

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.

⁷Therefore **do not be partakers with them**; ⁸for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; **walk as children of light**⁹(for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), ¹⁰trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹**And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them**; ¹²for 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.

¹³But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. ¹⁴For this reason it says,

*"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: _____ !

Why? There's so much at _____.

- A Word to Unbelievers: _____ !

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?