

LESSON 7

GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS

MARK 7:1—9:1



1 What do people usually mean when they call someone a hypocrite?



Read Mark 7:1—9:1 and the following notes:

- ☐ 7:1ff ☐ 7:3, 4 ☐ 7:6, 7 ☐ 7:8, 9 ☐ 7:10, 11 ☐ 7:18, 19 ☐ 8:11
☐ 8:34

2 Why did Jesus call the Pharisees hypocrites (7:6–13)?



3 The Pharisees were caught up in observing religious externals with little concern for inner purity. What are the externals in your church that people may use to judge others?

It's easy to catch ourselves going through the motions in our worship and church life. At times we all find ourselves singing hymns without paying attention to the words, or giving the right answers in Bible study without concern for putting the truths into practice. This is when we are in danger of lapsing into hypocrisy. All that is lacking is the *intention* of making people think that we are something that we are not. But trying to live a Christian life when our faith is weak is not hypocrisy. Satan uses our fear of being called a hypocrite to keep us passive. Never be afraid to live a vibrant Christian life. When you find yourself beginning to go through the motions, don't give up or put up a false front. Instead, fan the flame back into a roaring fire.

4 How can people restore meaning and significance to their faith when they find themselves beginning to go through the motions?

5 When are you tempted to exaggerate what's happening in your life—either good or bad?



6 In what aspects of your Christian life have you been more concerned about your image at church than about the inner reality of your heart?

7 How have you been paralyzed by the fear of being labeled a hypocrite?

8 Usually it's easy to spot hypocrisy in others but difficult to see it in ourselves. Who might think that *you* are a hypocrite?



9 In what areas would you like to be free from fear so that you can serve God more wholeheartedly?

10 In areas where you have been trying to make others think you are something you are not, pray for humility. What would you like to be able to stop doing?

MORE
for studying
other themes
in this section

A Why did Jesus spend such a large percentage of his time with the Jews as compared to the Gentiles? If he was so concerned with the Jews, why did he give any of his precious time to the Gentiles?

B Why did the disciples have difficulty understanding what Jesus was teaching? Which of his teachings are most difficult for you to understand? Why?

C Would the religious leaders have been convinced that Jesus is God's Son had he provided a sign from heaven? Why were they asking for something from heaven rather than something from earth (8:11)?

D Why do you think Jesus responded in the ways he did to the woman from Syrian Phoenicia and to the deaf man (7:25–29, 32–36)? Why did he perform these healings?

E Why were the people amazed at Jesus' miracles? What would it take to "amaze" you? What is his greatest miracle?

F How could more than four thousand people end up in the wilderness with no food to eat (8:1, 9)? What can you learn about the disciples from their response to Jesus' concern for the hungry crowd (8:4)? In what ways can you reflect greater faith than they did?

G What does it take to convince people that Christ is who he claims to be (see 8:12)? How can you be a part of that process?

H Why did Jesus touch the blind man two times (8:22–25)? What did Jesus tell him to do afterward (8:26)? Why?

I Compare Peter's words in 8:29 and 8:32 (also compare Jesus' response in 8:30 and 8:33). Why was there such a difference between Peter's and Jesus' words (8:33)? In what ways do we copy Peter's mistake? What can help us avoid doing this?

J What does it mean to follow Christ (8:34)? How can you keep close to him?