

Four Surprising Facts About Hypocrites

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Hypocrites were actors in ancient Greece. Their performance was primarily in speaking one thing and acting out another. It is no wonder that we use this word to describe a type of person in general. We define Hypocrisy as ability to readily perceive and condemn faults in others, while failing to perceive and condemn faults of their own

Jesus spoke about being hypocrites often; in fact, His usage of the word is almost certainly why we use it today. He commanded us in Matthew 6:1-16 not to behave like hypocrites, but to conduct our worship in sincerity to glorify God, not ourselves. In Matthew 23:13-23 he accused the leaders of the Jews of hypocrisy in their conduct.

The sad truth of hypocrites is that they hurt the church. Many leave the Lord and His church because of what they perceive to be hypocrisy. Jesus particularly admonished us not to conduct ourselves as hypocrites in Matthew 7:1-5.

The truth is that there are hypocrites in the church. Jesus Himself testified to their presence in Matthew 13:24-30. Why is it Jesus says He will not do anything about it until the end of the age? Perhaps it is because He desires that they change. Yet ultimately, are we not all hypocrites of a fashion, having turned from one path of conduct into Christ (I Corinthians 6:9-11). Would Paul have not been called a hypocrite to preach Christ, having formerly persecuted Christ?

Four Surprising Facts about Hypocrites:

Surprising Fact #1: Hypocrites are not entirely wrong. Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 23:1-3 that they were to listen to the Scribes and Pharisees, but not follow their conduct. Consider the words of a hypocrite; while their conduct is wrong, what they say may be true.

Surprising Fact #2: They confirm the value of Christianity. Paul said sometimes there must be divisions in the church so that those who are approved can be manifested. Perhaps hypocrites are necessary to remind us of the value of Christianity. No one counterfeits valueless things; there is no counterfeit peso.

Surprising Fact #3: They are closer to God than those who reject God and the church over them. It is simple to see that anyone who says that there are too many hypocrites in the church to be a part of it are accepting that the hypocrite is closer to God (as a false participant of the church) than they are. Jesus taught in Matthew 21:28-31 that a son who was a hypocrite in word but still obedient was still successful.

Surprising Fact #4: Anyone who forsakes God because of Hypocrites IS a Hypocrite. Consider that anyone who points to the faults of others is a fault-finder; they "judge" those for "judging" (Matthew 7:1-5). Could there be a greater hypocrisy than to punish God for the conduct of men, by refusing to seek God and pursue a spiritual life because of other people? Ultimately, the hypocrite is judging others for their conduct but not themselves. Hypocrites have the most sensitive hypocrisy detector.

In the end, God does not want Christians concerned about hypocrites. The reason is that we ought to be far more concerned about our own conduct than that of others. We ought to understand that people stumble, and that such perceived hypocrisy is the opportunity to help. At the same time, we need to remember that God will deal with hypocrites in the church at the end of the age, not men.

DO NOT be concerned about Hypocrites; God will handle it. Be concerned about BEING one, because God will handle it too