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Hypocrisy – Part 2 – Fogged Mirrors

In our last installment we established the *universal guilt* of both Christian's and non-Christians regarding hypocrisy, including yours and mine. This week we will focus on Christian hypocrisy – '*us guys*'.

With a biblical mandate for honesty, we can be big enough to acknowledge that the church of Christ has a spotted record, past and present, particularly regarding condemning people in an un-Christ-like manner. Sometimes the line between calling people to acknowledge and repent of sin and that of condemning people, becomes blurred. Some may be confused about Christ's conduct since at times, he was extremely encouraging and gentle, and would not 'bruise a reed' (Mt. 12:19-20; Jn. 3:17), when dealing with people who desired or at least were open to change from a sinning lifestyle. Yet at other times, he righteously and forcefully insulted some who had hardened their hearts in rebellion (Jn. 8:44, Mt. 23:13-15; 31-33, 27, 22:18; 15:12).

We have likely heard radio preachers rage with flailing condemnation, with little evidence of meekness incorporated with their boldness. Sometimes the pulpit is raised too high for the egos of men. Too often lay members have mimicked that example.

Let us face it, when we have strong values and feel strongly that we are right and others are wrong, the line separating properly calling others to repent and receive salvation from that of self-righteously condemning people, can become hard to recognize. – Our *mirrors get fogged*. Yet, failing to call people to repent of sin is neither righteous nor humble. It takes wisdom, maturity, self-control, humility, courage and inspiration to discern correctly between these two spirits. Christians need to be praying for this discernment.

When we cross that line, it should be unsurprising that Christians have gained a reputation for being hypocritical condemners. Surely, we can all critically review our past behaviors and honestly acknowledge that we have been unwittingly guilty of this behavior or attitude at some time to some extent. Thankfully, with God's help we can put an end to that.

Is it not easier for people to face their sins when the persons calling them to do so demonstrate humility instead of airs of superiority? That is because it is easier to perceive they truly care and are not their enemies; not trying to harm them when calling them to a dramatic change in lifestyle.

The church must continue following God's commandment to boldly call people to repent, yet do so in a spirit of meekness, maturity, and in the fear of the Lord (cf. I Pe. 3:15; Eph. 6:20; Is. 58:1; Mk. 16:15-16).