

HYPOCRISY

Hypocrisy is when someone claims to have moral standards, beliefs, or principles, but their behaviour contradicts those claims. In other words: saying one thing, doing another. It is an inconsistency to say one thing and do another.

Origin of the term: The word comes from the Greek word *hypokritēs*, which originally meant a **“pretender”**. Think of a hypocrite as a person who acts out **a role that isn't genuine**. They often "preach one thing and do another.

At the **root of hypocrisy** is fear and low self-esteem. We use hypocrisy to avoid looking at our shortcomings and figure out our part in it. It typically stems from a sincere belief that we should not be held to the same standards as others because we have better intentions.

The Bible tells us that a hypocrite is someone who pretends to be something he/ she is not. Hypocrisy is to claim to know and follow certain beliefs but to behave in a way that counteracts those beliefs. While we should have the wisdom to discern words and actions that do not match, we also need to remember that God is the **ultimate judge of character**.

“Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen”. 1John 4:20

EXAMPLES OF HYPOCRISY:

- A person who criticizes others for lying but lies when it benefits them.
- A leader who preaches fairness but plays Favorites.
- An activist who publicly promotes environmentalism but privately destroys the same.

THE KEY LESSONS ABOUT HYPOCRISY

- 1-**Walk the talk:** True faith or belief is demonstrated by actions that match words.
2. **Focus on internal integrity:** The core issue is a matter of the heart. Being outwardly righteous while being inwardly "full of hypocrisy and lawlessness" is a form of hypocrisy.
3. **Avoid self-righteous judgment:** The principle is to "first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye".
4. **Beware of motives:** Hypocrisy can be driven by the desire for praise or honour from others rather than a genuine heart for a cause or belief.
5. **Recognize the damage of pretense:** Hypocrisy is a form of deception that can be destructive. It can lead to shame and anxiety for the individual engaging in it.

“Better to be known as a sinner than a hypocrite” Proverb