

"Trick or treat." We hear that many times during the Halloween season. I hope all children get nice treats on that night.

Have you thought lately about your time before Jesus on that great day? It won't be trick or treat, but it will be heaven or hell. On that day some will come before the Lord dressed in goodness and kindness and some in wickedness and cruelty. There will be all kinds. The sweet and the mean, the humble and the fierce. Each will walk up with his life's goodies with him. The Lord will look at them, judge them, and pass out His sentence of judgment on them. There will be much excitement that day and everyone will be there, too. All will be wearing their costumes and masks that can't be taken off, for it is their life. Many people, when they hear and see God, will run and try to hide, but there will be no place to cover them. There will not be a car there waiting to whisk them off to another place.

As you see the little trick-or-treaters in their innocent little costumes on Halloween, look for your real self, the costume and mask that more closely resembles your true life before God. The children will take off the costumes after Halloween, and there's still time for us to change our costumes before judgment.

When E.F. Hutton talks, people listen. You remember that old commercial.

I don't know how much E.F. is talking these days or if we should even listen. What is most important is how much we listen to God. He's been talking to us all our lives through His word, the Holy Bible. Are we listening to what He says about His majesty and His power, His victory, His home and His will for us? Are we listening to His eternal purpose for us? Have we heard what He, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit have made for us—a way of redemption? Salvation. He has spoken about the price of our salvation; it was the blood of Jesus. Are we listening to His commands for our obedience and how He wants us to achieve it? Are we listening to His terms in order to receive His grace and mercy? Many people have a bad habit of not listening to anyone. They don't listen to their parents, preacher, teachers, good friends, their conscience, and probably not even E.F. Hutton.

Let me remind us that God is not just anyone. He is our creator, sustainer, and judge. Are you listening when God talks?

ARE YOU A PHONY?

Are you a phony? Do you pretend to be an obedient Christian man or woman before the people of this town and yet live a sinful life?

A phony is not really liked and certainly not respected. A phony brings about much sorrow and suffering for us all by the damage done by their hypocritical life. The phony is a destroyer. He destroys himself, the ideal of what he is supposed to be, the hopes and expectations of many, and to some extent all those close to him. He is a liar, a thief, and a general disgrace to the human race. His destruction must be counted by generations, as he will successfully corrupt some poor unsuspecting soul. It is very difficult to estimate the amount of damage he does the church of our Lord, present and future. His deceptive actions are a source of fresh pain to the Lord Jesus Christ who is again made to feel the pain of the cross. You see, his phony touch hurts everything. He is not born this way, but he chooses to live in this way. He is just another in a succession of a very long corrupted line since old Satan started it all off. He, like Satan, will pay an awful price for his phony life.

God has defeated and doomed the chief phony and will get all of his followers, too. Are you a phony?

DUTY

I have a friend who for months took care of an invalid wife, napping instead of sleeping. It was a long and tiring ordeal before she finally died. Toward the end it was difficult for him to see her as his wife. Too many things had changed. Her physical appearance was altered. The ability to care for herself was gone along with her vibrant personality. She was more an object upon whom care must be bestowed than a companion. Through it all her husband stayed by her side. She wanted him to care for her. He turned her in bed every 45 minutes throughout the night and kept her as clean and comfortable as possible. Everyone talked about how faithfully he cared for her. When these compliments were passed on to him he would politely brush them aside by saying, "I made this commitment to her 40 years ago."

Duty may be an old-fashioned word, but it's a regal one. General Robert E. Lee said, "Duty is the sublimest word in the language. You can never do more than your duty; you should never wish to do less." Ezekiel knew the full meaning of duty. He said, "I spoke to the people in the morning and at evening my wife died, and on the next morning I did as I was commanded." A man's life is completely changed. His home wrecked within 12 hours, but the next morning he is out proclaiming the word of God.

Duty may be a little old-fashioned, but it is still in your dictionary. Is it still in your life?

SIN

The other morning while driving from Amory to Smithville, a rock was thrown up as I met a truck, and it hit my windshield. It made a break in the glass. It's only a small place and there's plenty of fine unbroken windshield left. Still, there is a crack. No matter where I look on the windshield, I see the imperfection.

Is the whole windshield ruined? Does it need to be replaced? No, but now it is flawed. I really hate that it happened, because it could eventually mean the total ruin and replacement of the windshield. It's a lot like sin. When a person sins it doesn't mean that they are ruined and have no good left in them. It does mean they are spiritually flawed and in many cases scarred for life. If it is not taken care of, sin will destroy a person in this life and eternally. Sin will bring about much sorrow in a person's life. Prov. 13:15 tells us that "the way of the transgressor is hard." But we can do something about our sins. 1 John 1:9 reads, "If we confess our sins Jesus is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." And we can be happy again. Psalm 32:1 says, "Happy is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."

I can go see the windshield surgeon and he can cover the flaw in the glass. We can go see Jesus about the flaws in our lives and he can cover them with His powerful blood.