Hypocrisy: “The masks we wear…”

1. Do you remember your first taste of hypocrisy?

2. Do you remember your first taste of hypocrisy with organized religion?

3. Do you remember the first time you saw hypocrisy operating in your own life?

4. Did you ever wonder why God is so adamantly opposed to hypocrisy among His people?
Ever wonder why God hates hypocrisy so much?

1 *Therefore be imitators of God,* as beloved children; 2 *and walk in love,* just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

Ephesians 5:1-2 (NIV)

- **2 Commands** for every Christian to follow:
  - Mimic God
  - Love People

3 *But do not let* immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints; 4 *and there must be no* filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. 5 *For this you know with certainty,* that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 *Let no one deceive you* with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

Ephesians 5:3-6 (NIV)

- **2 Warnings** for every Christian to heed:
  - Don’t “use” people to satisfy your own selfish lustful agenda (especially with regard to human sexuality).
  - Don’t let anyone “deceive” you into thinking that selfish, lustful, me-centered behavior is compatible with mimicking God and loving people.
Therefore **do not be partakers with them**, for you were formerly darkness, but now you are **light in the Lord**; **walk as children of light** (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. **And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness**, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.

Ephesians 5:7-12 (NIV)

- **2 Applications** for every Christian to practice:
  - **Don’t participate** in deeds of darkness.
  - **Do practice** walking in the light.

**But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.**

“Awake, sleeper,
And arise from the dead,
And Christ will shine on you.”

Ephesians 5:13-14 (NIV)

- **2 Results** of Christians living in the light 24/7:
  1. When believers walk in the light (mimic God and love people), they winsomely “expose” evil and sin as the ugly agents of death that they are.

  2. When unbelievers see and interact with authentic (non-hypocritical) Christians, the light of Christ shines upon them and invites them to turn from the deception of sin and death and receive God’s love and forgiveness through a relationship with Christ.
So where do we go from here?

15Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, 16making the most of your time, because the days are evil.

Ephesians 5:15-16 (NIV)

- A Word to Believers: walk wisely!

Why? There’s so much at stake.

- A Word to Unbelievers: awake sleeper!

Why? There’s so much at stake.

Discussion Questions:

1. What did you learn about hypocrisy that was new to you?

2. What was the most painful experience you’ve had with hypocrisy in organized religion?

3. In what ways do you currently struggle with hypocrisy in your own life?

4. In what specific ways has your relationship with Christ freed you to live a more authentic life?
Jesus’ personal prescription for dealing with hypocrisy in our lives:

➢ **Begin within…**

39 He also told them this parable: “Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? 40 A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher. 41 “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? 42 How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.


➢ **Start with the heart…**

43 No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. 44 Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thorn bushes, or grapes from briers. 45 The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.

Luke 6:43-45 (NIV)

➢ **Weigh the consequences…**

46 “Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? 47 I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice. 48 He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. 49 But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.”

Luke 6:46-49 (NIV)
How to overcome hypocrisy in your heart:

15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 16 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. 18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. 19 Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Ephesians 5:15-21 (NIV)

- The Context: Ephesians 5:1-14

- The Command to be “Spirit-Filled”

- The Command: “Be filled”
  - The meaning of “filled” =
  - The plural form =
  - The passive voice =
  - The present tense =

- Four Evidences (proof) of being filled with the Spirit.

  1. Your speech will reveal it.
  2. Your private thoughts will reveal it.
  3. Your attitudes will reveal it.
  4. Your relationships will reveal it.
An important distinction: **Baptism ≠ Filling**

- **The Baptism of the Spirit:**
  “The non-experiential, unrepeated work of the Holy Spirit at regeneration whereby we are placed into the Body of Christ.” F.F. Bruce
  
  (Acts 2, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 8:9)

- **The Filling of the Spirit:**
  “The unobstructed or unhindered control or influence of the Spirit upon the believer’s life.” C. Ryrie
  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Baptism</th>
<th>Filling</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occurs only once in each believer's life</td>
<td>Is a repeated experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never happened before Day of Pentecost</td>
<td>Occurred in the Old Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True of all believers</td>
<td>Not necessarily experienced by all</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cannot be undone</td>
<td>Can be lost</td>
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<td>Results in a position</td>
<td>Results in power</td>
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<td>Occurs when we believe in Christ</td>
<td>Occurs throughout the Christian life</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>No Prerequisite</strong></td>
<td><strong>Depends on yieldedness</strong></td>
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<td>(except faith in Christ)</td>
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**Principles to remember:**

1. The issue is not getting *more* of the Holy Spirit; it’s Him getting *more* of you.

2. We are never told to seek an experience or gift as evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

3. The *conditions* for being filled are:
      Colossians 3:16-17
   b. **Undefeated life** (dealing with known sin) Ephesians 4:30-31
   c. **Dependent life** John 15
      Galatians 5:16

4. The key perspective: It is a relationship, not mechanical.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? How often can this happen?

2. How does one *know* if they are “filled” with the Spirit?

3. How does being filled with the Spirit address the issue of hypocrisy in your private world?

4. What specific steps do you need to take to be filled with the Spirit and live an authentic life?

**Resource:** *Baptism and Fullness* by John Stott
A Theology of Hypocrisy:

The Fact:

Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

The Evidence:

5b God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. 6If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. 7But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

1 John 1:5b-7 (NIV)

The Dilemma:

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

John 1:8 (NIV)

The Battle:

For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

Galatians 5:17 (NIV)

The Process:

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is.

1 John 3:2 (NIV)
17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 18 But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 (NIV)

Worship: God’s antidote for hypocrisy

15 “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. 18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. 19 Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”

Ephesians 5:15-21 (NIV)

Worship is God’s primary means of allowing us to “see Him” (significantly, but imperfectly) for who He is—and thus be progressively transformed into His likeness.

3 modes of Worship:

1. Corporate Worship:
   - Its Priority
   - Its Purpose
   - Its Practice

Ephesians 5:19a

Hebrews 10:24-25
Psalm 27:4
2. Personal Worship: Ephesians 5:19b

3. “Practicing His Presence” Worship: Ephesians 5:20

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do we all struggle with hypocrisy? Explain why Christians continue to sin even after they receive Christ for the forgiveness of their sins and power over sin. Review A “Theology of Hypocrisy” for needed help.

2. Why is worship such a pivotal and essential practice to eliminating hypocrisy in our lives? Read Psalm 27:4, Philippians 3:7-13, John 17:3, Deuteronomy 33:12-22 and discuss the common theme in these passages.

3. How do you currently prepare your heart for corporate worship in order to give God your very best?
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   - Its Priority

3. **“Practicing His Presence” Worship**
   - Its Priority

Resource: *My Heart Christ’s Home* by Robert Boyd Munger
           *My Utmost for His Highest* by Oswald Chambers

Resource: *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence

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For more resources, go to [www.LivingontheEdge.org](http://www.LivingontheEdge.org)
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3. How do you currently prepare your heart for corporate worship in order to give God your very best?

4. How do you worship in your daily devotional time? How do you keep it “fresh” and non-legalistic? What practical “tips” might you share with others about developing consistency?

5. What new insight or specific application did the Holy Spirit bring to your mind during this message? What will it look like to put this into practice this week?