

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A HYPOCRITE & A GOOD MAN  
MAKING A MISTAKE Text: 1 John 1:8-10

INTRO: It is a common error not to recognize the difference between a hypocrite & a good man making a mistake. Our text shows that no one is sinlessly perfect --yet it does not brand all as hypocrites. In seeking to distinguish between a hypocrite & a good man making a mistake, we will examine some of the events in the life of Simon Peter.

I. KINDS OF MISTAKES GOOD MEN MAKE.

A. Mistakes in judgment. Carelessness.

[If a man] uses a stone, by which a man could die, throwing it at him without seeing him, so that he dies, while he was not his enemy or seeking his harm... the congregation shall deliver the manslayer... (Num. 35:23-24).

READ JOHN 21:3-6, 11, 15-17

B. Mistakes because of ignorance.

1. Peter's dealings with the Gentiles, Acts 2:36-39.

READ ACTS 10:9-18, 28

NOTE: This truth had been available since the giving of the great commission & Peter had preached it on Pentecost, but he had not fully realized its application. His refusal to kill & eat was not hypocritical, even tho it was contrary to his own words in A 2:39. Peter was a good man making a mistake because he did not fully comprehend the truth.

2. Paul's persecuting the church,  
Acts 23:1; 26:9; 1 Tim 1:13

3. Cornelius' bowing down before  
Peter, Acts 10:25.

C. Mistakes of weakness. This is the area  
most similar to hypocrisy & is almost  
always mistaken for it.

READ MATTHEW 26:65-74

1. I am persuaded it was not fear of  
death that caused Peter to deny  
Christ for at least 3 reasons:

(1) Peter had known from the  
beginning that preaching  
that a kingdom of heaven  
was at hand was risky  
business during the  
days of the Caesars.

(2) There had been only 12 men  
with 2 swords when Jesus  
was arrested, yet Peter  
showed his willingness to  
fight to the death, MT  
26:47; LK 22:38.

(3) John was known to the high  
priest, was apparently  
recognized as a follower of  
Jesus, but seemed to be in  
no personal danger,  
John 18:1-17.

2. No, it wasn't fear of death that  
caused Peter to deny Jesus.  
Perhaps to some extent, he was  
confused that Jesus would not  
allow Himself to be defended--  
but I am persuaded that the  
primary factor was the shame

that attached itself to Jesus' arrest, trial & up-coming crucifixion.

READ AGAIN FROM MATTHEW 26:65-70

Peter was a good man making a mistake because of weakness.

II. THE PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARD A GOOD MAN MAKING A MISTAKE.

Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of gentleness, considering yourself, lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens & so fulfill the law of Christ. (Gal 6:1-2)

Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth & someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death & cover a multitude of sins. (James 5:19-20).

III. GOD'S PROVISION FOR THE CHRISTIAN WHO MAKES A MISTAKE. READ I JOHN 1:6 thru 2:6.

Hypocrite	Erring Christian
Walks in darkness	Walks in the light.
No fellowship with God	Fellowship, cleansing
Denies his sins.	Confesses his sins.
Truth is not in him.	Has Advocate, propit.

La Porte, TX, September 14, 1975  
Jonestown, TX, November 16, 1975  
Bellaire, TX, December 7, 1975  
Burkeville, TX, April 8, 1976 (meeting)  
Humphrey, AR, July 23, 1976 (meeting)  
College Park, Deer Park, TX, October 2, 1976  
Highway 29, Liberty Hill, TX, October 8, 1977 (meeting)  
Red Bluff, Pasadena, TX, January 15, 1978

Main Street, Dickinson, TX, January 15, 1978  
Indiana Ave., Lubbock, TX, August 6, 1978  
Auburn St., Lubbock, TX, August 6, 1978  
Cedar Park, TX, August 9, 1978  
Springhill, LA, October 21, 1980 (meeting)  
Weatherford, TX, September 19, 1982 (meeting)  
Exton, PA, March 10, 1985  
Exton, PA, April 28, 1991  
Shiloh, Mexia, TX, March 8, 1992  
Washington, NJ, April 8, 1992 (meeting)  
Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, November 2, 1997