

## **ULC Sermon Study Resource**

### ***What's up with Christians being so hypocritical?***

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**Prayer:** Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

**Reading:** Matthew 23:1-12 (ESV)

#### **Outline:**

- I. The problem of hypocrisy (v1-3)
  - a. From important people in the bible and major figures in the life of the church to individuals today, Christian history is rife with hypocrites.
  - b. The hypocrisy of Christians does not negate the truth of the gospel, but it does not advocate well for it.
- II. Jesus and hypocrisy (v4-6)
  - a. Jesus calls out our tendency to hold others to a standard of behavior that we don't even come close to meeting ourselves.
  - b. Jesus' words provide Christians with a built-in correction method for our hypocrisy, but it's up to us to listen to them.
- III. Truth brings humility (v11-12).
  - a. In the midst of your hypocrisy, don't justify yourself. Instead, use it as an opportunity to humble yourself and repent.
  - b. Jesus took on your sin, failings and hypocrisy when he went to the cross, and died to give you his perfection, righteousness, love and grace.

#### **Reflection/Application Questions:**

- 1) How do you react to hearing of the hypocrisy present in the bible (Abram giving Sarah to Pharaoh, King David's affair, Peter's cowardice and racism<sup>[1]</sup>)?
- 2) Recall a time when you've been confronted with your own hypocrisy. How did you respond? What would you do differently?
- 3) Do you meet your own standards for others' behavior? What do you "see in the mirror?"
- 4) What are some practices you can add to your life that would help you make changes in response to Jesus' corrections of hypocrisy?
- 5) Many individuals have been genuinely hurt in a deep, personal way by the hypocrisy of Christians. How can you adopt a spirit of humility and share our need for Jesus' mercy and grace in conversation with those who have been hurt in such a way?

#### **Suggestions for further reading:**

- Mark 7:1-13
- Luke 6:37-42
- <sup>[1]</sup>Galatians 2:11-14
- 1 Peter 2:22-25