

CHAPTER 13

Dealing with Different

Kinds of People

Part 3

THOSE WHO ARE HYPOCRITES

The Lord Jesus often spoke out against those who were “HYPOCRITES.” What is a HYPOCRITE?

The word HYPOCRITE means “someone who plays a part on the stage, an actor.” An actor is someone who pretends to be someone else. The same is true for a hypocrite. A hypocrite acts out a part and pretends to be someone else. He pretends to be someone different than he really is.

Sometimes little children enjoy playing “DOCTOR.” One child might pretend he is the doctor and the other child might pretend to be the patient. The child is acting out a part. He is not really a doctor; he is just pretending to be one! This is what the word “HYPOCRITE” means: AN ACTOR, A PRETENDER!

There might be a show on television which tells the story about a man who is a criminal and a drug addict. Some actor must play the part of this man. The actor is just pretending to be a criminal and a drug addict. In real life this man may be a fine citizen who has never been in trouble with the law and who has never taken drugs in his entire life. In the television show he pretends to be someone different than he is in real life.

In the Greek and Roman plays, the actors would usually wear large MASKS. The MASK represented the person whose part they were playing. To find out who the actor is, you must look under the mask! Every year on Halloween many children go from door to door wearing MASKS. A child may pretend to be a GORILLA and wear a GORILLA MASK. But this child is not really a gorilla! To find the real person you must look under the mask.

Hypocrites in the Bible

As we read the Bible (especially the gospels) we read about men who are called HYPOCRITES or PRETENDERS or ACTORS. As we look at some of these passages, we will look first at the actor and what he is pretending to be. Then we will look at what the person really is (under the mask):

Matthew 6:1-2

THE ACTOR WEARING A MASK

"I'm a very righteous person who loves to help needy people. Whenever I have opportunity, I give money (alms) to the poor because I really care for these people!"

THE REAL PERSON UNDER THE MASK

"I'm a very proud person who can put on a good show to make people think that I care for the poor and needy. I could care less about these people, but I want others to think I am very generous and very loving!"

Matthew 6:5

THE ACTOR WEARING A MASK

"I have a wonderful relationship to God. Because of my close relationship with the Lord I can pray often. Very few people are as righteous as I!"

THE REAL PERSON UNDER THE MASK

"The only reason that I am praying is so all these people can see me and think that I must be a very holy and righteous person. But when I am alone and by myself I hardly ever pray!"

Matthew 6:16

THE ACTOR WEARING A MASK

"I love God so much that often I fast (go without food). I am concerned about more important things than eating and drinking. My greatest concern is pleasing God, and if it pleases God I am willing to go without food. I am willing to suffer for God!"

THE REAL PERSON UNDER THE MASK

What is the real reason he is fasting?

Matthew 7:3-5**THE ACTOR WEARING A MASK**

"I do not have any faults myself, but I have noticed some very serious faults in my brother's life. In fact, right now I notice a tiny speck in his eye. It is always very easy for me to notice these faults in others!"

THE REAL PERSON UNDER THE MASK

As you lift up the mask and look into this person's eye, what do you find (verses 4-5)?
(This is a

large plank of wood such as would be used
to support the roof of a building!)

Matthew 15:7-8**THE ACTOR WEARING A MASK**

"With my mouth I will pray to God and with my lips I will sing to God and praise Him! I am a true worshipper of God!"

THE REAL PERSON UNDER THE MASK

If you could take a good look at the inside of this person, what would you find? Does he really have a close relationship with God?

Are there times when we honor God on the outside, but on the inside our hearts are far from Him? Is it possible to sing a hymn, and have my heart far from God? Is it possible to pray before a meal and have my heart far from God? Is it possible to sit in church and have my heart far from God? Is it possible to read the Bible and have my heart far from God?

Matthew 22:15-18**THE ACTOR WEARING A MASK**

"Jesus, we know that You are true and that you teach the way of God in truth!" (verse 16). [This sounds very good, but remember, someone is just acting!]

THE REAL PERSON UNDER THE MASK

Did these people want to follow Jesus' teachings or did they want to trap Him so they could put Him to death?

Matthew 23:24**THE ACTOR WEARING A MASK**

A little bug gets in his soup and he is very concerned. He must get it out! "I can't eat this soup as long as it is contaminated with this bug!"

THE REAL PERSON UNDER THE MASK

A huge camel gets in his bowl of soup and he swallows the whole thing! Even though he seemed concerned about the little things (little rules and regulations), he was not concerned about the things that were most important such as J _____, M _____ and F _____ (verse 23).

Matthew 23:25**THE ACTOR WEARING A MASK**

How does the outside look?

THE REAL PERSON UNDER THE MASK

What do you find under the mask and inside the cup?

Matthew 23:27**THE ACTOR WEARING A MASK**

How does the tomb appear on the outside?

THE REAL PERSON UNDER THE MASK

If you look within the tomb, what would you see?

Matthew 23:28

THE ACTOR WEARING A MASK	THE REAL PERSON UNDER THE MASK
What does this person pretend to be? _____	As you lift up the mask, what do you really find? _____

What about us? Are we ever pretenders? Do we ever put on a show before others? Do we ever wear a mask?

A person might pretend to be listening to the message on Sunday morning, but in his heart he is really thinking about some of the things he wants to do in the afternoon! His mask might fool everyone--everyone except the God who always sees under the mask!

A student might pretend to be concentrating and thinking hard while taking an exam, but out of the corner of his eye he is looking at his neighbor's answers. He wears the mask of honesty, but it is only a mask!

Can you think of other ways that a person can be a pretender and a hypocrite?

How Can We Help Hypocrites?

As we have already seen, the Lord Jesus Christ always had very strong words for those who were hypocrites. These people pretended to be righteous and right with God, and the Lord ripped off their masks and showed them that they were wicked and far from God!

God's message for every hypocrite is found in Matthew 23:26. What is the first thing that needs to be clean? _____ When this is clean, what else will be clean? _____ A hypocrite tries to make the outside right when the inside is wrong! Putting a beautiful dress on a pig does not make the pig a princess! The hypocrite must first let God change the inside, and then the outside will take care of itself! But every hypocrite needs to know that there is great danger ahead if he does not let God change him on the inside. Where will hypocrites end up if they do not let God work on the inside (Matthew 24:51)? _____

Where does God desire truth (Psalm 51:6)? _____ Where does God want us to be clean (Psalm 51:10)? _____ Who knows all about what is on the inside (Jeremiah 17:9-10)? _____

THOSE WHO ARE UNSAVED

Every believer should be concerned about those who are unsaved. This would include all of the groups we have been thinking about in these last three chapters: the uninterested, the ridiculing ones, the spiritually stupid, the ignorant, the seekers, the lost and the hypocrites. All of them are unsaved and need to receive Christ as their Saviour from sin. How can we help them?

If we want to help our unsaved friends and loved ones to come to know Christ, there are three things that we can do and that we must do: We must **PRAY**, **SPEAK**, and **LIVE**!

PRAY

The Apostle Paul was concerned for the unsaved Jews of his day, and so he prayed “that they might be _____” (Romans 10:1). Who is the only Person who can open up a **door** of utterance? Who is the only Person who can open up an opportunity to speak to someone about Christ (Colossians 4:3)? _____

Have you asked God to start opening some doors for you? Have you asked God to use you in reaching others? Have you prayed, “Lord, help me to be the right person in the right place at the right time to speak to the right person and help me to say the right things in the right way!” Have you ever wondered why you never seem to have opportunities to witness? Perhaps the problem is this: “Ye have not because ye _____” (James 4:2).

SPEAK

When God opens a door, we need to go through it! When God gives an opportunity, we need to take it! God's Word says that we are to “be R_____ A_____ to give an answer” (1 Peter 3:15). Have you ever lost a perfect opportunity to speak to someone about the Lord? Then some time later you might think to yourself: “Why didn't I say something?” We always seem to know just what to say an hour after it is too late!

Did Paul want people to pray that the Lord would help him to open his mouth in the right way (Ephesians 6:18-19)? _____ Did the early Christians pray the same thing (Acts 4:29)? _____ We can also pray that God would teach us when to open our mouths and when to close our mouths! It is especially important to learn to close our mouth when we are with our unsaved family members (see 1 Peter 3:1). However, it is more important for the unsaved to see the truth in our lives than to hear the truth from our lips! This brings us to the last point:

LIVE

We do not want to be hypocrites by speaking like a Christian and living like a devil! If our unsaved friends watch our lives and see that we do not live any differently than they do, why should they want to be saved? They would only say, “Why should I become a Christian if he (or she) lives the same way I do?” Or they might say something even worse: “I'll become a Christian too, because all my Christian friends have taught me that you can be a Christian and still live just like those who are not Christians!” Do we really want people to think that this is so?



CONSIDER 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-7. Can you find anything about **PRAYER** in these verses?

Can you find anything about **SPEAKING**? _____

Can you find anything about **LIVING**? _____

READ COLOSSIANS 4:3-6. Do you read anything about the importance of **PRAYER**?

Do you read anything about the believer's **WALK**? _____

Do you read anything about the believer's **TALK**? _____

May God help each of us to share His Word (His good news) with others in the power of the Holy Spirit! May God be pleased to do His saving work in the hearts of many!

I'm just a nobody

Telling everybody

About Somebody

Who can Save Anybody!

