

*Be Sincere*  
Romans 12:9  
November 13, 2016

1. Pastor Jim explained that the first commandment of love is to be sincere. To be sincere is to *not* be a hypocrite. Before we look at the bible's definitions of hypocrisy, what is your understanding of the word? Why is hypocrisy so damaging when it comes to our witness for Christ?
2. Pastor Jim outlined the following definitions of hypocrisy found in the bible:
  - a.) Saying one thing and doing another (Matthew 23:29).
  - b.) Focusing on outward appearance to please others (Matthew 6:2)
  - c.) Giving lip service to something without truly believing it (Matthew 15:7-8).
  - d.) Disguising your self-interest as something else (Luke 13:15-16).
  - e.) Refusing to acknowledge your sin while condemning others (Matthew 7:3-5).

As a group, review these definitions and read the passages that accompany them. Did any of these definitions surprise you? Do you see any of these types of hypocrisy in your own life? How so?

3. According to Paul, God's remedy for hypocrisy in Romans 12:9 is "Hate what is evil and cling to what is good." As a group, discuss how this remedies each case of hypocrisy found in the above definitions?
4. Pastor Jim gave five human examples of sincerity in our relationships:
  - a.) Regular confession and acknowledgement of our sins to others.
  - b.) Whatever you ask others to do, make sure you're doing it yourself.
  - c.) Beware of social media. It focuses mostly on outward appearances.
  - d.) If you harbor ill-will or bitter envy in your heart, don't deny the truth. Allow God to change your heart.
  - e.) Don't dress up your own self-interest as doing what is right or obeying the Bible. If we believe we should love the lost, we actually have to love them.

As a group, discuss each of these examples of sincerity. Out of the five, which example is easiest to follow for you? Where have you fallen short on this list? What's stopping you from participating in more sincere relationships?

5. Take time to pray with your group. Ask God to forgive you for insincerity in your relationship with Him and with others. Pray that God's Spirit would empower you this week to "Hate what is evil and cling to what is good."