

Hypocritical People

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A hypocrite is someone who pretends to be something they're not.

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean.²⁸ In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness. Matthew 23:27-28

Hypocrisy is the gap between what we show and who we are.

How should we deal with hypocritical people?

- **Love people enough to confront hypocrisy.** (Galatians 2:11-14 NLT)
...when Peter came to Antioch, I had to oppose him to his face, for what he did was very wrong. Galatians 2:11 NLT

Prayerful confrontation...

...if someone is caught in sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch for yourselves, or you also may be tempted.² Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:1-2

- **God, help me confront with the goal of restoration.** (Galatians 6:1a)
- **God, help me confront carefully.** (Galatians 6:1b)

Could it be me?

- **God, help me see when I'm the hypocrite.**
Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean. Matthew 23:26
 - **Drop the mask, bring your sin to Jesus, and confess to God & people.**
Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy. Proverbs 28:13
 - **Small groups are a place where we can be real without the fear of being judged and rejected**
Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. James 5:16

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. Romans 15:7

Let's Connect

- Who is one of your favorite actors or actresses? What is it about this person's acting abilities you enjoy so much?

Let's Talk About It

We all have *difficult people* in our lives. Some of them are hypocritical people who pretend to be something they're not. As followers of Christ, we have a responsibility to love and help each other when we are living in hypocrisy. Like Jesus, like Paul, we should love people enough to confront hypocrisy. And because each of us is tempted to pretend and hide our sin, we need a safe place where we can be real without the fear of being judged or rejected.

John 13:34-35; Matthew 23:1-5, 27-28; Galatians 2:11-14; Galatians 6:1-2; Matthew 18:15-1; James 5:18-19; Proverbs 28:13; Hebrews 10:24-25; Romans 15:7

- Which part of the message impacted or challenged you?
- Read Matthew 23:1-5, 27-28. How has the hypocrisy of another impacted you? What did you do when you "caught a glimpse of the person behind the mask"?
- Read Galatians 2:11-14 & 6:1-2. It takes courage to love the people in our lives enough to confront hypocrisy. How will you practically trust God to lovingly, gently, and patiently confront others?
- Read Matthew 23:26; Proverbs 28:13 and James 5:16-19. Is there an area of your life where you are being hypocritical? How does shame play a part in the temptation to pretend? What's your next step to address your own hypocrisy and break the power of shame in your life?
- Read Romans 15:7. How could small groups provide a place where you could be real and not have to pretend? How could being around people who Christ is transforming be a part of God transforming you?

Take a Step

- Ask God to search your heart and make you aware of your own hypocrisy. Take a step toward healing by letting your mask down in your small group.
- *Do you know someone who is hypocritical?* Pray for God to give you courage as you seek to confront them gently, graciously, and patiently.

Here's My Prayer

- God, give me a pure heart. Give me a humble spirit centered on Your love rather than the faults of others. If there's someone you want me to restore gently, please give me the wisdom, humility, and grace I need. Amen.