

# Inconsistent Imposter: A Lesson Plan on Being a Hypocrite

This Inconsistent Imposter lesson plan on being a hypocrite will help youth understand that followers of Jesus must live their faith with their actions. Yes, there are hypocrites in the Church. It is made of people! But the Church can still lead us to holiness.

## Opening Game for Inconsistent Imposter

Start this lesson plan on being a hypocrite by playing [Phony Fun Relay \(see the complete instructions\)](#).

Follow up with a couple of questions:

- Who looked the silliest?
- Which item was the most difficult to run with?
- Would this relay have been much easier without all of the props?

Sometimes we want people to see us in a certain way. We put up a great appearance and we say all of the right things. We can be quick to condemn others while hiding our own sins. This is true of spiritual leaders also. They can say one thing, but their actions are very different.

## Scripture Reading for Lesson Plan on Being a Hypocrite

Consider the religious leaders in this gospel:

[John 8:1-11](#) (Jesus and the Woman Caught in Adultery ) – the Gospel Reading for the [5th Sunday of Lent – Year C](#)

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. But early in the morning he arrived again in the temple area, and all the people started coming to him, and he sat down and taught them.

Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle. They said to him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?”

They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him.

Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger.

But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.”

Again he bent down and wrote on the ground. And in response, they went away one by one, beginning with the elders. So he was left alone with the woman before him.

Then Jesus straightened up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”

She replied, “No one, sir.”

Then Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin any more.”

[John 8:1-11](#)

## Discussion for the Inconsistent Imposter Lesson Plan

Most of you know what a hypocrite is. The dictionary tells us that a hypocrite is “the practice of claiming to have moral standards or beliefs to which one’s own behavior does not conform”. In other words, it is to say one thing and to do another.

In this case, Jesus is dealing with the scribe and Pharisees. These were Jewish religious leaders. They claimed that every letter of the law was important. And Old Testament law said that a person caught in adultery should be stoned. This meant they would stand around her and throw stones at her until she died. It was a horrible punishment.

*If necessary, you can explain that adultery is “sexual intercourse between a married person and a person who is not his or her spouse”.*

They are trying to show that Jesus doesn’t respect the law. They know what he teaches and expect him to show mercy say that the woman should be released. But instead Jesus points out their hypocrisy and uses it against them.

For they are quick to condemn this woman for her sins and bring her to a most painful and shameful death. But Jesus points out in a very clever way that they are sinners also. This is the hypocrisy. They find her sin intolerable, but they seem to be able to live with their own sins. They are holding her to a higher standard than they have set for themselves.

Interestingly, the man she was caught with is not being stoned. This is another level of hypocrisy. Women had very little influence and standing in the society of the time. So these religious leaders are eager to punish this defenseless woman. But the man she was with, who should have also been stoned according to the law, is not brought forward for punishment.

It is also important to note that Jesus does not tell the woman that the adultery was not a sin. In fact, he tells her to sin no more. But he does not condemn her as the scribes and Pharisees did. Instead he encourages her to be more holy in way which is merciful and compassionate.

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Unfortunately, we can see similar hypocrisy in the Church today. People will condemn and judge those they deem as “not holy”. It is important to remember that the Church is made of people. And people are sinners who are capable of being judgemental and unfair.

That doesn't mean that people should just do whatever they want though. The Church teaches us what is right and wrong and we should still follow that. Just as Jesus point the adulterous woman on the path to holiness by telling her to sin no more, the Church is pointing us on the path to holiness.

But sometimes the way the people of the Church do it is harsh and hypocritical. And that is wrong. Instead of judging and condemning each other, we need to recognize that we are all sinners and that all of us will stumble on the path of discipleship. Instead of pointing fingers like hypocrites, we should pick each other up, give a big hug of encouragement, and keep walking.

## Reflection Questions for the Hypocrite Lesson Plan

- Where have you seen hypocrisy in the Church?
- Have you ever felt judged? How did that make you feel?
- What are some ways we can respond to hypocrisy and still be faithful to Church teaching?

## Challenge for the Inconsistent Imposter Lesson Plan

This week, watch out for any tendency to be a hypocrite yourself. If you feel yourself judging and condemning someone, think of how you aren't perfect either. Then say a silent prayer for the person you are judging and for yourself.

## Prayer for the Lesson Plan on Being a Hypocrite

If time permits, pray the [Divine Mercy Chaplet](#).

For a shorter prayer option, use a [Popcorn Circle](#) to pray for personal intentions.

### More Resources

[Building our parishes into welcoming communities](#)

[Let us help each other as disciples](#)

[Divine Mercy Chaplet](#)

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