to God – good defntn. Another defntn/repent: come before God & rip off mask; stop pretnrng/faking/thinking God doesn't know who you really are. To repent: rip off mask hiding behind, show God who really are, lay all before him in sorrow & apology. *"In hoplssnss & near despair, I cry to you my Sav! My guilt is more than I can bear, I have not earned your favor. You know me as I really am: how much is truth, how much is sham" (CWS 738:1).* Show God the sham! He knows it all anyway. The Pharisee in J's prbl: all sham – God, thanks for making me awsm – hypocrt! He: hiding truth behind a lie. But tax collctr: took off mask; was honst w/God & self. When you repent, be honst w/God & self, not just on AW but ev day. Unmask hypcsy & truly repent.
- God called Dvd repent. Sent prpht Nthn. Nthn told Dvd story, re rich man who had evthng & poor man who had nothing – but pet lamb, like dghtr to him. You know how story goes: rich man, instd of just taking one/many lambs fr his own flock to prepare feast for guest, took the little pet lamb that poor man loved. And as Nthn tells this story, Dvd's fury builds/builds, until finally: **"As surely as the Lord lives, the man who did this must die! He must pay for that lamb 4x over, bec did such a thing and had no pity!" (12:5-6).** And as Dvd spews forth his vengeful wrath vs this chrctr/prbl, he's too stupid to see: poor man=Uriah; little lamb=Bthshba; and pitiless monster who took what did not belong to him=Dvd himself. So Nathan looks Dvd square in eye: **"You are the man!" (7).** "That's you; that's real you!" Then Dvd stopped pretending & took off mask. *"Most holy & merciful Fr, we confess to you & to oa that we have sinned by our own fault, by our own grievous fault. Have mercy on us, Lord."* And then Nthn said to Dvd, & also says to us, **"The Lord has taken away your sin" (13).**
- Today on this AW, God calls us to stop pretnrng & take off mask, bec only when confess depths of our hrt can we truly apprct depths God's hrt. Only when we rip away mask & show God who we really are can we see who God really is. He's the God who loves you – not mask but real you. Loves you so much: sent Son to suffer fate of the damned to save bunch hypocrts, like Dvd/me/you. And when, for sake/dth & res of no one less than Son/God, God says, "I forgive you," he's not just forgiving silly little things you want ppl think you're guilty of. He's forgiving your hypcsy!
- And that's what AW all about – depth of God's forgvnss. That's what God wants tch us w/this lesson on hypcsy. I'm not going stand here in pulpit & say, "All you who came ch today – you're all just bunch hypocrts." Wldn't be fair. You/I are: Xian ppl; know sin/Sav. But I will say this: very often we put on a mask, before others & before God. And today God urges us: take off mask & truly repent, so that we can truly undrstnd & apprct God's grace to us in CJ, whose bitter passion washes us compltly clean, and whose love for us drove him to hell & back to make us his redeemed, forgiven ppl. In name...

