

Sermon Notes

Christianity's Greatest Questions: The Problem of Hypocrisy

December 14-15th, 2019

Remember, small groups are primarily for growing closer relationships with other believers. We can learn wonderful things in this environment but keep relationships first.

- **Christianity's Greatest Questions**
- This series is in the line of apologetics/defending the faith based on my experiences and questions.
 - o Set the stage for curiosity: Not social pressure to conform, but freedom to explore the things of God.
- **This week: The Problem of Hypocrisy**
- Have you ever heard that the church is full of hypocrites?
 - o This is a significant practical barrier for people regarding the faith.
 - o We are the representation of God in this world. **Matthew 5:13-16**
- When we fail, it is a serious problem. **Romans 2:17-24**
 - o Hypocrite Christians drive others away from God. That is very bad.
 - o The opposite is also true. **John 17:20-21**
 - We don't need better marketing. We don't need a more sympathetic world. We just need to actually follow Jesus and we will win!!
 - This world doesn't need to hear about Jesus, they need to be shown.
- Why do people think that the church is full of hypocrites? A few thoughts:
 - o 1) Is it? 90%? 50%? Look around. I see some great people who are followers of Jesus.
 - The bad "Christians" get more press. They are going to pay. **John 9:39-41**
 - o 2) We take all comers at Good Hope. Jesus loves and died for all. Hypocrisy vs being flawed???
 - o 3) Excuse. If you are a Christian who isn't bearing fruit because others are hypocrites, well...
 - Do hypocrites know they are hypocrites??
 - o 4) They see Christians as unwilling to offer others what they need, forgiveness. **Matthew 6:14-15**
- What is a hypocrite?
 - o 1) People who pretend to be something they are not.
 - o 2) People who hold others to a higher standard than they hold themselves, but pretend they hold.
 - o 3) Pride is hypocrisy for Christians. Seeing yourself as above or better than others.
- Jesus gives several examples of hypocrisy in Matthew 23.
 - o **Matthew 23:13, 15.** Pretend to be spiritual guides, but are quite the contrary.
 - o **Matthew 23:23-24.** Legalistic pride without the heart of God. Totally missing the point.
 - o **Matthew 23:25-26.** Classic hypocrisy. Pretending to be something they are not.
 - o **Matthew 23:33** is the result of hypocrisy. Don't play with this. It isn't cute. No place for this.
 - God is angry with them too! He will certainly condemn the prideful hypocrite Christians.
- So, what do we do with this? There is a win/win here for us to take!!
 - o Embrace the life changing message of the gospel! Reject excuse doctrines and mere validation.
 - The hypocrite life is no fun! Don't fall for the Devil's lie!! Jesus gives us a better life!!
 - o AND that spreads the truth to others!!
 - How do others know if Christianity works? By looking at Christians!! **John 17:20-21**
- So, this can go both ways. God's people can attract people to God or push people away.
 - o Let's be overcomers who attract others to Jesus! It's good in every way!!
 - o Closing verse **Romans 12:2.**
- Pray for each other before you finish up!