

The Danger of Hypocrisy

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Introduction: It is very difficult for men to see themselves honestly.

A. God has always known this. In His mercy He seeks for us to know this too.

(Jer 17:9-10; Jn 2:23-24)

1. What is a hypocrite? ὑποκριτής hupokrites 1) one who answers, an interpreter
2) an actor, stage player 3) a dissembler, pretender, hypocrite.
 2. Dishonesty is the foundation of the hypocrite's character.
- B. If a man does not trust God then dishonesty "makes sense."
1. In the "here and now" who obtains rewards and praise? Do honest people receive recognition and rewards from men?
 2. Because I serve a merciful and all-wise God I can be honest and confess my sins! I know that God will forgive and help me if my heart is tender!
 3. Can we pray like David? **(Psa 26:1-6)**

I. The heart of a hypocrite

A. He majors in outward appearance so that men would think well of him. **(Mt 23:2-6)**

1. It is easy to go through life and fool people! (Ex. Pretending to be a doctor)
2. The hypocrite does not really have much faith in God. **(Mt 15:8)**
3. How many men serve as preachers and elders because of men? How many hide what they really believe?

B. He cannot think straight.

1. Dishonesty has a progressive effect upon the mind. **(1 Tim 4:1-2)**
 - a. How many have told a lie so many times that they believe it?
 - b. When you want something so bad your "thinking" lines up with your desires. **(2 Thess 2:10-11)**
 - c. Ever have a Bible study with someone like this?
2. Jesus described these influential men as "blind." **(Mt 15:10-13)**
 - a. Jesus tells us to protect the heart! Just as drugs have a progressive effect and eventually enslaves, so does dishonesty.
 - b. Could men think they are serving God but in reality miss the foundation of what God wants? **(Mt 23:23-24)**
 - c. Some of the greatest hypocrites of today will condemn the Pharisees.

C. He has no self-control only "spin-control." **(Mt 23:25-28)**

1. Worldly religion allows one to be comfortable in the only reward he will see.
2. The hypocrite lives in fear of exposure. **(Isa 33:14-16)**

II. The life of a hypocrite

A. The religion of a hypocrite.

1. He is interested in worship. **(Mt 6:1-7, 16-18)**
2. He is interested in evangelism. **(Mt 23:15)**
 - a. Why am I interested in reaching the lost?
 - b. If those I teach become like me, will they go to heaven?
3. He majors in tradition. **(Mt 15:3-9)**

B. The influence of a hypocrite.

1. These are the greatest evangelists of Satan. **(Rom 2:17-24)**
2. Those who put on a show can be seen for what they are by the world.
- C. The teamwork of hypocrites.
 1. They will work together against those who expose them. **(Mt 23:29-36)**
 - a. I have seen this “teamwork” in business meetings of the church.
 - b. How many foundations and papers dedicated as “guardians of the truth” begin to view themselves as a party that must be defended?
 - c. The ugliest treatment I will ever receive will come from those who call me a brother.
 2. Why did the Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians work together? **(Mk 12:13-15)**
 3. We must never accept falsehood as a tool in “defending the truth.”

III. The danger of hypocrisy

- A. Good men can fall to the sin of hypocrisy. **(Gal 2:11-13)**
 1. We must recognize the powerful influence of how our brethren want us to act.
 2. The only defense of this sin is openness to teaching and rebuke.
 3. If I give in to pressure I need to repent and fight this pressure!
- B. We must wage war against our prejudices. **(Jer 42:1-6)**
 1. Consider those who ask for the will of God but in their heart they will only accept one answer! They said the right things!
 2. God knew their heart. **(Jer 42:19-22; 43:1-4)**
 3. Why are you here today? To be challenged or to re-enforce your prejudice?
- C. Hypocrisy is bred in an atmosphere of bitterness and anger. **(Jas 4:13-17; Heb 12:15)**
 1. What are the fruits of an angry home, church?
 2. When anger is used to silence communication and to keep others from exposing them then we are teaching other to “pretend” and accept a false reality.
- D. Hypocrisy will cause men to be critical and merciless.
 1. Did Jesus condemn openness and rebuke here? **(Mt 7:1-5)**
 - a. Some view their “spirituality” only in terms of criticism.
 - b. Some of the weakest Christians I know think there are in fact strong.
 2. When we are concerned only for ourselves then we will run over others that get in our way. **(Lk 13:15; Jn 16:1-3)**

"One of my deepest convictions is that the terrible harms that are done in this world are not done by deliberately evil people, who are not numerous and are soon found out. They are done by the good--by those who are so sure that God is with them. Nothing can stop them, for they are certain that they are right." - Henry Fehren

- E. Jesus knew that this influence could easily spread among His disciples. **(Lk 12:1-3)**
 1. We need to ask as His disciples did at the last supper: “Is it I?”
 2. We need to see and expose sources among us that spread hypocrisy.

Conclusion: What does your God see?

- A. If He is the God of heaven then He sees all, including our hearts. **(Heb 4:12-13)**
- B. Will we make sure that we each day seek for a pure conscience? **(Acts 24:15-16)**