

Isaiah 4:1

First RPC Durham

I. Exposition of the Text (3:16-4:1)

- A.** Context — Indictment and Sentencing of Judah's sins (2:6-4:1)
- B.** Sin: The vanity and pride of the women of Judah (3:16)
- C.** Judgment: Jehovah takes all these away from Judah (3:17-26)
- D.** The Response of These Women (4:1)
- E.** The Point — Formalism: The outward conformity and claiming of Christianity, the true religion, while all the while the heart is full of indifference or despising of Christ, the Heavenly Husband.

II. Doctrines from the Text

- A.** There are many manifestations of Formalism
 - 1)** There are heresies through history and today (2 Tim 2:17-18)
 - 2)** There are many visible churches which are now synagogues of Satan, which are *Ichabod* (1 Sam 4:21-22)
 - 3)** There are many professors in word only, who have much knowledge, and assent that it is all true, but who have no trust in Jesus Christ for the salvation of their sins (Mk 1:23).
- B.** Formalism is a sin which is relentless in its pursuits
- C.** Formalism, hypocrisy of the heart, is a sin which would entrap (Joel 2:12-13).
- D.** Formalism is contrary to the nature of true religion
 - 1)** How the act of this women is contrary to nature
 - 2)** But is not hypocrisy and formalism more contrary to the nature of the true religion!
- E.** Formalism, in general, wants God on our own terms
- F.** Formalism, in particular, desires no provision from God (Ex 21:10; 1 Tim 5:8)
- G.** Formalism, in particular, desires no righteousness from Christ (Mt 22:11-14)
- H.** Formalism only wants the Name of God, though they care nothing for Him
 - 1)** For the woman bears the name of her husband (Gen 5:1b-2)
 - 2)** As the Christian bears the name of God (Num 6:27; Mt 28:19)

- 3)** There is more to the Name of God apart from the bare Name, which the heart-hypocrite wants nothing to do with (*LC 112*)
- 4)** Why do they want this name, what benefit is there for them? (Psa 68:15-16)

- I.** Formalism has a wrong estimation of what their shame is (Isa 54:4b; Gen 30:23)
- J.** Formalism, heart hypocrisy, is the same old sins covered by a different garb
- K.** Formalism provides the wrong solution to the true problem

III. Answering Objections to the Text

- A.** *Objection 1: Isn't formalism better than outright paganism?* (Psa 50:22)
- B.** *Objection 2: What about when I obey God by do not have particular emotions or lofty affections toward Him?* (WCF 14.2-3; Psa 43:5)

IV. Uses from the Text

- A.** We cannot tell the heart of another, but are rather to make our own calling and election sure (2 Pt 1:10)
- B.** The sight of this sin and temptation of heart-hypocrisy from the Scriptures should cause us to tremble (Phil 2:12-13)
 - 1)** Why should this sin cause us to fear, not with sinful anxiety but with sober humility?: The *(a)* ease, *(b)* entrapment, *(c)* prevalence of this sin
 - 2)** Yet, such trembling should lead us to look to the Lord; not simply gazing at ourselves (Acts 5:11)
- C.** What is the Remedy? The Spirit of God working through the proclamation of the Gospel that you should to take hold of Christ.
 - 1)** Not presuming upon the mere sign of baptism (Jer 4:4)
 - 2)** Not presuming upon bare profession
 - 3)** Not presuming upon age
 - 4)** Rather, we need a continual going to Christ (Rom 16:25a; Isa 4:2-6, 54:2-5)
- D.** The Church, together with all Her members, are to live as a true Spouse of Jesus Christ (Hab 2:4)