

# Answering Objections to Christianity



# Shining Mountains Bible Study Fall 2020

***“Christianity is hypocritical. I know many non-Christians who are far more kind and loving than many Christians I know. If God actually saves Christians, why don’t they look or act more saved? Christians are the most un-Christian people I know.”***

## **Introduction**

What are some examples of how the Christian church has been hypocritical in our society? You can come up with some on your own and/or use the attached article from the *Huffington Post*.

## **Love as the Defining Christian Identity**

**John 13:31-35** - <sup>31</sup> When he was gone, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in him. <sup>32</sup> If God is glorified in him,<sup>[a]</sup> God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once. <sup>33</sup> “My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come. <sup>34</sup> “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

**Luke 5:29-32** - <sup>29</sup> Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. <sup>30</sup> But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” <sup>31</sup> Jesus answered them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. <sup>32</sup> I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

In research on young outsider’s perceptions of Christianity (ages 16-29), “hypocritical – saying one thing, doing another” was listed as third<sup>1</sup>.

*Young outsiders believe that rather than being able to help them sort through the image-is-everything world, followers of Christ are playing the very same mind games that they are. They perceive us as employing the same tactics as everyone else to preserve an appearance of strength.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, *UnChristian: What a New Generation Really Think about Christianity...and Why it Matters* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), 28.

<sup>2</sup> “...” 44-45.

1. Quickly scan the context of **John 13:31-35**. How does this current perception of Christianity contrast with the perception of Christianity Jesus has in mind?
2. **Agree/Disagree & why:** By and large, the WELS and ELS (the church bodies Shining Mountains is a part of in fellowship with) care more about how we precisely confess the correct doctrine of Jesus' teaching than how we precisely put Jesus' teaching into practice in our communities."
3. From **Luke 5:29-32**, explain the saying: "The church is a hospital for sinners, not a museum for saints."

### **What to Do with Hypocrisy?**

**Matthew 7:1-5** - "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. <sup>2</sup>For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. <sup>3</sup>"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? <sup>4</sup>How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? <sup>5</sup>You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

4. Most skeptics, like the author of the introductory article, will propose that the solution to a hypocritical church is simply to remove religion (especially Christianity) from society in favor of secular ethics. In light of Matthew 7:1-5, what is a better corrective?
5. Watch the Time of Grace Devotion, "How to Avoid Being a Hypocritical Christian." What are some practical, specific steps we can take to prevent the accusation of being hypocrites? ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=6BVYTIJv5IA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6BVYTIJv5IA))

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### **Conclusion**

Practice how you would answer this objection: "Christianity is hypocritical. I know many non-Christians who are far more kind and loving than many Christians I know."

## Exposing America's Biggest Hypocrites: Evangelical Christians

It's okay to prey as long as you pray.

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Francis Maxwell, Contributor

Ahhh, Christianity in America. Or should I say, the single greatest cause of atheism today. You know who I'm talking about, right? The type of people who acknowledge Jesus with their words, and deny him through their lifestyle. The ones who preach the importance of traditional family values, all while holding a rally and offering standing ovations for a man who preyed on 14-year-old girls. The ones who look to excuse the despicable allegations directed at Roy Moore by literally quoting the bible, comparing his molestation to Joseph and Mary. I give you the most hypocritical religious group in America, Evangelical Christians.

First of all, for the record, I grew up Catholic in Scotland. I went to church, and greatly respected the community in which I was raised. I truly believe that religion can help instill wisdom, guidance and a sense of belief when all else seems hopeless. So I get it... to an extent. But what I have never understood is why someone feels the need to impose their beliefs on another. Especially in America. Especially with regard to evangelical Christians. Aside from preaching anti-LGBT rhetoric and abstinence to the world, evangelical Christians have proudly touted themselves as righteous do-gooders doing the Lord's work. Until you insert politics into the mix. Then "the Lords'" work means about as much to them as consent means to Donald Trump.

In 2016, 72 percent of evangelicals reported that immoral leaders could still govern ethically, which was validated when 81 percent of white evangelicals who voted last year cast their ballot for Donald Trump. They were happy to shelve their morality in order to justify electing a thrice-married, casino mogul who bragged about grabbing women by the pussy and rarely goes to church — but yeah, thanks Jesus. And now they're ratcheting up the hypocrisy even further with the stern defense of alleged child molester Roy Moore.

The everyday filth that has become the support of Roy Moore has shone further light on this selective morality. Moore has long been an icon for the evangelical Christian community, from his defiance of a court order to remove a Ten Commandments monument from the Alabama Judicial Building, to his staunch opposition to abortion and same-sex marriage. All of which, I guess, grant you refuge when several detailed allegations of child molestation become public, as long as you are part of the right political party.

Take Alabama pastor David Floyd, for example. Back in 1999, Floyd was so appalled that a president of the United States had the gall to embark on a sexual relationship with a woman less than half his age that he told his Alabama flock that Bill Clinton had crossed the line and had to go. And now, fast forward nearly 20 years, with four women and 30 sources confirming allegations against Roy Moore, what does our righteous evangelical pastor have to say? He calls Moore "an upright man" who should be forgiven for his sins and elected to office. Because, of course he did. And don't worry, he elaborates as to why Moore's case is different than other cases of sexual assault, saying "You have to look at the totality of the man. I've prayed with him. I know his heart." Translation: It's okay to prey as long as you

pray. These views were echoed around evangelical TV sets by televangelist Pat Robertson when he said Bill Clinton turned the oval office playpen into the sexual freedom of the 1960s, but then championed Trump as an inspiration and explained that his sexual predatory past was him just "acting macho."

These are just examples of the overarching, undeniable hypocrisy in conservative fundamentalist and evangelical circles, where they qualm their goody-two-shoed outlook whenever the political price is right and give

masculinity the freedom to run rampant. Evangelicals preach about maintaining gender roles and American family values whilst deliberately ignoring that the values they uphold on gender is part of the reason someone like Roy Moore is able to wander through life grooming minors and come out unscathed. The gender construct of evangelicals is the problem, not society's willingness to accept different gender identities. The LGBT community is not the one who prides itself on male dominance, allowing for the normalization of child sexual abuse — that's evangelicals.

Take a look at one of the most influential and popular evangelical books on family values for instance, *Wild at Heart* by John Eldredge. In it, he famously wrote that God created men to long for "a battle to fight, an adventure to live, and a beauty to rescue." With the role of women as passive: the assumption is they yearn to be fought for, to be saved, if you will. When you attest to a 36 year old pursuing a 14 year old, to the evangelical community he is just a strong male who is able to save a young woman and provide for her. Something despicable right wing talk show host Wayne Allyn Root referred to when he suggested that Roy Moore did nothing wrong; he was just a "32 year old district attorney, swashbuckling and handsome, hitting on some young girls who were very pretty." And yet, people still question why, despite there being numerous accounts of suspicion involving the creepy older man hanging around malls and high school football games, people ignored him.

Evangelicals will make the world think embracing a progressive outlook on gender identity will be the beginning of the end for society and American values. When really it is their medieval ideology that has to change.

[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/exposing-americas-biggest-hypocrites-evangelical\\_b\\_5a184f0ee4b068a3ca6df7ad](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/exposing-americas-biggest-hypocrites-evangelical_b_5a184f0ee4b068a3ca6df7ad)