

Hypocrisy

I. Introduction

A. The Lord repeatedly warns against hypocrisy. Consider some things Scripture teaches related to this theme.

II. “Many Christians Are Hypocrites”

- A. An excuse made at times for failure to obey God is that many Christians are hypocrites. It should be understood that someone *else’s* hypocrisy does not excuse one’s *own* choice to disregard God. God does not ask us to follow the hypocrite, but to follow Christ. **2 Corinthians 5:10; Matthew 16:24**
- B. Though nothing justifies choosing to disobey God, the use of this excuse does demonstrate the damage hypocrisy can do.

III. What is Hypocrisy?

A. Hypocrisy involves service to God that is really just a pretense. A hypocrite pretends to be someone he or she is not. **Matt. 6:16**

IV. “Good” Works, Impure Motives

- A. A manifestation of hypocrisy is in “good” deeds that are done with impure motives. **Matthew 6:1-7**
- B. The scribes and Pharisees of Jesus’ day were generally guilty of this. The deeds they did in “service to God” were actually done in order to exalt their status in the eyes of others. **Matt. 23:5-7**

V. Hard on Others, Easy on Self

- A. Another demonstration of hypocrisy involves binding things on others that a person fails to bind on him or herself. If we fall into this trap, we will be guilty of pretending to value godly principles that we do not sincerely hold to. **Matthew 23:3-4**
- B. This relates to Jesus’ “judge not” command in His sermon on the mount. **Matthew 7:1-5**

VI. “Pick and Choose” Commands

A. A more general way we can be guilty of binding God’s will while failing to follow it ourselves is by “picking and choosing” certain commands to follow while ignoring others. This is also hypocritical. **Matthew 23:23-24**

VII. Outwardly “Right,” Inwardly Wrong

A. In their efforts to meticulously submit to certain details while ignoring the “big picture” of serving God, the scribes and Pharisees of Jesus’ day engaged in outward actions that were not consistent with their inward hearts. This is another example of hypocrisy that must be avoided. **Matthew 23:25-28**

VIII. Self-imposed Worship

A. Another demonstration of hypocrisy is worshipping God in ways that He has not authorized. While such gives off an appearance of righteousness, it does not actually produce anything good. **Matthew 15:7-9; Colossians 2:23**

IX. Empty Claims to Follow Christ

A. Finally, hypocrisy can be manifested through empty claims to follow Christ. One who claims to serve the Lord faithfully but whose lifestyle does not match this is a deceiver. **Titus 1:16; Luke 6:46**