

Job 8.14-15—The utter failure of a hypocrite's hopes

How is a hypocrite's hopes like a spider's web?

- I. Bildad says a hypocrite's confidence is severed/cut off because he's risked the weight of the welfare of his eternal soul on a foundation no more able to hold the weight of his soul than a spider's web is able to hold the weight of his body.
- II. How is a hypocrite's confidence like a spider's web?
 - A. Its the fruit of his own doing, Lk 18.11-12
 1. The hypocrite's refuge is made up with materials from his own self-righteousness, strength, knowledge, conceit, &c.
 2. He's not trusting in anything outside of himself—because he sees no need for any help outside of himself. He's too proud to trust in the work of another and very fond of the castle he's built for himself, cp. Rom 5.5
 - B. It's about as weak as a spider's web.
 1. A spiderweb is a work of art but it can't hold anything heavier than the insects it ensnares and it can easily be wiped away by a child's hand. And so it is with the hypocrite's hopes. When God comes to sweep His house with judgment, those hopes of his will fare him no better than a spider's web, Ps 1.5
 - C. It'll end as well as a spider's web ends: in utter ruin.
 1. The hypocrite's confidence is a web of deceit and lies, and when Christ the Truth comes, it'll all be swept away. Nothing will be left to show for all his work, Mt 7.27; Ps 9.5-6

Why will a hypocrite's hopes ultimately fail him?

- I. Why will a hypocrite's hopes ultimately fail him? Because his spiderweb of a house can't withstand the judgment of God.
 - A. It'd be one thing if he was going up against man's opinions. But he'll stand before the Almighty, heart-searching God (Rev 2.2-3), who will sweep all his foolish hopes away, Isa 14.23
 - B. Though he leans on it in hope it will not stand; and though he grabs hold of it in desperation it will not endure. He'll painfully realize his folly, but it'll be too late to secure another refuge. He'll see his need for Christ at last, but the door of mercy will be closed and he'll be left to fare as well as he can with what he's built with his own hands. And, sadly, it will not hold.

How can we know if there's any hypocrisy in us?

- I. Three caveats:
 - A. It's not our falling into sin, even into gross sin, even for a shameful period of time, that proves us to be hypocrites, cf. 2Sam 11. It's the *reigning* of sin that makes a man a hypocrite.
 - B. It's not our backsliding into the same sins that proves us hypocrites, because the covenant of grace includes a promise to heal our backslidings if we return to God in repentance, Hos 14.1-7
 - C. It's not even our tendency to hypocrisy that proves us to be a hypocrite, because the seed of hypocrisy is in all of us and if we don't mortify it, it will get the better of us, Jer 17.9
- II. So how do we know if there's hypocrisy in us?
 - A. Loving the world and the things of the world is a fearful evidence of hypocrisy because it shows that the love of the Father is not in us, 1Jn 2.15-16
 - B. Not loving the Word of God and receiving it as the Word of God is a dangerous sign of hypocrisy because it shows that we don't want the Word to discern and expose and challenge our thoughts and intentions, Heb 4.12; 1Kgs 22.8
 - C. A long and continual barrenness under the Word of God is a sign of hypocrisy because if we can sit regularly to faithful preaching and never be changed by it, then there's hypocrisy in our hearts.
 - D. If a man's goals are lower than God and his pursuits are anything less than God's glory and Christ's honor, then there's hypocrisy behind his Christianity, 1Cor 10.31
 - E. If you embrace and favor any sin in your heart that you cannot, will not, let go, then you're in the bond of hypocrisy.

How can we steer clear of the sin of hypocrisy?

- I. Take heed of self-flattery, Ps 36.2; 2Cor 13.5
- II. Always live as before the eye of God, Heb 11.27; Job 31.1-4
- III. Be quick to repent—as soon as you see your sin, Lk 22.62; Ps 139.23-24; 143.8
- IV. Put forth the greatest effort to mortify the sins that fuel hypocrisy and with a lively faith in Christ, cultivate those sins that oppose it, Lk 18.13
- V. Keep yourself under a powerful ministry of the Word, Ps 119.24
- VI. Press the Lord with the promises of the covenant, Ezk 36.26-27