

The ancient Greeks started the practice of a single actor playing multiple roles by using masks. People still wear masks today. Women often resort to wigs and hiding behind excessive make-up as a means of covering up who they really are. Similarly, men might grow a beard or long hair as something to hide behind. Both men and women often use sunglasses as a subtle way of hiding. Both genders now also disfigure their bodies with piercings and tattoos.

Jesus minced no words as He exposed His two-faced critics. He called them *hypocrites*, but that was just the beginning. He left no doubt about the wickedness of these people – calling them *serpents* and *vipers, full of iniquity, fools and blind guides*. He used graphic language to further describe how these people made a show of piety and holiness:

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

... you are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outside, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. (Matthew 23:25, 27)

These days, we don't have to look far to find hypocrites. Take those who defend the right of William Thomas to change his first name, grow long hair, take hormone blockers, put on a woman's swimsuit, and then compete against women. Since the best women swimmers are about ten percent slower than the best men, this enabled Thomas to compete on par with elite women.

Yet, the same people who defend Thomas' right to pretend to be a woman to compete against them also decry a nine-year-old Kansas City Chiefs fan, who dressed up as a chief and painted his face with his team's colors. They **call out** this child for *cultural appropriation* while they **celebrate** Thomas' *gender appropriation*. These people are hypocrites. But that's just the start.

We have judges who make a show of upholding the law while intentionally upending it. We have lawmakers who pretend to support the people while making laws to enslave them. We have executive leaders who routinely break their oath of office by selectively enforcing the law.

There's coming a day of reckoning for these "vermin." This same Jesus who came as a humble baby to redeem all mankind will soon return to put down evil and establish righteous rule over all of the earth. When that day comes, woe to these hypocrites.

And what exactly will happen to those who oppose the KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS when He returns? Jesus will speak the word, and slay the armies arrayed against Him. The fowls of the air will be dispatched to eat their carcasses. After one thousand years, they will be raised from the dead to face judgment by this same Jesus. Their names will not be found among those who accepted His gracious gift of salvation, and they will be cast into the Lake of Fire. Then evil, death, *and hypocrisy* will be no more. (Revelation 19:16-19; 20:11-15; 21:4)

While the account of these vexing times doesn't sound particularly in tune with the celebration and joy of God's great gift of our Savior, it does serve to contrast with how glorious life will be when Jesus returns and brings with Him peace, justice, truth, and righteousness. So as we celebrate His first coming, we also look forward to when He returns and makes all things new.

Merry Christmas!