

Asking for a Friend

"Hypocrites?" – Matthew 7:1-5

August 30, 2026

Back to School Sermon Series

ASKING FOR A FRIEND	
Seeking Answers to Questions That We All Want to Ask	
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Aug 16	PROBLEM OF EVIL: If God is Good and All-Powerful, Then Why is There So Much Suffering, Disease, and Tragedy in the World?
Aug 23	OUT-DATED BOOK: Doesn't the Bible's Views About Slavery and Women Make It Unreliable and Not Relevant for Today?
Aug 30	HYPOCRITES: Why Should I Come to Church When It's Made Up of a Bunch of Hypocrites?
Sept 6	INTOLERANCE: Isn't It Intolerant and Unfair to Claim That Jesus is the Only Way to Heaven? What About Other Religions? What About Good People Who Have Never Heard of Jesus?
Sept 13	SCIENCE: How Do You Reconcile Scientific Evidence Like Evolution with the Creation Story? Don't Science and the Bible Contradict Each Other?
Sept 20	PURPOSE: What on Earth Am I Here For? What is My Purpose?

Today's Question

- TODAY'S QUESTION: Why should I come to church when it's made up of a bunch of hypocrites?
- Examples of people calling out the church for hypocrisy

My Response to the Hypocrisy Question (Matthew 7:1-5)

1. **Guilty as charged.**

- You are right. The church is full of hypocrites starting with me.
- **Matthew 7:1-5**
- hypocrite = *hypokrites* = stage actor; interpreter from under a mask; describes someone who plays a part, hides their true identity, or puts on a false outward appearance
- You are right. I am a hypocrite, and I apologize. I repent. Please forgive me. Please forgive us.
- **Romans 3:23** – *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*
- **1 John 1:8** – *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

2. **This is why I need a Savior.**

- You have identified the very thing that led me to run to Jesus Christ.
- **Isaiah 53:6** – *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned – everyone – to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*
- **Romans 5:8** – *But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

- Christ-followers are NOT people who do not sin. Rather, Christ-followers are people who ADMIT they sin and need a Savior.

3. **This is why you need a Savior too.**

- Please do not use my hypocrisy as an excuse to avoid Jesus.
- Some people point to the hypocrisy of church people in order to avoid dealing with the Person and claims of Jesus Christ.
- Jesus does NOT say that there will be no hypocrites. Rather Jesus says, "Be careful how you deal with hypocrites, because you might be one too!"
- Everyone has violated Matthew 7:1-5 including you.
- God is real. Jesus is real. And one Day you will stand before Him and give an accounting for your life.
- **Romans 14:10,12** – *We will all stand before the judgment seat of God. Each of us will give an account of himself to God.*
- You need a Savior too. As a matter of fact, you are a hypocrite too. No one lives by their own standards let alone God's standards.
- **Romans 3:10-12** – *None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good; not even one.*

God's Solution for My Hypocrisy and Yours

1. **Repentance** – own your hypocrisy.

- Acknowledge your hypocrisy and sin. Confess it and repent.
- The problem is NOT that the church has hypocrites. The problem is when the church pretends that it doesn't.
- The church is not a museum for perfect people; it's a hospital for hypocrites who are learning to live by grace. And grace starts when we admit our hypocrisy and sin and repent.
- **1 John 1:9** – *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
- **Acts 2:38** – *Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*
- This is the taking of the log out of your own eye first (Matthew 7:5).
- The Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14).

2. **Justification** – receive Christ.

- Jesus died for my hypocrisy and for your hypocrisy.
- **1 Peter 2:24** – *He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed.*
- **Romans 5:1** – *Since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- **Revelation 3:20** – *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him.*

- **John 1:12** (NASB) – *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.*
- **Romans 10:9** – *If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*
- **Application #1** – Pray a prayer of saving faith: “Lord Jesus, I confess that I have sinned and acted hypocritically. I am sorry, and I repent. I believe that You died for my hypocrisy and all my sin and that You rose from the dead, and I receive You into my life as my Lord and Savior. Please forgive all of my sin, make me righteous in You, and write my name in Heaven. I choose to follow You.”
- **Application #2** – Go public with your faith through public water baptism. Our next baptism service is on Sunday, September 13, at 12:45pm. Info and sign up at WhatIsGrace.org/Baptism

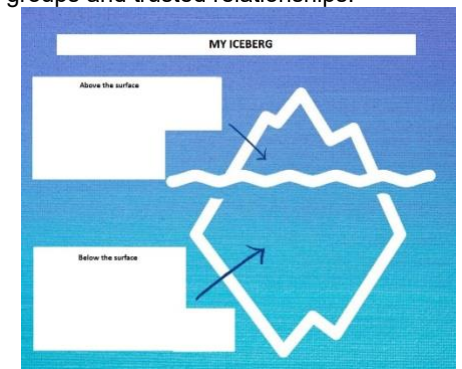
3. **Sanctification** – walk in the Spirit.

- People who follow Jesus still sin.
- The church is not a museum for perfect people; it’s a hospital for hypocrites who are learning to live by grace. And living by grace involves walking in the Spirit.
- **Galatians 5:16,24-25** – *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.*
- **Application #3** – Walk in the Spirit: Practice spiritual breathing as a lifestyle. Whenever you realize that you have sinned, immediately...
 - **Exhale the bad** – Lord, I confess that I just took control of the steering wheel of my life and sinned by (name the sin). I am sorry, and I repent. I thank You that You have already forgiven me of this through my receiving Jesus and His work on the cross (Colossians 2:13-14).
 - **Inhale the good** – Spirit of God, I invite You to take Your rightful place again in the driver’s seat of my life. Please fill me and direct, control and empower my life for godliness (Ephesians 5:18).

4. **Community** – live a life of transparency and accountability in the fellowship of a local church.

- The problem is NOT that the church has hypocrites. The problem is when the church pretends that it doesn’t.
- The church is not a museum for perfect people; it’s a hospital for hypocrites who are learning to live by grace. And grace flows when we live a life of transparency, honesty, vulnerability, and accountability within a community of fellow strugglers and believers.
- Note from Matthew 7: Jesus is NOT eliminating accountability; rather, He is changing the order and the attitude:
 - Wrong approach: “Let me fix you.”
 - Right approach: “Let God fix me and then let me help you.”

- **Proverbs 27:17** (NIV) – *As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.*
- **James 5:16** – *Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.*
- **Ecclesiastes 4:9-10,12** (NIV) – *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.*
- **Hebrews 10:25** – *Do not neglect to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.*
- **Application #4** – Ten best practices for living a life of transparency, vulnerability, honesty, and accountability:
 - (1) Write down an honest prayer request every Sunday on the prayer request card.
 - (2) Come to the prayer altar frequently and cup your hands and share a transparent prayer request and get prayed for.
 - (3) Plug into a group (discipleship experience) of some kind at Grace Fellowship. Find groups at WhatIsGrace.org/Care and WhatIsGrace.org/spiritualformation
 - (4) Ask a same gender friend to be your accountability partner. Google “Patrick Morley’s accountability questions” and use those as you meet twice a month together.
 - (5) Go to an AA or Al-Anon meeting. Watch how they practice vulnerability and then do the same in your groups and trusted relationships.
 - (6) Practice vulnerability in the (safe) groups that you are a part of. Go first in transparency and honesty and vulnerability. Risk sharing below the surface of your “iceberg.”
 - (7) Adopt the practice of each family member sharing the “best and worst things that happened today” at family dinner each night. Practice vulnerability as you are sharing. Go first in transparency. (Actually eat dinner together 5 nights per week.)
 - (8) Practice the concentric circles of vulnerability and transparency as modeled by Jesus (1, 3, 12, 70).
 - (9) Use the Feelings Wheel to aid you in describing your emotions and feelings. Increase your feelings-word vocabulary.
 - (10) Keep confidences. Don’t share other people’s confidential data without their permission.



Bottom Line: The church isn’t a museum for perfect people; it’s a hospital for hypocrites who are learning to live by grace.