

Messenger Of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16).

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Hypocrisy

"What hypocrites we seem to be whenever we talk of ourselves! – our words sound so humble while our hearts are so proud." – Hare

"What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say." – Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Hypocrisy annoys me, people need to look into mirrors. Let me hold a mirror in front of your face." – C. JoyBell C.

"Royce Westmoreland stared at him with biting scorn. "I despise hypocrisy, particularly when it is coated with holiness." – Judith McNaught, *A Kingdom of Dreams*

A hypocrite at one time was applied to a person who was a play or stage actor. As with actors today, they would take on the role of a character other than themselves. In other words, they would pretend to be a completely different person.

Jesus spoke of the scribes and Pharisees in this light when He said, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness" (Matt. 23:27-28). Notice how Jesus stresses that they appeared differently than what was within. Such is the concept of play acting.

If you recall in Matthew 6, the Lord pointed out that there was a motive behind their hypocrisy; that they may be "seen" (6:1), that they might have "glory from men" (6:2), and again, "that they may be seen by men" (6:5). Even in 6:16 they purposely altered their faces to give the impression they had been fasting. Jesus said they had their reward (6:17).

Jesus gave a stern warning. "...Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known" (Luke 12:1-2). We might say, you can "pull the wool over people's eyes," but you certainly cannot fool God.

The New Testament affords us the example of Ananias and Sapphira a couple that were jealous of the attention which Barnabas had received for being so generous to the church (Acts 5). Under a false pretense, they wanted people to think that they sold their land for a certain price that they might receive the praise of men. But they were caught in their lie, and subsequently died for it. Their hypocrisy did not get them what they had wanted.

Since we know we cannot fool God, there is no possible benefit beyond this world to be a play actor!