

CHRISTIANS ARE HYPOCRITES

EPISODE 1: THE PROBLEM OF HYPOCRISY

look back

First, **LOOK BACK** at the past week by asking, “How did we do?” Begin with prayer, then check in with one another—sharing honestly, celebrating victories, acknowledging struggles, and graciously offering practical help.

 **PRAYER** - Begin with prayer, inviting Jesus into the conversation.

Since this is the first episode in the series, take time to:

- Share what brought you to this study and what you hope to gain.
- Talk about the challenges you’ve faced in discussing faith with people who see Christians as hypocrites.
- Reflect on what you hope to gain from these episodes.

look up

Next, **LOOK UP** to God’s Word by asking, “What does Jesus want us to know?” If you haven’t already, watch this week’s video: “*The Problem of Hypocrisy*.” Then use the “What Do You Think?” and “What Does God’s Word Say?” sections to draw out the main truths together.

 **WATCH: EPISODE 1: The Problem of Hypocrisy**

Episode Summary

This episode confronts one of the top reasons younger generations are leaving the church—the perception that Christians are hypocrites. Jesus, however, approached hypocrisy very differently than the religious leaders of His day. He didn’t condemn doubters or outcasts; He reserved His strongest rebukes for self-righteousness.

Jesus was righteous, but not religious. He loved sinners, outcasts, and misfits while challenging empty tradition and fake holiness. His approach was relational, not performative. He listened, asked questions, and built genuine connections that drew people to the Father.

When we let Jesus “do the talking through us,” we reflect His heart—leading with love instead of defensiveness, dialogue instead of debate. The goal isn’t to win arguments but to draw people closer to Jesus through authenticity and grace.

The endgame isn't to win the argument, but to bring others to Jesus.

HOW TO USE THESE RESOURCES

Whether you’re studying on your own or with a group, each guide follows a simple yet powerful rhythm: **Look Back / Look Up / Look Forward**. For group leaders, additional instructions for leading a small group are included at the end of the first workbook in each series.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

This series helps us face one of the most common objections to Christianity: “**Christians are hypocrites.**” Each episode explores how Jesus confronted hypocrisy, modeled authenticity, and built bridges to outcasts and doubters. The goal is not to win arguments but to represent Jesus truthfully—to listen well, live honestly, and let His character shine through us. The final study guide in this series includes **Discussion Starters** designed to help you share these videos and talk about faith with your children, grandchildren, and friends.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. How do you think the perception of Christian hypocrisy has affected the church’s witness in today’s culture?
2. Was it shocking to you to realize that Jesus is on the same page with skeptics when it comes to religious hypocrisy?
3. How can showing skeptics that they share the same concerns as Jesus help draw them to Him?
4. What does it mean to be “righteous, but not religious,” and how can you live that out personally?
5. What’s the difference between genuine faith and merely following rules or traditions?
6. In what ways can we follow Jesus’ example of befriending and listening to outcasts or skeptics?

WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY?

KEY SCRIPTURE

Matthew 23:27–28 “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like white-washed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.” Jesus confronted religious hypocrisy head-on, calling His followers to sincerity of heart over outward performance.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

Luke 5:30–32 “But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, ‘Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?’ Jesus answered them, ‘It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.’” Jesus welcomed those others rejected, showing that love and truth go hand in hand.

John 4:23–24 “Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.” True worship is not about religious rituals but about an authentic relationship with God.



Finally, **LOOK FORWARD** by asking, “What does Jesus want us to do?” Commit to practical steps for living out this lesson. Review the assignment, share commitments with the group, pray for one another, and move forward together in faith and hope.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

James 1:22–25
Mark 11:15–18
Titus 1:16

THIS EPISODE'S ASSIGNMENT

This week, practice humility and active listening. In any conversation about faith—or with someone skeptical of Christianity—ask thoughtful questions before sharing your perspective. Reflect Jesus' spirit by listening with empathy rather than defending your viewpoint.

Also, identify one person in your community who might feel like an outsider. Reach out to them with a simple act of kindness or friendship that reflects Jesus' inclusive love.

PERSONAL GROWTH COMMITMENTS



- What has God laid on my heart?
- What is the Holy Spirit leading me to change?
- What will I do in my own life, in my relationships, and to reach NextGen loved ones?

SHARE WITH THE GROUP



Encourage sharing commitments, prayer needs, and real-life stories. Close in prayer, asking Jesus to help you live with sincerity, humility, and love—and to make your life a reflection of His authentic heart.



ESSENTIALS FOR LEADING A SMALL GROUP

These principles will help create a safe, encouraging environment where everyone can grow and connect:

- **Begin with Prayer** – Invite Jesus into the meeting and ask for His guidance.
- **Create a Welcoming Setup** – Sit in a circle so everyone can see each other.
- **Facilitate, Don't Lecture** – Guide the conversation with thoughtful, Scripture-based questions.
- **Stay on Mission** – Gently redirect if conversation strays into politics or unrelated topics.
- **Model Grace & Openness** – Be transparent about your own journey and set expectations for confidentiality.
- **Build Relationships** – Include social time before or after the session.
- **Follow the Look Back / Look Up / Look Forward Rhythm** – Celebrate progress and offer grace for struggles.



Explore additional resources and upcoming events at LegacyImperative.org. If this series blesses you, please share it—and consider helping us reach more families by clicking the donate button.