

# Make Church a Part of Your Life

## WEEKLY SERMONETTE

### "Too Many Hypocrites"

By Pastor Terry Laughlin, CrossRoads Church, Norton

One of the most common excuses given for someone not surrendering to the Gospel of Christ is found in this statement, "There are too many hypocrites in the church."

Many persons who are seen by outsiders to be "hypocrites" may be true, yet immature, Christians. Christians are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone and are being changed into His likeness; some grow quickly in their walk with the Lord, others more slowly.

However, there is another undeniable fact. There are many hypocrites in the church. People have many reasons for attending church; some are Biblical and valid, others are not. Many Pharisees in Jesus' day performed the external actions of religion without true inner devotion to God. Jesus didn't mince words with them. Seven times in Matthew 23, Jesus pronounced "woe" (a curse) on the scribes and Pharisees because they were hypocrites, leading the people astray.

Also, even though Judas Iscariot was chosen to be among the twelve original disciples, Jesus knew him to be a hypocrite. When Judas was proclaiming along with the others that he would not betray the Lord, Jesus said to him, "Yes, it is you." (Matt. 26: 25) Judas had earlier complained about a woman pouring expensive perfume on Jesus' feet saying, "It could have been sold and the money given to the

poor." But John 12: 6 tells us that Judas did not care about the poor for "...he [Judas] was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it."

The use of the Greek word for hypocrite refers to being a play-actor. An actor usually wore a mask and in speech and action imitated the character of

someone else while on a stage to be seen by others. The English transliteration of hypocrite has the meaning of pretending to be what one is not, especially in the area of religion or morality.

Sadly, there are clergy, televangelists and people holding Christian positions, as well as people sitting in the pews each week, professing to be Chris-

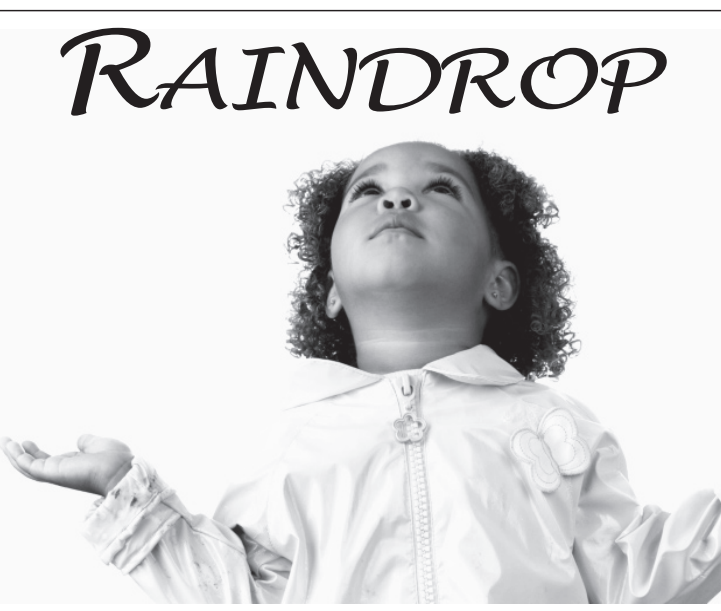
tians who don't know Jesus Christ. They may have head knowledge but have never been born again. 2 Timothy 2: 19 says, "The Lord knows those who are His and everyone who confesses the Name of the Lord must turn from wickedness." Peter wrote, "Therefore, rid yourself of all... hypocrisy." (1 Peter 2: 1) Jesus said the place assigned for hypocrites is in hell. (Matthew 24: 51)

Does the fact that there are counterfeit \$20 bills in circulation prevent you from using those that are in your pocket? No! You trust that they are real. The fact that there are hypocrites in the church should not prevent you from receiving Christ into your life and being all you can be in Him!

Hypocrites play at religion when people can see them in church; but they live, talk and act much differently elsewhere. They watch the same movies, tell the same jokes, commit the same sins and have the same bad attitudes as others of the world when outside of their "religious" setting.

True Christians have found Christ's forgiveness through repentance of sin. They are not perfect, but they will live life with the fervent desire that the power of God's Holy Spirit will change them more and more into the image of their Lord.

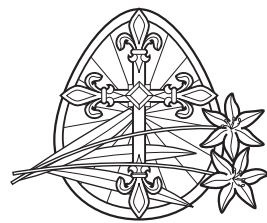
Don't let hypocrites keep YOU from eternal life in Christ!



The air seems so still on a bright, hot, late summer afternoon. Suddenly, a dark cloud appears out of nowhere, accompanied by the contrasting coolness of a refreshing breeze. Then the first raindrop falls - it's the beginning of a rain shower. There is always a first drop, soon followed by a light rain or a downpour. That one little drop will get things started; many drops together will keep the earth cooled and free from drought. Get started learning about God this week at your house of worship. Your relationship with Him will be continually renewed as you are aware of His constant presence.... Like the first drop of the summer rainstorm, each journey has a beginning.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Philippians 3:1-21	Philippians 4:1-23	1 Thessalonians 1:1-10	1 Thessalonians 2:1-16	1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:13	1 Thessalonians 4:1-18	1 Thessalonians 5:1-28

Scriptures Selected by The American Bible Society  
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