***Indifference is a Sin***

The bride cannot be in indifference. Indifference is when someone does not care. It may be a lack of care about life, other people, or the things of God. **Spiritual indifference is a sin.** It can begin when there is no sincere love and worship. Religious words and ceremonies take their place. It was like this with the priests. They just went on repeating words. They did their duties in the Temple. But they said: ‘How tired we are of all this.’

God desires worship that comes from love. He does not want only words. Ceremonies alone do not please him. Many prophets spoke to the Jews. They all gave the same message. There was Amos and Hosea. There was Micah and Isaiah. They spoke in century 8. Now, Malachi came with the same message. They could offer things that would please God.

But there was only one way that they could do this. They must obey him because of love. If there was no love in their worship, then God hated their gifts. (Read Amos 5:21-24; Hosea 6:6; Isaiah 1:11-20; Jeremiah 7:21-9:3 and 14:12 too.) We may have become careless in our own spiritual lives. It is so easy for this to happen. We must always be aware of this danger. It is very easy not to be sincere. We can pretend to love and to obey God. The name for someone like that is a hypocrite.

An actor is the same word in the Greek language. It means ‘the person who wears a mask’ (or cover on his face). In plays, actors pretend to be someone else. Jesus used this word for a group of men. They were the religious leaders at that time Their name was the Pharisees. They had many extra rules. They insisted that the people must obey them all. But their ceremonies, too, had no meaning. Jesus made it clear that he hated their methods.

Perhaps we have ‘a mask’ in our Christian lives. We are hypocrites. We pretend to be people that we are not. Only the Lord Jesus can help us to recognize it. Only he can help us to be free from it.

There is a lot about the Pharisees in the Bible. It must be there to warn us today. There are always similar dangers for us. The words of Jesus in Matthew 23 are one example. They are not ‘comfortable’ words. They are there to warn us.

*(An excerpt from Raymond Brown teaching on Malachi.)*