

Remnant Life Church
January 6, 2019
Core-Life Change: Hypocrisy
Matt 23:1-12

What is core-life?

- The foundational beliefs of our heart that dictate and control how we act and what we say
- What identifies who we truly are

Is core-life change possible?

- No – if you use the same strategies time after time without result
- Yes – if we will do what it takes to decrease the “willing-doing gap”
 - I know what I need to do; willing to do the right thing
 - But it does not happen consistently or at all
 - That is the “gap”

The core changes are not possible by simply determining to use more will-power

Why?

- Will-power is controlled by emotion
- Will-power usually decreases over time
- Will-power feeds on past failures and successes to sustain itself

We say, “Boy, that person has tremendous will-power!”

- Probably not – they are simply dealing with something that is not difficult for them but would be for you
- We project ourselves into their situation

Clarify a major misconception

- You do have a significant role to play in how this happens
- Too many Christians get caught up in and utilizing “waiting on the Lord” as an excuse for their inactivity
 - It is a sentence used too often to justify or hide our own laziness or lack of direction because we are not seeking God
 - *Isa 40:31 - But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.*
 - Those who wait, in the original language is qavah (Kah-VAH)
 - Not to sit inactively and disengaged
 - Def: Look eagerly for; hope; expect
 - A readiness to act as God directs and leads

This is a fight against **hypocrisy**

- Your first thought is probably, “I’m not a hypocrite!”
- But hypocrisy is what we must acknowledge if we say we believe one thing but do another
- Jesus came aggressively against those who were different on the outside than they were on the in

We live in a culture that not only tolerates but encourages and rewards those who present a surface beauty with no accountability for what is inside

- Consider Hollywood – all beauty and glitz but shallow and hollow
- Revealed in how they treat the people around them

One primary reason given by people when asked why they don't come to church is: its filled with hypocrites.

- Are they wrong?
- Where do they get this impression?
- They get it by their encounters with people who say they're Christians and who attend church but don't act any differently than they do
- Ill: pastor at the gym

The 23rd chapter of Matthew is devoted entirely to Jesus addressing the hypocrisy of the day

READ - Matt 23:1-12

- Through the rest of this chapter, Jesus calls the teachers of the law and Pharisees hypocrites 4 times
 - Jesus was sick of their two-faced false righteousness
 - They not only did not follow what they taught but they put unrealistic religious demands on the people which they did not follow themselves
- This has also hurt the church today

Hypocrisy is not only dangerous for your life it is, as we heard, what can keep people from coming to church

- When true motives are revealed, do they line up with how we should live according to the Bible and the example set by Jesus?
- Ill: A businessman was returning home from a trip for his company and his wife met him at the gate. They made their way to the baggage claim area when an extremely attractive stewardess walked by. Suddenly, the husband perked up and, beaming a bright smile said to the stewardess, "I hope we fly together again soon, Jennifer." She grinned at him and walked on by.
His wife turned to the man and asked, "How did you come to find out and remember the first name of that stewardess?" The husband answered quickly and coolly, "Well, her name was listed up on one of the monitors in the plane, right under the names of the pilot and co-pilot."
"Oh, really?" she replied, "Well, that makes sense. By the way, what are the pilot and the co-pilot's first names?"
- Of course, he knows he's been found out and his true motives have been revealed.
 - His explanation on the outside was logical, appeared proper, and addressed the concern
 - But his heart was wrong and became exposed – as it always eventually will – if not here then certainly before God

- *I Cor 4:3-5 - I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore, judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God.*

This is the result of ignoring the willing-doing gap in our lives –

- So how can we deal with hypocrisy?
 - Def. - Hypocrisy is the practice of professing beliefs, feelings or virtues that we don't really have: falseness
 - They are people who profess to have a higher moral standard of living, but don't live by it; who pretend to care about others when they actually don't, and who put on a show of righteousness to keep up appearances for others. These are hypocrites and fakers.

How do we begin to close that gap between what we know we should do and what other people see us doing?

1. It begins with transparency

- a. Can we tear down the facades we put up and be genuine?
- b. Why are Christians not more transparent?
 - i. Fear – scared you'll find out they don't have it all together
 - ii. Embarrassment which leads to shame – I'm the only one who has done this or struggles with this
 - iii. Pride – they might think they're better than me
- c. Hollywood is the ultimate non-transparent place on earth
 - i. Nothing is real
 - ii. Behind the beautiful sets are cables, boxes, cameras, lights, a mess of odds and ends
 - iii. News anchors behind a desk are often dressed down below the waist
 - iv. They want you to assume or imagine they are 100% together
 - v. Too many Christians are doing the same thing -counting on everyone assuming they have it all together in the time they see them on a Sunday morning
- d. Two things you must understand about facades in your life
 - i. God sees straight through them
 - ii. So do most people

2. Value truth more than your own personal gain

- a. Gain in these circumstances is not about things monetary rather the gain of your reputation and what other people think
- b. The truth is about who you are and what you believe
- c. Even the best disciples of Jesus had difficulty putting the interest of Christ about their own
 - i. *Phil 2:19-21 - I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. I have no one else*

like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare. For everyone looks out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.

- ii. Even in the early church, Paul is cautioning the people not to put their own interests over that of Jesus
- d. Many Christians are ready to serve God right up until the time it becomes inconvenient
 - i. Convenience is a matter of priority
 - ii. If something is of a high priority, then it is never inconvenient
- e. Battling hypocrisy means I think of others more than myself
- f. **Phil 2:3** - *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves*

3. Being genuine means persevering and never giving up

- a. No one starts as a hypocrite
- b. An important bridge to uniting the inside with the outside of our lives is perseverance
- c. God will use catalysts in our lives to do this
 - i. People – **Prov 27:17** - *As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another*
 - ii. Circumstances – **Rom 8:28** - *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*
 - iii. Spiritual discipline – this is not will-power but our willingness to surrender our lives completely to God
 1. We do not control the first two
 2. The last is left up to us
- d. It comes down to consistency
 - i. Consistency in your life (church/home; home/work; with your family/with your friends)
 - ii. And consistency with others
 1. Not giving up on someone
 2. Many have come to Christ through the consistent witness and prayers of a person who sacrificed the return of their affection for the value of that person's soul
- e. Jesus was and is persistent in His love
 - i. Not only now in His glory
 - ii. But when He was on earth dealing first-hand with human emotion
 - iii. The disciples regularly frustrated Jesus, but He continued to love them
 - iv. The parable of the prodigal son is a perfect example of that persistent love

To deal with hypocrisy, one of the great contributors to the willing-doing gap:

- begin being more transparent with the people in our lives
- value truth in your life more than protecting your image
- persevere in your care and love for others