

# Why Are There So Many Hypocrites In The Church?

Questioning Christianity | Week 5 | Matthew 6-7; 23

## INTRODUCTION

## NOTES

The word “hypocrites” is used 17 times in the New Testament, and it’s pretty interesting that every single time this word was used, it was used by Jesus. He talked about it. He denounced it, and He addressed it head-on. In fact, when Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount, He taught his disciples exactly what to do to help prevent holy hypocrisy. So today, we’re going to look at the teachings of Jesus so that we, too, can prevent hypocrisy from being present in the church.

## KEY POINTS

### 1. Be holy in your private life.

Your BEING will determine your DOING. In other words, who you are will determine what you do. 1 Peter 1:15-16 says, “*But as the one who called you is holy, you also are to be holy in all your conduct; 16 for it is written, ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’*” Basically, this means you’ve got to BE holy before you can LIVE a life of holiness.

Now, this doesn’t mean you are going to be perfect and never make a mistake. But what it should mean is that, as a follower of Jesus, you are waking up every morning, pursuing holiness in your life, longing to be like Jesus, and craving intimacy in your relationship with the Lord. If that’s true in your life, there will be a pattern of you becoming more like Christ. This is what it means to be holy in your private life.

### 2. Be humble in your public life.

Jesus tells us in Matthew 6:1, “*Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. Otherwise, you have no reward with your Father in heaven.*”

When He talked about being “seen” by others, that word “seen” also comes from another Greek term meaning “theater.” It’s a word that means “something to be stared at.” Jesus was referring to those same Pharisees that He called hypocrites in Matthew 23 and He was saying we should all be righteous, and we should all be godly, but we shouldn’t put on a show.

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The Pharisees had a reputation for knowing the Scriptures and teaching the Scriptures, but they were also known for praying these elaborate prayers with flowery language that were meant to impress the people who heard them. They would put on a religious show, and these prayers were spectacles that put the spotlight on themselves. This is the kind of behavior we need to avoid if we want to be humble in our public lives in order to please Jesus.

**3. Be honorable in your personal life.**

As Christians, we have to understand that nonbelievers don't read their Bibles; they read us. Therefore, your life and my life should be lived in a way that makes nonbelievers question their disbelief about God. If you're the real deal, and you are living your life for the Lord, people can tell, and God will use you.

But how can we tell if someone is the real deal? Jesus answers that in Matthew 7:16. He said: "*You'll recognize them by their fruit.*" If you have a real relationship with God, if you're living in the Spirit of God, and if He's redeemed you, restored you, forgiven you, and made you new, then your life ought to be a testimony of that transformation. The fruit always reveals the truth!

**NOTES**

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**QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1. What are some steps you can take to be holy in your private life?
2. On a scale of 1-10, 10 being the most humble, how humble would you say you are in your public life? How can you improve in this area of humility?
3. What are some fruits that are evident in your life that point other people to Jesus?

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