

What Makes a Christian a Hypocrite?

<u>Matthew 15:7-9</u>: (NASB) ⁷You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you: ⁸This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far away from me. ⁹But in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.



Nobody likes a hypocrite. Nobody likes it when you proclaim yourself to be a certain way or stand up for specific principles or speak up in support of a clear ideology, and then display yourself to be a walking contradiction. Nobody likes lip service or feigned support, especially when there are circumstances that require firm conviction. For followers of Christ, the mere thought of being seen as a hypocrite is at the very least cringeworthy. Yet, when we look at history as well as our present time, it is evident that Christian hypocrisy abounds. So how does this happen? What provokes anyone to consider and then act upon those things that result in being two-faced and therefore unreliable? Even more importantly, how can we as Christians avoid such a trap? Further, if we have already fallen into the hypocrisy trap, what does it take to get up, get out and get going?

Hypocrite: Strongs #5273, hupokrites, an actor under an assumed character (stage-player), i.e. (figuratively) a dissembler ("hypocrite")

Merriam Webster Dictionary:

hypocrite: (noun)

- 1.) a person who puts on a false appearance of virtue or religion
- 2.) a person who acts in contradiction to his or her stated beliefs or feelings

The first definition is OUTWARD and has a clear intention to deceive as someone who puts on a false appearance. The second definition is INWARD and provokes action that could be motivated by things like fear or ignorance and maybe even self-protection.

Were you a perfect Christian today? If we do not live up to the ideals and standards of what a perfect Christian is, does this make us a hypocrite? Does this meet the definition of "a person who acts in contradiction to his or her stated beliefs or feelings"?

We believe that just because we act in a hypocritical way does not mean we are a hypocrite. We have stated objectives for being a Christian, but we fall short - we may fail every day. But we get up, ask for forgiveness and try again. This is not being a hypocrite; this is being weak or making a bad choice but trying again. It is like growing from a child to an adult. Continually striving to hit the ideals but falling short is not hypocritical. We are trying to get to the next step and this is an important distinction.

Jesus gave us a lot to work with on this topic. There are seven "woes" Jesus pronounced upon the Pharisees and are a good basis to begin our understanding of what hypocrisy is, how it works and how to be rid of it.



The woes are said the week before his crucifixion, so this was his last face-toface statement to the Pharisees. When Jesus said, *Woe to you...* he was driven by his love for the truth, for his Heavenly Father and for the people who were deceived by error. He had a wonderful heart when he was saying these, because he was trying to protect those he loved. Further, he was trying to "wake up" those who were being hypocrites. He would soon have no more time with them. Up to this point, he had tried reasoning with them, contradicting their terms, defiance, guidance, showing miracles...and this was his last chance to get through to them.



As harsh as they are, they are statements of love by Jesus.

Matthew 23:13: (NASB) But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.



Their seizing of power through hypocrisy gave them authority to wield that which was not rightfully theirs. They substituted darkness for light and tried to close the way of salvation. Sometimes this seeking of power is focused on others (OUTWARD), and sometimes it is focused on seeking power in our own lives (INWARD).

The Pharisees were hypocrites, but what about us?

Healing for my own **OUTWARD** hypocrisy

When it comes to power, I MUST be willing to humbly assess my own fruitage. Is it in line with God's holy order? Do I accept the fact that power easily corrupts?

OUTWARD

Matthew 7:15-18: (NASB)

¹⁵Beware of the false prophets, who come to ⁴And my message and my preaching were you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? ¹⁷So of men, but on the power of God. every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.



Healing for my own **INWARD** hypocrisy

When it comes to power, I MUST see the issues I have with how I view my personal power struggles within myself.

INWARD

1 Corinthians 2:4-5: (NASB)

not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom

Power is probably the most coveted thing in all of humanity!



Hypocrisy related to assuming power is broad and common in our day. Does it lead to anything else?

Embedded in Jesus speaking firmly to the Pharisees there is a specific process. Power IS a broad-based common destination that draws out displays of hypocrisy, leading to other more specific desires. Jesus is telling us that when there is a struggle for power there is a struggle for our lives.

()) Greek definition, What is a Hypocrite, Pastor Greg Laurie, 2010

• Let's understand what the word means. When it was used in its original context, it meant an "actor." It was the word used to describe an actor. In fact, in Greek culture it had no negative connotation whatsoever. You would just say, "Well, he's a hypocrite," or another way to say an actor. "He is a guy or a girl that has lines that he memorizes and repeats, and he pretends to be someone he is not. We watched them down in the town square, and they hold their little masks in front of their faces, and they take on a part." And we have actors today, and many times we admire them. We think they have a lot to tell us, until we see them interviewed on Jay Leno or Letterman, and we say, "Wow, they are not at all like the person they portrayed on the screen."



Jesus was saying to the Pharisees, "When it comes to godliness, you are just actors. You are just playing a part."

<u>Matthew 23:15</u>: (NASB) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, <u>hypocrites</u>, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell (Gehenna, final judgment) as yourselves.

You make him twice as much - once this person becomes like the Pharisees, he has two problems. First, the proselyte already had their own old ways they will need to undo in the Day of Judgment. Now the Pharisees taught them new wrong ways, making them take on false, negative and ungodly teaching. They will have twice as much to undo in the kingdom.



The Pharisees were hypocritical in applying their zeal and led others *further from God* as a result! In leading people to their *own version* of light, they put their followers in a worsened condition.



What about us?

Healing for my own OUTWARD hypocrisy

When it comes to having powerful influence over others. I MUST be abundantly clear as to WHAT I say, HOW I say it and WHY I say it. Be a selfless follower.

OUTWARD

Matthew 15:1-2,7-9: (NASB)

¹Then some Pharisees and scribes came to ¹⁰After Jesus called the crowd to him, he said bread...⁷You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah the man. prophesy of you: ⁸This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far away from me. ⁹But in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.



Healing for my own INWARD hypocrisy

When it comes to having powerful influence within my own personal life, I MUST weigh what I am listening to, where it comes from and how it truly affects me.

INWARD

Matthew 15:10-11: (NASB)

Jesus from Jerusalem and said, ²Why do your to them, Hear and understand. ¹¹It is not what disciples break the tradition of the elders? For enters into the mouth that defiles the man, but they do not wash their hands when they eat what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles

Having influence on others is a good thing, as long as it is godly. We have to check what makes us have that desire for influence over others. To do that, we need to be clear about what we say, how we say it and why we say it. Our ego can guickly get in the way when we are the "expert." Being selfless takes away the desire of what hypocrisy can bring us. Hypocrisy can bring us accolades and other things that are big and impressive.

The Pharisees were trying to trap Jesus with their questions.

Also see:

Matthew 7:21-23: (KJV) ²¹ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? ²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you ...

This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far away from me this is hypocrisy. Their hearts have different desires, but they outwardly looked and acted like they needed to in order to hold their high positions.

Teachings as doctrines the precepts of men - it is important to keep this in mind as we introduce others to the gospel message.

Enters into the mouth/proceeds out of the mouth - if we want to have powerful internal influence, we must be standing for something bigger than ourselves. We need God's word to learn the precepts so we can copy them. We need to go to the right source.

What do we feed ourselves so we can stand for the right things? Christian Questions ©2019 all rights reserved



For the third woe, Jesus introduces new ways to describe the hypocrisy of the Pharisees.

<u>Matthew 23:16,17</u>: (NASB) ¹⁶Woe to you, <u>blind guides</u>, who say, Whoever swears by the temple, that is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple is obligated. ¹⁷You <u>fools and blind men</u>! Which is more important, the gold or the temple that sanctified the gold?

The Pharisees had lost their reverence for God's house and tried to make up "higher" rules so they could look more pious. This reminds us of the wealth-driven brand of Christianity today focusing on

the wrong area.

<u>1 Corinthians 3:16</u>: (NASB) Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

The focus is *supposed* to be on the inward fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, self-control, etc. See <u>Galatians 5:22-23</u>) to help the parishioners to be Christlike - not on money or other distractions.

<u>Matthew 23:18-22</u>: (NASB) ¹⁸And, whoever swears by the altar, that is nothing, but whoever swears by the offering on it, he is obligated. ¹⁹You <u>blind men</u>, which is more important, the offering, or the altar that sanctifies the offering?

They tried to implement new details they made up to show themselves as better and holier than everyone else.



Trish asks: Regarding the warning about "powerful personal influence," the Apostle Paul said, *Follow me as I follow Christ*. Why would we want that in any shape or form unless it is the power of influence of God in our lives that He displays through us? Also, can you be a hypocrite if you don't know it? Is hypocrisy something you do intentionally?

Why would you want personal influence if it is not godly? Maybe you do not know how to get it in a godly way. It is an ego-feeder to have influence. We become hypocritical because we want influence for the wrong reasons. We will get back to the second question shortly.

²⁰Therefore, whoever swears by the altar, swears both by the altar and by everything on it. ²¹And whoever swears by the temple, swears both by the temple and by Him who dwells within it. ²²And whoever swears by heaven, swears both by the throne of God and by Him who sits upon it.

Reverence the big things and the details will fall into place.

THE DOOR TO HYPOCRISY OPENED BECAUSE OF A DESIRE TO SHOW THEMSELVES AS THE MOST AMBITIOUS FOLLOWERS OF THE LAW. The Pharisees were making things up on purpose so the people would always be one step behind. Jesus said they were "acting," and he could read the heart. They knew what they were doing. Jesus called them *blind guides*, *fools* and *blind men*. These designations were attained as a result of their own reckless and blind ambition, thinking, interpretations and teaching. This led to them

blindly, ambitiously and foolishly teaching things of fabricated importance. This woe of ambition led them to teaching things that were made up!



We are all supposed to have ambition to follow Christ. How do we keep it from becoming hypocritical?

All of our Christian energies are to be focused on following Jesus, but all of our fleshly desires and energies will constantly challenge that. This is the inherent dilemma that brings the inward hypocrisy to the surface. The good news? God knows we can be daily set right by His grace.

Portraying themselves as the most ambitious followers of the Law, the Pharisees liked to say, "Look at me and how I understand things. I know and you do not. You do not have what I have." They were good at making the people feel inferior. Because the people were kept down, the Pharisees looked so lofty and holy they could do anything they wanted.

Healing for my own **OUTWARD** hypocrisy

When it comes to having blind ambition creeping into my interactions with others, I MUST remember the horrible consequences of self-guided teaching.

OUTWARD

2 Peter 2:1-3: (NASB)



Healing for my own **INWARD** hypocrisy

When it comes to having blind ambition creeping into my personal space, I MUST get back to the basics of my personal salvation it is ALL because of Jesus.

INWARD

Matthew 21:32: (NASB)

¹But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive but the tax collectors and prostitutes did heresies, even denying the Master who bought believe him; and you, seeing this, did not them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. ²Many will follow their sensuality, and because of believe him. them the way of the truth will be malianed; ³and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him; even feel remorse afterward so as to

Many will follow their sensuality - This is a scathing indictment against false prophets and teachers in Christianity. Our self-guided teaching inevitably comes back to what I desire and not what is desirable for me to be godly.

Our ambition when dealing with the brotherhood - maybe to be helpful or recognized - can lead us to play roles that are not ours and cause us to be hypocritical.

One way to avoid hypocrisy is to remember it is ALL because of Jesus. When we see it creeping into our personal lives, we need to get back to the basics of our personal salvation.



Just because we fall down and do not live up to the standards we set for ourselves does not mean we are hypocrites. We want to ask for forgiveness and keep trying.

Can you be a hypocrite if you do not know it? Yes, here is an example of hypocrisy because of ambition: Let's say I want to get a job. Because I know I am the best qualified, I pad my resume, adding lies or exaggerations. This is hypocrisy, putting on an act, playing a part I am not.

For John came to you in the way of righteousness - Jesus referred to John the Baptist and told the Pharisees, "The tax collectors and prostitutes believed what John was saying and repented. And you, seeing that, would not even repent yourselves. You blinded yourself to the fact that you were sinful." Our internal blind ambition can do the same to us.

The difficulty about internal hypocrisy is sometimes no one else sees it, but the Lord does.

(1) Belief and action, Everybody is a Hypocrite, Aieysha Ann Mathew, TEDxMACE

• What is hypocrisy? Lonnie Lee, one of the few people who strongly believed that everybody is a hypocrite, defined hypocrisy through a formula. Hypocrisy is equal to belief minus action. The degree of hypocrisy is equivalent to the value of the difference between your belief and actions. You can say that if you want to sound smart, but in simple words, hypocrisy means if your beliefs are not congruent to your actions, you're a hypocrite.



This can be depressing, because often our actions do not live up to our beliefs. But this is part of learning the difficulties of failure - getting up and falling down over and over. We do not want to give up.

<u>Matthew 23:23-24</u>: (NASB) ²³Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, <u>hypocrites</u>! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. ²⁴You <u>blind guides</u>, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

You blind guides - calling out someone in authority using this expression would be a powerful way of getting their attention.

The Pharisees were meticulously counting out a tenth part of all of their spices as a tithe. "Not only am I acceptable, I am MUCH more acceptable than everyone else. Look at how much attention I pay to the tiniest details because I will serve God so precisely!" Jesus pointed out this hypocrisy - *strain out a gnat and swallow a camel* - a big comparison!



This became all show and no heart! Their blindness was enhanced by the pride of their position founded in their <u>power</u> (first woe), <u>influence</u> (second woe) and <u>ambition</u> (third woe). They now blindly adhered to and taught the tiniest details of the Law while omitting its most vital precepts.





I was thinking of the words "omitting vital precepts." I was talking to a fellow Christian, and I said, "Thank God for the kingdom!" They looked at me and asked, "What kingdom?" I wondered what he was learning and if he was reading the Bible. How many times did Jesus talk about his kingdom during his ministry? Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done...

Sometimes the weightiest aspects of the gospel are ignored. We do not want to be in that situation. We can look at the Pharisees and think what a bad example they are, but what about us?

Healing for my own **OUTWARD** hypocrisy

When it comes to my desire to show myself acceptable to God before others, I MUST remain centered on honoring and obeying God and Jesus only.

OUTWARD

Matthew 6:1-3: (NASB)

¹Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. ²So in the synagogues and on the street when you give to the poor, do not sound a corners so that they may be seen by men... trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the ⁶But you, when you pray, go into your inner synagogues and in the streets, so that they may room, close your door and pray to your be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have Father... their reward in full. ³But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing...



Healing for my own **INWARD** hypocrisy

When it comes to my desire to show myself personally acceptable to God, I MUST question my actions to be sure they are in line with sound scriptural prinicples.

INWARD

Matthew 6:5-6: (NASB)

⁵When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray



I have had the privilege of being a go-between for someone who saw someone else in great need. They handed me money and said, "I would like you to give this to them. Tell them it is a gift from someone who loves them verv much." I got to be the one to give it to them and say, "Somebody loves you," and watch their face. That follows this Scripture precisely. We do not need honor and acceptability before men; we need it before God.

Our acceptability before God is in guiet fellowship, not putting on a show for someone else or for ourselves. We are to be humble.



Power, influence, ambition and acceptability. Hypocrisy can rise up in so many ways! What's next?

Our next focus is actually a logical next step. The desire for unfettered power opens the door to persuasive influence, which confirms our high ambitions and obviously makes us acceptable before all. This sets the stage for showing off our grand appearance before any who will observe.

Jesus showed us a process with the Pharisees - power, influence, ambition and acceptability - all the public things we could also fall into which could bring us away from God instead of closer to Him.

(1) What hypocrisy is not, What is a Hypocrite, Pastor Greg Laurie, 2010

Notice Jesus refers to the Pharisees as "hypocrites" in verse 5. You know, we throw this word around a lot. Hypocrite - as soon as someone stumbles or makes a mistake -"You're a hypocrite," we'll say. Well, look. We have to understand what the word actually means. To be a hypocrite doesn't mean that you make mistakes and you don't always live up to what you believe. That's not hypocrisy, that's called humanity. And every one of us is going to fall short. And every one of us have had moments of hypocrisy, myself included. Every one of us have said things we wish we had not said, we've done things we wish we had not done. We've had to apologize, we've had to right wrongs. We're just struggling Christians trying to live this out. That's not hypocrisy, that's the Christian life.

It is acceptable to have a high standard and fall short as long as we decide it is not acceptable to stay far away from that high standard. God blesses our effort.

Remember, the woes were driven by Jesus' love for truth, his Heavenly Father and for the people who were being deceived by error. Jesus also loved the Pharisees, and this was their last chance. He was being straightforward with them.

<u>Matthew 23:25-26</u>: (NASB) ²⁵Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, <u>hypocrites</u>! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. ²⁶You <u>blind Pharisee</u>, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also.



Their hypocrisy was in their meticulous efforts for appearance so they could look cleansed and righteous. In fact, those actions were in place to irreverently take (robbery) and gluttonously use (selfindulgence) that which did not belong to them. They ignored the very reasons the Law required such rituals.

We need to ask ourselves if we do the same. When it comes to the truth of the gospel, do I do the rituals but ignore the core of the matter? Do we have a desire to have a grand appearance before all?





Healing for my own OUTWARD hypocrisy

When it comes to my desire for a GRAND APPEARANCE before all, I MUST seek that which is honored by God through Jesus, and not others. God makes us grand!



Healing for my own INWARD hypocrisy

When it comes to my desire to appear grandly before God, I MUST pray fervently as to be clay in His hands that He may fashion me as He sees fit.

OUTWARD

Galatians 2:11-14: (NASB)

¹¹But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. ¹²For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision. ¹³The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?

INWARD Isaiah 64:8: (NASB)

But now, O LORD, You are our Father, we are the clay, and You our potter; and all of us are the work of Your hand.

The influence of Peter's hypocrisy influenced Barnabas and he started following instead of leading. We can also fall and try to appear great before others. Peter learned and grew from his mistake.

The drawing power of things causes us to be hypocritical, drawing us away from being shaped by God. In effect, we are telling God we know the shape we should be made into.

Prayer is good: but when used as a substitute for obedience, it is naught but a blatant hypocrisy, a despicable Pharisaism. – Charles Studd



Matthew 23:27-28: (NASB) ²⁷Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, <u>hypocrites</u>! For you are like <u>whitewashed tombs</u> which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of <u>hypocrisy and lawlessness</u>.

Compare what Jesus and the apostles wore with Christianity today - do clergy now wear beautiful robes with tassels and gold accessories? The Pharisees were also about outward appearance.

THE DOOR TO HYPOCRISY OPENED BECAUSE OF A DESIRE TO HAVE ENORMOUS PRESTIGE. The Pharisees' presentation of themselves was holy and beautiful, yet their reality was that their beliefs and actions were all about putting on a show, violating the meaning of the Law and leading to death. They pompously proclaimed to be the representatives of God, but actually represented lawless destruction.





This is Glorybeth from the Philippines and I'm happy to be able to listen again. It really requires the humility of heart to be able to not be tangled by hypocritical attitudes. These days, it seems like

Christians are Christianizing everything. I heard a friend saying, "Christian agnostic," "Christian abuser," or "Christian naturalist." Or we could say, "Are you a born again Christian? Are you saved?" Grace is unmerited favor. By grace we have been saved. Thank you.

It is not about the label. We put on "designer Christian clothing" to look good to others and ourselves. What is the design of our Christian heart? How is it focusing on godliness and not being hypocritical?

This seeking of prestige seems so obvious shouldn't it be easy to avoid the hypocrisy shown here?

Because of our present imperfect state, the avoidance of hypocrisy in any area is never easy. Sometimes the remedy can be simple, but its accomplishment is never easy. The fact is we all want to be noticed and acknowledged and too often that can lead to actions that tear others down.

We are all broken. In our brokenness, sometimes the hypocritical things we engage in can be enticing. But following the pathway of hypocrisy to get there is a pathway of self-destruction. Is it worth it?

We have been talking about the Pharisees and their desire to have enormous prestige, and their "profound" characters and "incredible" accomplishments to be recognized.

What about us? What about healing our own outward hypocrisy when it comes to prestige?

Healing for my own **OUTWARD** hypocrisy

When it comes to my desire for prestige before others, I MUST be sure to never step on or damage anyone in my blind pursuit. I must instead leave it to God.



Healing for my own INWARD hypocrisy

When it comes to my desire for my own personal prestige before God, I MUST be honest about who I am and leave all of the assignments of glory to God.

OUTWARD

Luke 18:9-12: (NASB)

⁹And he also told this parable to some people¹³But the tax collector, standing some who trusted in themselves that they were distance away, was even unwilling to lift up righteous, and viewed others with contempt: ¹⁰Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee stood and was praying this to justified rather than the other; for everyone himself: God, I thank You that I am not like who exalts himself will be humbled, but he other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or who humbles himself will be exalted. even like this tax collector. 12I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.

INWARD

Luke 18:13-14: (NASB)

his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, God, be merciful to me, the sinner! ¹⁴I tell you, this man went to his house



If we want to get somewhere or become somebody, or if we want the prestige from attaining something, that is wonderful. The idea of pursuing it is GOOD. But follow the pathway to godliness and leave the destination to God's overruling. Otherwise, it ends up being a waste of our time, probably damaging ourselves and others along the way.

In <u>Luke 18:9-12</u>, Jesus is telling a story about a Pharisee who was *praying this to himself*. He was not praying to God, because God would never listen to such a prayer. This was not a godly prayer. Now we have to look in the mirror: do I seek the prestige of being acceptable when it comes to others? Do I put others down so that I can be lifted up? That is what this Pharisee was doing. Instead of pushing others down, we should lift them up - that is the best way to have prestige before God.

Other ways we can gain honor and prestige before God:

- > *Honor* and *prefer* one another.
- > *Help* one another.
- > *Listen* to one another.
- > *Fellowship* with each other.
- > If you have opportunity, *guide* and *direct* one another.
- > Share your difficulties with one another.

This might look like a lot of work. But to avoid the hypocrisy of self-proclaimed prestige, we have to be ACTIVE.

God will assign glory when, to whom and how He wants to. That should be fine with us. When we talk about God's providence, we do not always make it as powerful as we should. God is overruling and providing for our best benefit, and that is incredible. We should leave all the assignments of glory to God.

Now let's look at the tax collector's approach in <u>Luke 18:13,14</u>. This is such a wonderful story. This tax collector, who was looked down upon by society, stands far away, not even willing to look up to heaven because he feels the shame of his position, the humility of being an outcast. His prayer is not eloquent, long or profound. It does not inspire tears. But his prayer shows humility before God: *God be merciful to me, the sinner*.

Because our own inward hypocrisy tends towards wanting prestige, we need to go back to the basics outlined here by Jesus: "God be merciful to ME, a sinner, through Jesus. Amen." Then we should *mean* it and let God apply the prestige where He wants to. His way is always best.



Comparing extremes, How to Deal With Hypocritical Activists, Politicians, Charities, Nat Ware, TEDxOxford

• The second mistake that we make is that we compare to the extremes of selflessness and selfishness. Say you walk into a café, and there's a sign on the wall that says, "We donate 20 percent of our profits to charity." You probably think, what a great café, what good people - donating a bit of their profits to charity. And so, when we have mostly profit-making - mostly selfishness but a bit of altruism, we like it. We think of it as a good thing. But then if someone works for a charity, if someone dedicates their entire career to a good cause, if someone is mostly selfless but then takes home a reasonably decent salary we say, "Ha. Hypocrite." So we are fine with my mostly selfish with a touch of altruism, but not mostly altruistic with a touch of selfish. You can be 10 percent altruistic, but can't be 90 percent, which doesn't make any sense. We prefer honest greed to imperfect generosity.

Isn't that interesting? Again, it is a way for us to stop looking at others and start looking internally, asking, "Am I like that?" We want to make sure we give credit to others for whatever goodness they are trying to do.

SEVENTH "WOE"

Jesus in the seventh woe introduces two new descriptions.

Matthew 23:29-33: (NASB) ²⁹Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, <u>hypocrites</u>! For you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, ³⁰and say, If we had been living in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in shedding the blood of the prophets. ³¹So you testify against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. ³²Fill up, then, the measure of the guilt of your fathers. ³³You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell (Gehenna)?

That 33rd verse is dramatic: *you serpents, you brood of vipers*. The term *serpent* reminds us of Satan, the usurper. Their attitude has to change. They have a lot of work to do in order to be acceptable for life in the kingdom. Hypocrisy in the present moment may gain us some earthly success, but in the long run, it leads to a much longer and harder pathway to righteousness. Jesus is using hard language against the Pharisees here to wake them up. This is his last attempt to get them to see the value of being sincere instead of hypocritical.



Their utter hypocrisy culminates here. Not only did they corrupt their own and future generations, but they claimed a personal purity of principle relating to the rejecting of God's prophets in past generations. They were darkly and maliciously usurping authority just as Satan, that old serpent did.

They were saying, "If we had lived in the times of our fathers, we would not have persecuted the prophets of God, because we would have recognized them." Jesus is standing there before them saying, "I am the truth and the life. I am the kingdom. You hypocrites. I AM a prophet, a great man of God! How dare you?" Jesus had every right to talk to them like this.



Healing for my own **OUTWARD** hypocrisy

When it comes to my desire for worthiness before all, I MUST stop the mental gymnastics that elevate me. God elevates the humble in His time and in His way.



Healing for my own INWARD hypocrisy

When it comes to my desire for worthiness in my own private life before God, I MUST focus on the beauty that comes from true self-examination.

OUTWARD

Matthew 7:1-2: (NASB)

¹Do not judge so that you will not be ³Why do you look at the speck that is in your judged. ²For in the way you judge, you brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in will be judged; and by your standard of your own eye? ⁴Or how can you say to your brother, measure, it will be measured to you.

Matthew 7:3-5: (NASB)

INWARD

Let me take the speck out of your eye, and behold, the log is in your own eye? ⁵You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

Most of us are not accurate at judging others.

Hypocrisy can work its way into our lives, especially at the times we cast judgment on someone else so we can look worthy. It is then we need to stop and take the "big tree branch" out of our own eye instead of worrying about the little speck of dust in our brother's eye.

We have to be careful because if Jesus spent all this time talking about hypocrisy, we need to realize this applies to us. Are we looking for power or personal influence on others? Do we have ambition? Are we looking for acceptability, grand appearance, prestige or worthiness? These were the seven woes given to the Pharisees. They are seven woes also given to us. Outwardly, what are we doing to keep from falling into the hypocrisy of seeking these things? Inwardly, how are we acting and responding to godliness to change the way we live?

Hypocrisy is everywhere. Let it not be part of our own hearts and minds. We have a choice.

> So, what makes a Christian a hypocrite? For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Ouestions. Think about it...!





Join us next week for our podcast on January 21, 2019: Ep. #1057: "Is This the Moment You Were Created For?"

Bonus Material!



In the past I've had experiences with hypocrites, and those experiences are all the same. I make a stand, and those who support me (or said they did) in the background left me hanging when it came to making a public declaration. For example, one time I worked at a nursing home where abuse was taking place. I went through the proper channels, but when I went to make a stand, my coworkers who all supported me privately, all abandoned me, leaving me hanging out to dry. In short, they represented something they weren't, and I would have preferred they had not said anything at all.

Hypocrisy can afford to be magnificent in its promises, for never intending to go beyond promise, it costs nothing. – Edmund Burke

Origin of hypocrite: from the Latin word *hypocrita* (same in Greek) meaning a stage actor, hence one who pretends to be what he is not.

One text that seems to sum up the vile results of hypocrisy:

Luke 6:46-49: (NASB) ⁴⁶Why do you call me, Lord, Lord, and do not do what I say? ⁴⁷Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and acts on them, I will show you whom he is like: ⁴⁸he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock; and when a flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. ⁴⁹But the one who has heard and has not acted accordingly, is like a man who built a house on the ground without any foundation; and the torrent burst against it and immediately it collapsed, and the ruin of that house was great.

Here we sum up the degrading pattern of the Pharisees and the potential applications of that pattern to ourselves in both our public lives as well as our private lives.

The door to hypocrisy opened because of a desire for power.

Healing for my own outward hypocrisy: When it comes to power, <u>I MUST be</u> willing to humbly assess my own fruitage; is it in line with God's holy order? Do I accept the fact that power easily corrupts?

Healing for my own inward hypocrisy: <u>I MUST see the issues I have with how I</u> view my personal power struggles within myself. Turning them over to God - the God of power - is necessary.



The door to hypocrisy opened because of a desire for powerful personal influence over others.

Healing for my own outward hypocrisy: When it comes to having powerful influence over others, <u>I MUST be abundantly clear as to WHAT I say</u>, <u>HOW I say</u> it, and <u>WHY I say it</u>! Be a selfless follower.

Healing for my own inward hypocrisy: When it comes to having powerful influence within my own personal life, <u>I MUST weigh what I am listening to</u>, where it comes from and how it truly affects me.

The door to hypocrisy opened because of a desire to show themselves as the most ambitious followers of the Law.

Healing for my own outward hypocrisy: When it comes to having blind ambition creeping into my interactions with others, <u>I MUST remember the horrible</u> consequences of self-guided teaching.

Healing for my own inward hypocrisy: When it comes to having blind ambition creeping into my personal space, <u>I MUST get back to the basics of my personal salvation</u> - it's all because of Jesus.

The door to hypocrisy opened because of a desire to show themselves as the most detailed and acceptable followers of the Law.

Healing for my own outward hypocrisy: When it comes to my desire to show myself acceptable to God before others, <u>I MUST remain centered on honoring</u> and obeying God and Jesus only.

Healing for my own inward hypocrisy: When it comes to my desire to show myself personally acceptable to God, <u>I MUST question my actions to be sure</u> they are in line with sound scriptural principles.

The door to hypocrisy opened because of a desire to have a grand appearance before all.

Healing for my own outward hypocrisy: When it comes to my desire for a grand appearance before all, <u>I MUST seek that which is honored by God through Jesus</u> and not others. God makes us grand.

Healing for my own inward hypocrisy: When it comes to my desire to appear grandly before God, <u>I MUST pray fervently to be as clay in His hands that He</u> may fashion me as He sees fit.

The door to hypocrisy opened because of a desire to have enormous prestige.

Healing for my own outward hypocrisy: When it comes to my desire for prestige before others, <u>I MUST be sure to never step on or damage anyone</u> in my blind pursuit. Instead leave it to God.

Healing for my own inward hypocrisy: When it comes to my desire for my own personal prestige before God, <u>I MUST be honest about who I am</u> and leave all of the assignments of glory to God.



The door to hypocrisy opened because of a desire for worthiness.

Healing for my own outward hypocrisy: When it comes to my desire for worthiness before all, I MUST stop the mental gymnastics that elevate me. God elevates the humble in His time and in His way.

Healing for my own inward hypocrisy: When it comes to my desire for worthiness in my own private life before God, I MUST focus on the honesty that comes from true self-examination.

The debilitating effects of hypocrisy:

Matthew 23:1-7: (NASB) ¹Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, ²saying: The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; ³therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do them. ⁴They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger. ⁵But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men; for they broaden their phylacteries and lengthen the tassels of their garments. ⁶They love the place of honor at banquets and the chief seats in the synagogues, ⁷and respectful greetings in the market places, and being called Rabbi by men.

Romans 2:21-24: (NASB) ²¹You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?²²You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? ²³You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? ²⁴For the name of God is blasphemed among the gentiles because of you, just as it is written.

Romans 16:17-18: (NASB) ¹⁷Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. ¹⁸For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

1 John 4:18-21: (NASB) ¹⁸There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. ¹⁹We love, because He first loved us. ²⁰If someone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. ²¹And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

2 Timothy 3:1-7: (NASB) ¹But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. ²For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, ⁴treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these. ⁶For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, ⁷always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

1 Peter 2:1-3: (NASB) ¹Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, ²like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, ³if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

Galatians 6:1-5: (NASB) ¹Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. ²Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. ³For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ⁴But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. ⁵For each one will bear his own load.

Titus 1:10-16: (NASB) ¹⁰For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, ¹¹who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole Christian Questions ©2019 all rights reserved



families, teaching things they should not teach for the sake of sordid gain. ¹²One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons. ¹³This testimony is true. For this reason reprove them severely so that they may be sound in the faith, ¹⁴not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. ¹⁵To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. ¹⁶They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.

James 1:22-25: (NASB) ²²But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. ²³For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. ²⁵But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.



Carina suggests: The following verse is helpful in remembering how little we really are and how thankful we should be for every good thing, no matter what we have or do. <u>1 Corinthians 4:7</u>: (AMPC) For who separates you from the others [as a faction leader]? [Who makes you superior and sets you apart from another, giving you the preeminence?] What have you that was not given to you? If then you received it [from someone], why do you boast as if you had not received [but had gained it by your own efforts]?

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