



June 10, 2018

“All Talk but No Walk”

Isaiah 29

Pastor Gary Hamrick

Hypocrisy plagues us all, because all of us are inconsistent from time to time regarding the way we live or talk or evaluate others in relation to ourselves. One of the worst types of hypocrisy is how we relate to God. This was the problem with the Jewish people in Isaiah’s day. He accused them of honoring God with their lips (giving God “lip service”), but not in their hearts. Did you know that a recent study by the Barna Group found that hypocrisy was the number one reason that Millennials (people in their 20s and early 30s) gave as the reason they don’t want to attend church? Pastor Gary’s teaching today will help us understand that the Bible teaches that hypocrisy is sin, and it also causes God to be dishonored and unbelievers to be disillusioned.

Historical Background

1. [Isaiah 29:1a](#) - *“Woe to you, Ariel, Ariel, the city where David settled!”*
 - a. Ariel is another name for Jerusalem and, in Hebrew it means lion of God.
 - b. Isaiah prophesied about impending judgment from God upon the city.
 - c. Pastor Gary said: “This is probably a play on words, because while Ariel means lion of God, Isaiah was probably being a little sarcastic [in his] indictment of the city of Jerusalem. This is the only place in [the Bible that Jerusalem is nicknamed Ariel]. ... Isaiah [was] saying to the people of Jerusalem: ‘You pride yourselves in your strength, and your majesty, and your splendor, like the lion of God, the king of the beasts. But, woe unto you because your splendor and your majesty and your strength are about to fade.’ ”

2. God was preparing to send judgment for their rebellion.
 - a. [Isaiah 29:2](#) - *“Yet I will besiege Ariel...”*
 - b. [Isaiah 29:3](#) - *“I will encamp against you all around...”*

- c. [Isaiah 29:4](#) – *“Brought low, you will speak from the ground; your speech will mumble out of the dust. Your voice will come ghostlike from the earth; out of the dust your speech will whisper.”*
3. [Isaiah 29:13](#) – *“The Lord says: ‘These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men.’ ”*
 4. Hypocrisy was one of the major reasons why God was going to judge Jerusalem.
 5. The Pharisees of Jesus’ day were Jesus’ worst critics.
 - a. The Pharisees were strict adherents to the Law, who were guilty of actually adding to the commandments of God by their oral traditions!
 - b. The Pharisees were guilty of considering their commentary on the commandments to be on par with the commandments themselves!
 - c. The Pharisees were always looking for ways to discredit Jesus and his ministry, and in [Mark 7](#), we read about a delegation of Pharisees who came from Jerusalem to the region of the Sea of Galilee, so they could confront him.
 - i. [Mark 7:1-8](#) – *“The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus and saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were ‘unclean,’ that is, unwashed. (The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.) So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, ‘Why don’t your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with “unclean” hands?’ He replied, ‘Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.’ You have let go of the commands of God and holding on to the traditions of men.”*
 1. The Bible records eight times that Jesus quoted from the book of Isaiah.
 - ii. Pastor Gary said: “The reason Jesus [indicted them] was because they were more interested in external cleanliness than the cleanliness of [their hearts]. They were more interested in duty than devotion. They were more [interested] in rituals about God than [with their] relationship with God.”

6. The Greek word for hypocrite is hupokrites, which means play actor or someone who hides behind a mask.
7. Pastor Gary said: “Hypocrisy always involves some form of inconsistency. Inconsistency in what you say [or what you do or how you treat others or in how you relate to God].”
8. In a recent survey, the Barna Group found that among millennials, 66% said the reason they don’t attend church was because, “American churchgoers are hypocritical.”
9. [1 Peter 2:1](#) - *“Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.”*

Hypocrisy Toward Self

10. This type of hypocrisy occurs when a person says one thing and does another.
11. The Bible records the details about the hypocrisy of the apostle Peter.
 - a. [Acts 10](#) is tells the story about Peter and Cornelius.
 - i. In this chapter we see the prejudice Peter had toward Gentiles, and we also see that God helped Peter see that God loved all people.
 1. [Acts 10:34-35](#) - *“Then Peter began to speak: ‘I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.’ ”*
 - ii. Approximately 10 years later, Peter had begun to socialize with Gentile Believers, but, when certain Jews came to town, Peter basically declared that he was not connected to Gentiles in any way whatsoever. (See [Galatians 2:11-21](#))
 1. [Galatians 2:11-13](#) - *“When Peter came to Antioch, I [Paul] opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. The other Jews joined [Peter] in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray.”*

Hypocrisy Toward Others

12. This type of hypocrisy occurs when a person holds other people to a higher standard than the standard they hold for themselves.

13. The person who is hypocritical in this way is one who underjudges himself/herself and typically overjudges others.
14. Pastor Gary commented on the fact that many people like to quote [Matthew 7:1](#), even though they may not have any idea where this verse appears in the Bible!
- a. [Matthew 7:1-5](#) - *“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brothers’ eye.”*
15. Pastor Gary said: “Jesus [did not] say that we should not judge, he said there was a right way to do it, and it involves two things: [order and purpose]. [If Jesus meant that we] should never speak into the life of another person, out of sincere care and concern for [someone] who might be ‘going off the rails,’ and they also having the same freedom to do the same for you, then how are we to ever hold each other accountable? [Jesus spoke] about the wrong way to judge and the right way to judge. ... You need to remove the plank from your own eye before you can with proper dexterity and compassion, remove the speck from your brother’s eye. We have to still be engaged with each other. We have to still hold each other accountable. ... Hypocrisy happens when we are aware of [the other person’s] sin and blind to our own.”

Hypocrisy Toward God

16. This type of hypocrisy occurs when a person goes through the motions without the emotions.
17. Pastor Gary said: “God is not interested in lip service. God wants your heart, and God knows that if he really gets our heart, then our actions will follow. God wants your heart more than he wants your worship, [your offerings,] and more than what you can do to serve him in the kingdom. ... God wants us to live lives that are not in contradiction or inconsistent. [He wants us to live lives in which] we judge ourselves first, [and] we are the same in public as we are in private. God wants a consistent life and an undivided heart.”
18. [1 John 2:6](#) - *“Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.”*

19. [Psalm 86:11](#) – *“Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.”*

Discussion Questions

1. Read [Isaiah 29:13](#) to provide a foundation for your Bible study time.
2. Prepare an overview of the historical background and Scripture Pastor Gary shared concerning God’s judgment for the sin of rebellion. (See #1 through #4 above)
3. Spend time talking about the Pharisees of Jesus’ day regarding their hypocrisy and religious fervor for the traditions of men. (See #5 above)
4. Read and discuss Pastor Gary’s statement about the ways hypocrisy shows itself. (See #6 and #7 above)
5. Read and discuss [Acts 10:34–35](#) and [Galatians 2:11–13](#). (See #11 above)
6. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary’s remarks concerning hypocrisy toward others. (See #12 through #15 above)
7. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary’s remarks concerning hypocrisy toward God. (See #16 through #19 above)
8. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads and ask someone to be prepared to read [Psalm 86:11](#) so you can “pray the Scriptures.”

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).