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Hypocrites in the Church? – Discussion Guide

Section 1

Discuss what you applied in the past seven days from the last Overflow Show.

Read John 5:37-40 Discuss the outward characteristics of the people Jesus is criticizing. Does it surprise you that he is criticizing people who have a seemingly godly habit in their life? What is missing in the people he is criticizing?

Section 2

Go to www.OverflowShow.com and listen to the 5-minute podcast titled “Hypocrites in the church?”

Section 3

What did you think? What stood out to you as you listened?

How often have you heard the hypocrites-in-the-church objection from a non-Christian?

Newman says many people mistakenly assume they are Christians. Do you agree and why?

The author feels quite confident that you might meet some jerks at church, and he’s somewhat comfortable with that. Why? Try to name 3 or 4 reasons jerks are there.

How does self-awareness of being flawed play into one's salvation decision?

Newman admitted his traffic anger and instances of lust. Take 3 minutes and jot down some ways you fall short.

In what ways do any of these match things you speak against as wrong? How can you deal with speaking against while recognizing that they exist in your life at the same time?

What are two questions that Newman asks someone who raises the hypocrisy objection to get him to see the charge against the church in a different context?

Section 4

Discuss some ways we could apply a few of these principles in the next 7 days?

One suggestion (if needed): Initiate a conversation with a non-Christian friend (or approach people in public with a survey) recounting that your spirituality discussion group has been discussing hypocrites in the church. Ask them their opinion of where they see hypocrisy in society in general or in religion today.

Overflow enthusiastically recommends the book QUESTIONING EVANGELISM by Randy Newman, from Kregel Publications.

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