Pastor Jesse Giglio
January 17, 2010
Matthew 6:1-18

Please use the space below to take notes on today's message:

## Take It Homework

We encourage you to not only do these exercises on your own, but also with a group of friends, co-workers, neighbors, small group or family members.

Most of us have heard someone say, "I don't attend church because it's full of hypocrites." But what exactly is a hypocrite? Is it anyone who doesn't live a perfect 'Christian life? In this study, "Hypocrite of Human" (from intouch.org) we'll learn to distinguish between genuine faith and hypocrisy.

According to Dictionary.com, a hypocrite is "a person who pretends to have virtues, moral or religious beliefs, principles, etc., that he or she does not actually possess, especially a person whose actions [contradict those] beliefs." The word comes from the Greek for a stage actor—someone who pretends to be what he is not.

- Read Jeremiah 7:5-9. What sins had the Israelites committed?
- What did they assume about the requirements to receive God's blessing?
- In what ways are modern-day church-goers similar to the Israelites of Jeremiah's day?

In Jesus' day, spiritual leaders called the Pharisees considered themselves righteous because of the religious laws they observed.

- Read Matthew 23:4-5. What did Jesus say the leaders' motivation was?
- Read Titus 1:15-16. How does this passage describe a hypocrite?
- Do you pretend to be more spiritual than you are? Why?
- What is NOT hypocrisy?
- What did Satan say was Job's motivation for fearing God? (Job 1:8-12)

Matthew Henry's Commentary on Job 1: *See how Satan censures Job. This is the common way of slanderers, to suggest that which they have no reason to think is true. But as there is nothing we should dread more than really being hypocrites, so there is nothing we need dread less than being called and counted so without cause. It is not wrong to look at the eternal recompense in our obedience, but it is wrong to aim at worldly advantages in our religion.*

- What are some temporal benefits you receive as a result of living a righteous, obedient life?
- Why do you think God's blessing sometimes becomes our primary motivation for living righteously?
- How does Job later demonstrate his unconditional allegiance to God? (Job 13:15)

Jesus treated prideful religious people far differently than those who had failed and were repentant.

- Re-read the definition of hypocrisy given at the beginning of this study. Do you think Peter was a hypocrite for first declaring his readiness to die with Christ and later denying Him (John 13:37)?
- How did Jesus respond to Peter's betrayal? (John 21:15-25)
- What do you think God's reaction is when we boldly take a stand for Him and then publicly fail to live up to our beliefs?
- Have you ever regretted making your faith known because you later failed to behave as you feel a Christian should?