

# THE SIN OF HYPOCRISY!

Sermonette by Robert Schmid

March 1992

Brethren, I have a question. Have you ever prayed: *Please God, give me no more knowledge?*  
Or, do you always ask God for more knowledge in your prayers?

Someone has said: *When the pitcher is full of water it's time to use the water in the pitcher - not add more water.*

Now, I believe that this is good advise. Why? Well because the difference between what we know and say, and what we do, is hypocrisy.

The scriptural basis for this is found in the book of James chapter 4 and verse 17.

But before we look at this scripture, what about this word hypocrisy? Hypocrisy is a Greek word meaning: *The act of playing a part on stage.* In other words a hypocrite is simply an actor. So, as long as one is a hypocrite on stage that's perfectly alright. That's the intent and everybody knows it. But what if one becomes a hypocrite - an actor - in real life, where people assume by your words and actions that you are one thing, when in reality and in fact you are something else?

I have been absolutely amazed at the uproar the movie JFK has caused. Now I don't know about you, but I don't go to the movie to learn about history. I go to the movie to be entertained by actors who are hypocrites. Movie to me means "make belief" it means "not real". JFK was not sold, at least not officially, as a documentary. So why do people argue about it? By the way, real documentaries are not full of foul language. JFK, I been told, is full of foul language, as probably all "R" rated movies are.

The point is, that just like the movie, we are all a mixture of truth and falsehood. *Do as I tell you, not as I do,* is the method by which we even teach and raise our children. We are all hypocrites and the only issue is how big of a hypocrite I am, and do I have awareness of this sin in my life?

Now as the Passover is approaching, let's ask ourselves just how serious a sin hypocrisy is from God's point of view?

Well, the scripture has much to say about it and God does not leave any doubt that if we don't deal with this sin of hypocrisy, if we don't search ourselves, if we don't repent of this sin, it will not only cause us problems in this life, but God plainly tells us that *there will be no hypocrites in the Kingdom of God.* You can find that in the last verses of Matt.24 (Matt.24:48-51).

It was President Lincoln who said that: *You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you can not fool all the people all the time.*

**And of course we can not fool God at all, at any time.**

In other words hypocrisy will always catch up with us. And so we need to ask ourselves, to what degree are we acting on the knowledge that we already have? Is it time to use the water in the pitcher instead of adding more water? Is it time to pray, please God give me no more knowledge, but give me wisdom and power to act on that which I already know?

The first time the Bible speaks of knowledge is in Gen.2:9 when God told Adam and Eve *not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.*

In Ecc.1:18 it tells us that *"he who increases in knowledge increases sorrow".*

Paul told Timothy in I.Tim.6:20 *"avoid godless chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge."*

And then of course there is Paul's warning in I.Cor. 8:1 where he tells us that *"knowledge makes arrogant"*.

In fact, knowledge is so dangerous that it can take you right out of the Church of God!

Brethren, knowledge is obviously necessary and desirable, but knowledge is not the key to the Kingdom of God. Now just in case somebody asks, what then is the key?

Let me tell you and let me make it perfectly clear: **The key to the Kingdom of God is Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on the cross. Jesus Christ is the key, not our knowledge.**

In fact, God plainly tells us in I.Cor.13 vs. 8-10 that *"knowledge will pass away (why) for our knowledge is imperfect and when the perfect, that is Christ comes, the imperfect will pass away"*.

Have you ever wondered how God will judge a Mother Theresa?

I wonder how much time she spends studying doctrine?

How much time she spends on Daniel's 2300 day prophecy?

You know, that there are millions of people in this world who have less knowledge than you and I, but who utilize their time and talents, that God has given to them, to serve others. These are people who give of themselves without expecting anything in return. They don't ask first of what theological persuasion you are!

How much knowledge do we need to show love, kindness and compassion in some tangible way to our brethren or to any other human being in the world.

When are we going to put into action the knowledge we already have? As I said before, the difference between your knowledge and to what degree you act on it becomes hypocrisy.

And God has no pleasure in hypocrites.

The letter of James is about true religion and how true faith is evidenced by what we do. Notice, by what we **do**, not by what we **know**. In chapter 4 it speaks of worldly friendship that is enmity with God. In other words even though we call ourselves Christians, is our friendship, our involvement with the world, greater than our friendship and involvement with God? If it is, we are hypocrites. If you would stand before a judge being accused of being a Christian, would they find enough evidence to convict you?

Look at verse 17 in chapter 4. James says: *"Whoever knows what is right to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin."* What sin? The sin of hypocrisy. That was the problem of the Pharisees in Matt 23 when Christ warned us to follow what they say, not what they do, (why) *"for they preach, but do not practice."* They had a form of godliness but their hearts were far from God. **They were hypocrites.** Please, read this whole chapter.

Every minister knows that his greatest challenge is to live up to what he preaches. I can speak to you the word of God, but I can not always live up to what I say. So don't expect it. Obviously, Christ was the only one who ever perfectly lived up to what He was preaching.

I think we can see that the sin of hypocrisy is one that we all have to be aware of, especially as we prepare for the Passover where we need to examine ourselves carefully to what degree (not if) the sin of hypocrisy is present in our life. **God hates hypocrisy.** He hates it when we say one thing and do something else.

So, if you are not yet acting on what you already know, don't ask God to give you more knowledge. Ask God to give you more power, more of His Holy Spirit. Ask God to give you more of His love, His patience and concern for others, and then live according to the knowledge you already have and be true to yourself, for God knows the secrets of your heart.

Remember, we may be able to fool people, and we are certainly able to fool ourselves, **but we can never fool God!**