

MYTHBUSTERS

“The Church is Hypocritical & Judgmental”

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Matthew 23:1-4; 13-15; 25-28 (ESV)

WHAT MAKES HYPOCRISY SUCH A TURN-OFF:

- 1) **THE CONTRADICTION** – Acting in contradiction to my stated beliefs or feelings (vv. 1-3)
 - Words and conduct do not match; saying one thing and doing another

- 2) **THE DECEPTION** – Putting on a false appearance to make it seem like my conduct is consistent with my stated beliefs or feelings when it's really not (vv. 25-28)
 - **Hypocrisy** = from Gk. *hypokrisis* - "acting on the stage, pretense" or wearing a mask since actors in those days covered their faces.
 - Appearing to be one thing but, behind the mask, being someone else.

- 3) **THE CONDEMNATION** – Judging others for the very same imperfections that I struggle with (while putting on a false appearance of virtue) (vv. 4, 13-15)
 - Carrying around the air of moral superiority, not acknowledging imperfections in my own life while harshly criticizing those same imperfections in others

THE REAL ISSUE WITH HYPOCRISY:

My failure to **deal honestly** with the inconsistencies in my life

COUNTERING HYPOCRISY WITH TRANSPARENCY:

1) **BE REAL**

- Don't pretend to be something you're not. It's okay not to be okay.

2) **BE HONEST**

- Admit that you need help to God and to trusted others. Using good judgment, be open about your faults

CENTRAL TRUTH:

God calls me to be real and honest about the inconsistencies in my life.

LIFEGROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you think is the general perception of Christian churches by the unchurched in today's culture? How did the Christian churches get this reputation?

Going Deeper into the Message

2. Read the entire chapter of Matthew 23. Share as many observations as you can make regarding Jesus' attitude and emotion toward the scribes and the Pharisees (the religious leaders of his days). What problem does Jesus have with them?
3. From the perspective of a non-believer, look at the points under "What Makes Hypocrisy Such a Turn-Off" one by one. What attitudes, emotions, or thoughts come to your mind about Christians and the institution of the church when you consider each point?
4. What motivates people to wear masks and give the false appearance of virtue? Why not just be open and transparent?
5. Give your honest assessment of YNCC. Which characterizes our church more, hypocrisy or transparency? Explain your answer.
6. Is YNCC a safe environment where people can be real and honest about their imperfections without being judged? Are you a part of the problem or a part of the solution? Explain your answer.

Responding to the Message

7. What one insight from the message seems most personally significant to you right now and what action can you take in the next week to start putting this into practice or to cooperate with God in bringing about this transformation?