Why are Christians hypocrites?

A challenge to behaviour

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KEY SCRIPTURES *Matthew 5:43-45*

Why are Christians hypocrites?

This is a question raised by some who reject Christianity, A recent report by Barna Research showed that 42% of people who question Christianity and have doubts, identified the hypocrisy of Christians as being behind their doubt. This caused me to stop and think about my behaviour. It also prompted me to ask the question of us all, “Are we a good witness to God?”

The fact is, that we need to be open and ready to declare that we are followers of Jesus. This is the call to be witnesses to a lost world.

Acts 1:8 “But you shall receive power, the Holy Spirit coming upon you. And you shall be witnesses to Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Just as the first Disciples were witnesses to the faith of a believer in Jesus, we too are His witnesses in the world. That means we are to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. This is not only in words but in our behaviour. Actions can often speak louder than words. The Apostle Paul reminds us through his words to the Romans:

Romans 13:12-14 “The night is almost finished. The day is almost here. So we should stop doing whatever belongs to darkness. We should prepare ourselves to fight evil with the

weapons that belong to the light. We should live in a right way, like people who belong to the day. We should not have wild parties or be drunk. We should not be involved in sexual sin or any kind of immoral behaviour. We should not cause arguments and trouble or be jealous. But be like the Lord Jesus Christ, so that when people see what you do, they will see Christ. Don't think about how to satisfy the desires of your sinful self."

The good news is that we have a great helper the |Holy Spirit to guide us and lead us in thee right paths. Furthermore, Paul also reminds us of the grace of God.

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 "That is why we always pray for you. We ask our God to help you live the good way he wanted when he chose you. The goodness you have makes you want to do good. And the faith you have makes you work. We pray that with his power God will help you do these things more and more. Then the name of our Lord Jesus will be honoured because of you, and you will be honoured because of him. This can happen only by the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."

We therefore, can rely on God's grace to aid us in every situation. When we are challenged or insulted, when we feel aggrieved by others, keeping our minds on Jesus will help our response. Peter gives advice:

1 Peter 2:17 "Show respect for all people. Love your brothers and sisters in God's family. Respect God, and honour the king.

1 Peter 2:19 "One of you might have to suffer even when you have done nothing wrong. If you think of God and bear the pain, this pleases God."

This is a great challenge. The truth is we all lose it sometimes and our responses fall short. This is where we can look to a God who does not condemn us, but understands our weaknesses. (Hebrews 4:15) When we do fail we turn to God and He forgives us (1 John 1:8-9) and we can continue to walk in Him who loves us. Let me leave the final word with Jesus or Master and example:

Matthew 5:43-45 “’You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies. Pray for those who treat you badly. If you do this, you will be children who are truly like your Father in heaven. He lets the sun rise for all people, whether they are good or bad. He sends rain to those who do right and to those who do wrong.”

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