Busting Myths

Lesson 2: All Christians Are Hypocrites

**Lessons in this series:** [1](http://www.teensundayschool.com/342/lesson/i-must-be-perfect-to-come-to-church.php) **2**[3](http://www.teensundayschool.com/350/lesson/there-is-more-than-one-way-to-heaven.php) [4](http://www.teensundayschool.com/354/lesson/im-fine-just-the-way-i-am.php)

LESSON OBJECTIVES  
Goals

1. To bust the myth that all Christians are hypocrites  
2. To learn we have areas in our life we still need God to chisel away  
3. To equip students with a Biblical understanding of what it means to be alive in Christ without hypocrisy

Topics:

Body of Christ, Character, Christianity, Habits, Hypocrisy, Integrity

Scripture Memorization

Mark 7:21-23

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (15 minutes)

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| **Mirror-Mirror Now What Do You See? (Activity)** Like last week, place a full-length mirror near the entrance of the classroom. Choose a spot where everyone must notice his or her reflection while entering the room. (If a full-length mirror is unavailable, a hand-mirror will also work. As the students arrive, give them the hand mirror and ask them to look at their face in it.)  **Leader:** Start the class this time wearing a mask. (Any Halloween mask will work.) Allow the students to stare at you, make fun of you, or whatever as they arrive. Keep the mask on until everyone is seated.  Have the students get into groups of four or five, and allow them to take a few minutes to discuss the following questions. These questions can be found in the lesson workbook, or you can write them on the board. There are no right or wrong answers, but this activity will begin the process of connecting the youth to the purpose of this lesson and to each other. Allow about 10 minutes. Also, encourage everyone to share.  **Discussion Questions:** 1. As you entered the room and saw your own reflection again, who did you see this week in the mirror? 2. Would your friends say you look like a Christian? Why or why not? 3. How awkward was it to see the leader wearing a mask at the beginning of the class? Explain. |

Last week, we looked "outwardly" and saw who we are and who God wants us to be. This week, we want examine who we are on the "inside." When people look at us, do they see us for who we really are?  
  
Have you ever pretended to be something that you are not? For example, as a child we play Cowboys and Indians, or pretend to be a princess or a superhuman to save the world. No show of hands, but who here today has ever pretended to be someone else on for example, Facebook, MSM, or MySpace? With no accountability, it is easy to do.  
  
As Christians, believers, followers of Christ, we hide behind a mask at times or in some cases most of the time. Why? Why do we live in a world as if every day is Halloween and no one needs to know who we really are?  
  
**General Discussion:**• What are some areas in our lives that we cover with a mask, so others are unaware? *(Allow a minute or so for answers. Some examples are pornography, self-mutilation, divorce, anger, abuse, etc.)*• Why is pretending nothing affects you in life so easy to do?   
• How can we remove the masks we wear, and get to where God wants us to be?

GETTING STARTED (5 minutes)

Today, we will focus on the book of Mark. Mark is a unique character who does not get much recognition.  John Mark was his name, and he was a powerful author and communicator of God's Word. This young man traveled with Paul during his first missionary journey. Although Paul was upset that Mark left in the middle of this journey, we also know Paul commended his work at Colosse (Col. 4:10-11).

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| **Facts about Mark** • Actual name: John Mark • He was NOT one of the original 12 disciples.  • Early believers met in his mother's home. (Acts 12:12) • He understood his culture, which was a Jewish Ritualistic Culture.  • Mega Themes include, Jesus Christ, Jesus as servant, Jesus the Miracle leader, Jesus and the Gospel spreading. |

What Mark talks about in Mark 7:1-23 is vital to our lives as believers in Christ. Who we think we are, what we hide, and how Christ allows us to be free and live fully. With all of that said, let's dig into God's Word and see what we look like on the INSIDE.

DIGGING IN (35 minutes)

**PART 1 - THE ACCUSED**  
  
Have you ever been accused of something you did but you had no idea you did it? Even worse, have you ever been accused of something you know you did? How about something you are still doing that you try to hide from others? Here in Mark we will see how Jesus accuses the Pharisees of an inner spiritual impurity that is hypocrisy.   
  
**Read Mark 7:1-5  
  
Discussion Questions:**   
1. What is a hypocrite?*(Hypocrisy is pretending to be something you are not and never intend to be.)*2. In what areas were the Pharisees being hypocritical in verses 1-5? *(Ceremonial washings, which were done in specific ways to show they were acceptable to God.)*3. Why did Jesus bring their ceremonial washings to their attention? *(These Pharisees believed they were acceptable to God because they were clean looking on the outside.)*   
4. What are some things we as Christians struggle with that we may try to mask? *(Language, lust, greed, being a fake Christian, etc.)*5. Is every believer a hypocrite? Why or why not? *(No. Not every believer is a hypocrite. Remember it means you are constantly participating in hypocritical actions. We have all done hypocritical things, but just because we did something once does not make every believer a hypocrite.)*

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| **Where did hypocrisy originate?**  Hypocrite is a word that was born out of stage acting. The actual meaning of the word was “p*lay actor."* Originally, the word pertained to an actor, but then it began to be applied to anyone, especially in religion, who pretended to be what he was not.    People who were actors appeared completely different than who they actually were. In fact, in ancient times, many women were not allowed to be actors, so men played women. That’s how drastic of a change they portrayed.   It was the idea of being something completely different from who you were. Like a man who played the role of a woman. Therefore, a hypocrite is a person who plays the role of a fake. |

Therefore, a "hypocrite" is pretending to be something you are not and have no intention of being. For example, the Pharisees had the idea they were leaders of God's people. Yet, their masks were their own rituals and rules that they followed to make them look or pretend to look like a follower.  
  
    
**PART 2 - THE CONVICTION  
  
Read Mark 7:6-13  
  
Discussion Questions:**   
1. So, how do you know if you are being a hypocrite? *(Allow for answers.)*One way to tell if you are being a hypocrite is if you pay more attention to your reputation than to your character. Another way is if you start to be like the Pharisee by following religious practices but your heart remains distant from God. Finally, you are being hypocritical when you highlight another person's sin while highlighting your own merits. For example, "Hey Billie, I saw you cussing the other day--I never do anything like that."   
  
2. How can we nullify the Word of God by our hypocrisy?*(Allow for discussion.)* **PART 3 - THE DECLARATION**Have your parents ever asked you to clean their car? Obviously, you jump right up and get the soap, buckets, rags, and water hoses. Of course, you offer your time and you wash it in 30 minutes. Doubtful. However, what if you did, then to your amazement, your parents came out and said, “That’s not clean. You still have to do the inside." How would that make you feel? If you were upset at first, you would really be upset now. However, they would be right. The car is not really clean if the inside is dirty.  
  
This is Jesus' declaration of the TRUTH. True living comes from within, not from without! To be fully clean, the inside has to be clean in addition to the outside.

**Read Mark 7:14-16  
  
Discussion Questions:**1. How can you clean your life from hypocrisy? What steps or actions can you take to rid yourself of your masks? (*Admit your sin to God, find a mentor who will keep you accountable.)*2. What did Jesus want the Pharisees to get from this life experience? *(That they were following the rules but their HEARTS were distant from Him.)*3. It what areas can you make a difference in how you portray yourself among your peers?*(Some examples are with language, gossip, dating relationships, Facebook/MySpace accounts, etc.)*4. How can you make a difference in how you portray yourself at home or with your parents?*(Respecting them, obeying, etc.)   
5*. If you are trying to make a difference in your school, how could you be "Jesus" to others? How could you make yourself real to others?*(Allow for discussion.)*6.What was Jesus' declaration? *(The LAW they are following was/is fulfilled in Christ.)*

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| **Interesting Fact about the LAW** God gave the Law to the Israelites so they could see the big picture: Sin entered through the door that Adam and Eve opened. God was preparing a way to end that mess when He sent His son, the Messiah. Jesus claimed that He was the fulfillment of the Law because He was the Messiah whom God sent. We don’t have to wear masks anymore. Romans 6 discusses how we (as believers and immersed in Christ) have died to sin and are no longer bound to it. |

**PART 4 - THE ENLIGHTENMENT**  
How easy is it to break a habit? Not very easy. Ask the smoker, the fingernail biter, the nose-picker, or the led-footed driver. Let's take a last look at how Jesus enlightens His disciples.

**Read Mark 7:17-23**  
**Discussion Questions:**1. Why do you think the disciples were so confused by what Jesus taught?*(Because they grew up under these ritualistic rules/laws, and they were not listening to Jesus' main point--THE HEART.)*2. Why are habits so hard to break? *(Many are accepted without boundaries, repercussions, etc.)*3. When you take your mask off or let your guard down, who are you really? *(Examples may be lost, scared, confident, etc.)*4. Why do we try to be so many things and wear so many different masks? *(Allow for discussion.)*It is not simply random outside actions we do that make us hypocrites. It is what is inside of us. Do you remember last week when we talked about God doing some chiseling in our lives? What still needs to be chiseled away? What is holding us back from becoming like Jesus? What do we need to get rid of? People see us as hypocrites because they see our actions as representations of whom we are on the inside. Listen to this well-known anonymous quote:  
  
   *“Watch your thoughts, for they become words.  
    Watch your words, for they become actions.  
    Watch your actions, for they become habits.  
    Watch your habits, for they become character.  
    Watch your character, for it becomes your destiny."*

MAKING IT REAL (15 minutes)

• Are you ready to allow God to have complete control of your life, both inside and out? He calls us to be true, humble, and righteous.

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| Workbook Activity  Think back about the mirror as you entered the room today as well as the mask illustration. Take a moment now and list three areas in your life that you are hiding behind a mask.   1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Now, write down two areas where you can make a difference with your faith in school or home.  1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Finally, how do you think your peers will respond if you remove any of the masks you wear and allow them to see who you really are? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

(Hold up the mask.) Remember, you are God's Poem—His original masterpiece—He never intended for you to wear a mask. Here is the challenge. Do not leave here today without understanding that you can take off the masks you put on. It does not have to continue. Don't let your evil thoughts become words, and your words, your actions. Don't let your actions become habits, and your habits, your character. Don’t let your character become your destiny. Don’t let separation be your destiny.

CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)

(Have the students say this prayer with you. Pause along the way so they can repeat the words.)   
"God of mercy and Grace, as I have found out today, I am wearing many masks, and I am desperate to take them off and clothe myself in purity and faith. I need You to help cleanse my life both INSIDE and OUT. For You are my potter, and I am the clay. I know I have been hypocritical in many ways. I know I need to change. Father, allow Your Holy Spirit to work within my life. Amen."