

7 Ways to be a Hypocrite (Matthew 23)

Introduction:

This chapter records Jesus' final public teaching before His arrest. He speaks to the crowds and His disciples (vv. 1–12), then pronounces seven woes against the scribes and Pharisees (vv. 13–36), and finally laments over Jerusalem (vv. 37–39).

It is a sobering chapter, with not much good to say about the scribes and Pharisees. But how about Christians today? Has anyone ever called you a hypocrite? Do we "walk the talk", or often fall into the dangerous slope of superficial religion? In this passage we break down 7 ways that Jesus calls out hypocrisy, and reflect on God's response - and our necessary action - towards hypocritical people.

7 ways to be a Hypocrite

- 1) Don't practice what you preach (v.1-4)**
- 2) Exalt yourself (v. 5-7)**
- 3) Make the Gospel exclusive (v. 13-15)**
- 4) Don't keep your word (v. 16-22)**
- 5) Major on the minor (v. 23-24)**
- 6) Focus on the OUTSIDE. Ignore the INSIDE. (v. 25-28)**
- 7) Condemn Past Sins While repeating them (v. 29-36)**

God's response to Hypocrisy? (v. 37-39)

Solution to Hypocrisy? (v. 8-12)

Reflection Questions:

1. Jesus highlighted 7 characteristics of hypocrisy. Which of them are we in danger of practicing in our own lives?
2. While Jesus rebukes the hypocrites, it is clear he longs for them to return (v. 37-39). How do we respond to hypocrites? How can we help them turn to Jesus?
3. Rather than rebuke hypocrites, we ought to model humility. How can we do that more in our daily lives?