

when it gets the whole character moulded and hardened into deception, there is but little hope of its ever being changed. Beware how you allow the devil to fasten such a mask upon you.

Thirdly. God can see through all such masks, and see our real character, no matter how thick the masks may be. We may deceive our fathers and mothers, and teachers, and neighbors, but we cannot deceive God. Man looketh at the outward appearance, but God looketh at the heart.

Fourthly. God hates such masks. In His sight they are a great deal uglier than the mask in the picture. There is no sin more black and hateful than lying, and all who wear the kind of mask I have been speaking about, are living a lie.

In conclusion, remember that God will judge us, not by what we seem to be, but by what we are, and the mask will but add to our guilt in the sight of Him who will reward every one according as his works shall be.

Are you wearing a mask? Take it off at once. Ask God to take away any of it that may be clinging to you. Study the character of Christ, who was what He professed to be. Trust to His death and atonement for pardon of sin, and ask God, by his Spirit, to make you more and more like Him, until you reach that Home where there are no masks, and where, seeing Christ as He is, you will be like Him.

HOW A SISTER HELPED A BROTHER.

I WAS a country lad, restless, ambitious, and easily influenced, either for good or evil. For the first time in my life I was to leave home to enter a business house as clerk in a large town in another State, where I would be a total stranger. My home-life had been of the quiet, rigid New England type, and the event of my home-leaving had been long and earnestly discussed in the family circle, and the final verdict, I think, was one of grave apprehension, but, boy-like, I was eager to enter the new world that lay before me so attractively in fancy.

I had a sister older than myself, a sweet and gentle girl, who seemed to breathe the very air of heaven, whose intimate companionship had always been a benediction to me. She did not share in the general misgiving in anticipating the new experience that lay before me. She smiled her encouragement and spoke hopefully. In a short time I bade good-by to the dear old home, and entered upon the duties of my new position.

I was sent to board at a hotel, and my roommate was a young man, older than myself, who was attending an academy preparatory to entering college. He was handsome, brilliant, and witty, but terribly wicked. Ordinary profanity he scorned. He coined his own curses, and they were diabolical. One of his favorite evening recreations was a mock prayer-meeting, conducted in a student's room directly under our own, to which he had invited a number of his congenial friends. His exhortations were always eloquent, his prayers fervent. Other students present were called on to take part. These meetings always closed with uproarious hilarity and rollicking songs. Every argument his fertile brain could devise was employed to draw me into the companionship of his vicious life, but, to my own amazement almost, at that time, I seemed to be held back by some invisible force which I could not explain. I was in his society daily. I admired his dash and wit, but wherever his poisoned missile struck me they met an armor that was impenetrable.

The current of my young life sought and found a better channel. A year or so later I returned to my country home for a visit. My sister immediately drew me aside and inquired as to the experience and companionships of my new home. I told her all, and I shall never forget her look and smile as she said, when I concluded, "I am not surprised; the result is just what I expected. I knew you would be terribly tempted, so I prayed for you every day, and it just seemed to me that God answered me, and I have had no anxiety for you." Then the power that had held me was revealed.

Not long after this, I held the hand of this sister, who had been my ministering angel, as she lay dying, and as, at her request, I tried with choking sobs to sing the hymn, "O sing to me of heaven when I'm about to die," it seemed to me that every beautiful fabric my boyish ambition had built for the future was consumed, and nothing was left but ashes; afterwards the memory of that saintly life and gentle influence became my guiding star when in doubt, and I shall cherish it while I live.—*Scl.*