



Fake - June 2024

Matthew 23:23-28

*"What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore the more important aspects of the law—justice, mercy, and faith. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things. **24** Blind guides! You strain your water so you won't accidentally swallow a gnat, but you swallow a camel!"*

25 *"What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are so careful to clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you are filthy—full of greed and self-indulgence! **26** You blind Pharisee! First wash the inside of the cup and the dish, and then the outside will become clean, too."*

27 *"What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs—beautiful on the outside but filled on the inside with dead people's bones and all sorts of impurity. **28** Outwardly you look like righteous people, but inwardly your hearts are filled with hypocrisy and lawlessness."*

This passage is a portion of the "Seven Woes" that Jesus proclaims to the Pharisees. He condemns them as hypocrites. The word "hypocrite" comes from the Greek word for an actor: someone who pretends to be something they are not. Hypocrisy in the church is a significant reason that people leave the Church family. They become disillusioned by inconsistency between what people say and how they live.

The characteristics of a hypocrite include inconsistent attitudes and behaviors based on your context, making excuses for insincere actions, and embracing masks to appear better than one is.

In contrast, the characteristics of a true believer include consistency, sincerity, and zeal for God and others.

Questions:

1. What is your perception of hypocrisy in the church?
2. Are there any areas in your life where you think there is an inconsistency between what you believe and how you live?
3. What is the key to overcoming hypocrisy?

