[[1]](#endnote-1)185 Hypocrisy (*[H]ipocrisis*)

This vice dissuades many from Christ as is evident in Matt. 6[:16]: “And when you fast, be not as the hypocrites, sad. For they disfigure their faces,” that is, they apply outside of the boundaries of natural color. For they are not pure men, but rather chimeras since they do not have pure members. For they do not have a pure heart because the love no one on account of himself, but on account of their possessions, and they do not have a pure mouth because they think another thing, when however the mouth is the messenger of the heart, nor do they have pure hands because they do anything of the good to make a show as they seem. Wherefore also hypocrites are compared to mendicants who in their approach to men move their lips and pretend indigence that they may receive something, but when they pass from men they are turned into dissolution, Isai. 29[:13]: “This people draw near me with their mouth, but their heart is far from me.”

Wherefore the verse: No voice, no vow; no musical dance, but the heart; No clamor, but love sounds in the ear of God. Wherefore Bernard says in his *Meditationes*,[[2]](#endnote-2) often under a sheep skin did I hide my wolfish conscience. My conscience is plainly wolfish, my conversation is lukewarm, my thought is animal like, my confession is feigned, my compunction is short and rare, my obedience is without devotion, my prayer is without intention, my reading is without edification, my speech is without circumspection.

¶ O how hard these things are for me which I speak, because in speaking I run myself through. Truly because I acknowledge my sin, it will be perhaps with the worshipful judge this knowledge of fault, petition for forgiveness.

¶ The gratuity of this sin of hypocrisy is evident by the confusion which they call upon them. For Christ said more often “Woe to you hypocrites,” [Matt. 23:27], and it can be the reason that when the antichrist will come, he will be full of sins. However, he excels in this kind of sin who most forcefully seduces the people, as it is indicated in the [2] Epistle to the Thessalonians [2:4] because he extols himself above that which is called God.

¶ There is another reason why Christ thus cursed hypocrites because hardly is there a sin that so envelops men like hypocrisy. For there is no other good man that he does not wish to be reputed better. No one so religious, studious, or holy that he does not wish to be reputed more religious, more studious, or more holy. The whole world is placed as if in this malignant (*maligno*) condition, that is, in this evil fire (*malo igne*). Wherefore as now almost through the whole world there is this sophistication in voices, so hypocrisy in the greater part. But since hypocrisy seeks to appear on the outside there are two vices in it, the defect of holiness and the feigning of holiness. Because the hypocrite intends to hide what he is and to show what he is not.

Wherefore Augustine[[3]](#endnote-3) spoke of the hypocrite in this way, Either be what you appear or appear what you are. On account of these matters the hypocrite seems to be the sophist of Satan showing appearance and hiding malice, Eccli. 37[:23]: “He that speaks sophistically, is hateful.” Therefore, it is said upon Psal. 63[:11],[[4]](#endnote-4) feigned equity is not equity but a double inequality, because inequality is feigning. Wherefore Gregory says in *Moralia,[[5]](#endnote-5)* hypocrisy is more prepared to die than to be corrected. For after a rebuke he returns worse. On account of the aforesaid matters now hypocrisy is compared to many things, such as the whitened sepulcher, Matt. 25[:30]: “The unprofitable servant cast out into the exterior darkness.”

¶ Again the dung pit covered with snow, Eccli. 37[:3]: “O wicked presumption, whence came you.”

Again, it is compared to the wolf covered in a sheep skin who is not recognized until he runs through. For then he shows his teeth but otherwise he is of a sheep, Matt. 7[:15]: “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in the clothing of sheep.”

¶ Again, it is compared to a fox hiding himself between the alley ways, just as the hypocrite pretends, he is dead to the world until he has his benefice, Ose. 9[:10]: “I found” your prophets “Israel like” foxes “in the desert.”

Again, it is compared to the candle for the illumination of others but consuming itself, Apo. 3[:1]: “I know your works, that you have the name of being alive: and you are dead.” And Luke 16[:15]: “You are they who justify yourselves before men.” Wherefore someone said hypocrisy is the blinding of truth, the shackle of justice, fox fur of obedience, the pallium of brief patience, the worm of religion, the exterminator of virtues, and the den of vices. Wherefore Jerome, *Epistola* 72,[[6]](#endnote-6) in which things he is a feigner, inside he is Nero outside Cato. It is totally ambiguous so that from contrary natures it seems to conflate a single monster. But because hypocrisy is well versed in feigning, for it feigns what it does not have. Note that it has a double intention in feigning. For it simulates what it does not have with the intention that iniquity is palliated and itself a sin is praised as if holy. It however it feigns on account of the honor of God and edification of one’s neighbor, it merits more than it detracts.

¶ Note[[7]](#endnote-7) also this what Chrysostom says in the *Imperfecto* on that of Matt. [23:27]:[[8]](#endnote-8) Woe to you hypocrites, Say, hypocrite, if it is good, be good, and if it is evil, be evil. If the first is given, why don’t you want to be what you wish to appear. If the second, why do you want to be what you do not wish to appear.

¶ For what is ugly to appear, it is uglier to be, and what is beautiful to appear, it is more beautiful to be. Therefore, either be what you appear or appear what you are. For it is manifest evil not to be corrected by the wise, when you are considered unsound of mind.

This name hypocrite is of a common kind, therefore it is to be feared because to the common kind of men it extends itself to the laity, to the literate, and to the religious. Because the taking up of orders manifests well, but not the use of the skull, but not the shaving of the skull in the clerical habit, but the mind of a lay person with a collection of sheaves, but the destruction of souls.

See more about hypocrisy below, [c. 401] Hypocrite, hypocrisy ([*H*]*ypocrita*, [H]*ypocrisis*).

1. Cf. John Gower, *Vox clamantis* 4.12.509-510 in *The Complete Works of John Gower: Latin works,* ed. George Campbell Macaulay (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1902), p. 180: Non vox set votum, non musica cordula set cor, / Non clamans set amans, cantate in aure dei.

Cf. “Non Clamor Sed Amor”: The words are written in the Decrees, distinction 92, the chapter *Cantantes* and the chapter *In sancta Romana*.16 In its gloss we read these two verses, not very eloquent, but devout:

Not the voice, but the desire; not the tune, but the heart;

not being noisy but loving, sounds in God's ear.17

16 Gratian Dec. I, dist. 92, chaps. 1 and 2 (PL 187.429): corde magis quam voce Deo cantandum meminerint.

17 Non vox, sed votum; non cordula musica, sed cor [vox]; Non clamans, sed amans cantat in aure dei. <http://virginiahuguenot.blogspot.com/2010/07/non-clamor-sed-amor.html>

Cf. Decretum, Dist. 92, c. 1: Deo non uoce, sed corde cantandum, nec in tragediarum modum guttur et fauces medicamine liniendae sunt, ut in ecclesia teatrales moduli audiantur et cantica. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. (Pseudo-)Bernard, *Mediationes* 10 (PL 184:502): et ita sub ovina pelle vulpinam conscientiam conservabam. Vulpina plane conscientia est tepida conversatio, [Col.0502B] animalis cogitatio, ficta confessio, brevis et rara compunctio; obedientia sine devotione, oratio sine intentione, lectio sine aedificatione, sermo sine circumspectione. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Augustine, *De Actis cum Felice Manichaeo* 2.12 (PL 42:544): esto quod nondum es, et desine esse quod es. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Cf. Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 63.11 (PL 36: 765): simulata aequitas non est aequitas, sed duplex iniquitas; quia et iniquitas est, et simulatio. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Gregory, *Moralia* 8.42.67 (PL 75:842): paratior mori quam corripi, redargutione deterior redditur, quia quasi dirae percussionis aestimat jaculum puritatis verbum. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Jerome, *Epistolae secundum ordinem temporum,* Epistol 125: Ad Rusticum monachum, 18 (PL 22:1083): intus Nero, foris Cato. Totus ambiguus, ut ex contrariis diversisque naturis, unum monstrum novamque bestiam diceres esse compactam. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. *Fasciculus morum* 5.17 (p. 512-514): Et ideo huiusmodi ypocritas pulcre redarguit Crisostomus super Mattheum in *Inperfecto* super illud “Ve vobis ypocrite qui similes estis sepulcris dealbatis”: “Dic, inquit, ypocrita, si bonum est esse bonum et malum esse malum. Si primum, ut quid ergo non vis esse quod vis apparere? Quod enim turpe est apparere, turpius est esse, et quod formosum est apparere, formosius est esse. Ergo (dicit ipse) aut appare quod es aut esto quod appares, qui manifestum malum non reprehenditur a sapientibus dum insania estimatur.” Hec ille. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. (Pseudo-)Chrysostom, *Opus imperfectum in Mattheum,* Homilia 45 cap. 23.27 (PG 56:885): Dicito mihi, o hypocrita, si bonum est, esse bonum, ut quid non vis esse, quod vis apparere? Si vero malum est, esse malum, ut quid vis esse, quod non vis apparere? Nam quod turpe est apparere, turpius est esse: quod autem formosum est apparere, formosius est esse. Ergo aut esto quod appares, aut appare quod es: quia manifestum malum a sapientibus non facile reprehenditur, dum insania aestimatur. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)