

Give Me a Reason to Trust the Church
Matthew 7:15-20, Acts 20: 25-31, 1 Tim 3:2-7, 1 Tim 4:12 -16, James 3:1
Al Gascon | April 19, 2026

“We were freed from the rule of sin in our bodies. This doesn’t mean we’re perfect, but means in Christ we actually can overcome and choose to let our sin stay dead. The freed Christian who returns to sin sometimes isn’t so much a hypocrite but more so a newborn learning to walk in a new life and power in Christ.” —Michael Brown

“It is not the being seen of men that is wrong, but doing these things for the purpose of being seen of men. The problem with the hypocrite is his motivation. He does not want to be holy; he only wants to seem to be holy. He is more concerned with his reputation for righteousness than about actually becoming righteous. The approbation of men matters more to him than the approval of God.” – Augustine

- Jesus warned of imposters within the church. He also told us we would be able to recognize them and that they would be sentenced.
- A true leader has a flock-first mindset. The flock > self.
- There is a God-set standard for leadership/eldership in the church.
- There is a stricter God-set standard for pastors and teachers of the Word of God.

Give me a reason to trust the Church...

- The church is full of people who need mercy, forgiveness, and a savior. All of us. Sometimes we blow it.
- Trust the one who died for the church. Jesus can be trusted, the Father is faithful, and the Spirit is good.
- There are more leaders and churchgoers who live with Christ-like integrity than you can meet in a lifetime.

Discussion Questions

- a. What evidence have you seen in your experiences that shows the church as trustworthy?
- b. Has there ever been anyone within the church who has hurt you or sinned against you? How was the conflict resolved?
- c. Has there ever been a time when you “blew it” and caused harm or conflict with someone else in the church?
- d. What would the church look like if there weren’t higher standards and qualifications for elders and teachers?