

## **The Masks We Wear**

Luke 12: 1-3

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September 08, 2024

### Introduction:

I can remember in June 2022 when we in South Africa were legally allowed to take off our masks in public, which feels like a life-time ago. But to be honest, while most people were excited that these masks are a thing of the past, there are so many people walking around with masks on...

Under normal circumstances, if someone had to hide their face every time they leave the house, that would be rather suspicious! But so often people wear Spiritual masks & Emotional masks.

### Pretending

There are two kinds of masks I want to talk about: The kind we wear to pretend that we are something we are not (projecting), and the Kind we wear to hide who we are (Hiding).

Even though these might sound similar, they are very different. They do have something in common though, they both entail pretending you are something that you are not. But pretending something is true doesn't make it true. Pretending you are something you are not doesn't make you that thing. You cannot fix what you pretend isn't broken and God cannot bless what you are pretending to be. So, what are these masks we are wearing, and how can we take them off?

### Projecting:

Let's start with projecting, which is pretending you are something you are not. This is a trap in our spiritual lives. This could happen if we feel inferior. We start pretending to be more spiritual. But Jesus warned us about this. In fact, this is an area where Jesus spoke harshly against wearing a mask. 15 times in Matthew, 1 time in Mark and 4 times in Luke Jesus condemns the Pharisees for wearing a mask. The word "hypocrite" in the New Testament translates to "stage-player, actor or pretender"? So 20 times, it is recorded

that Jesus spoke against their actions, because they were pretending to be something they are not.

Matthew 6:5 - "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full."

Spiritual projection doesn't bring you any closer to Jesus. The only reward is your pride. But when we come to Him in humility; James 4:6 - "But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble."

How can we take this mask off: humility. It's OK not to have all the answers and even to make mistakes. Even the disciples, the people who travelled with Jesus, who witnessed His ministry and teaching, who ate with Him and walked in His footsteps had the humility to be honest.

Luke 17:3-5 - "So watch yourselves. If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying 'I repent,' you must forgive them. The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

Jesus didn't respond by throwing them out of the group and finding more spiritual people to hang out with. Instead, He said even a little faith can do great things, it can enable you to live according to the standards that Jesus was setting.

Hiding:

There are many reasons we might do this, but I want to touch on 2 of them: Shame and Insecurity.

Shame: Sometimes, even after we accept the amazing gift of life and salvation that Jesus gives, we keep on reminding ourselves of what we once did, or when we made that mistake. But we are not called to live in the shadows of our past, but in the light of Christ.

Ephesians 4:22-24 - "You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."

Your new self is created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. This is where your mind should be. This should be your focus and goal. The mask that hides shame is taken off by a heart and mind that is focused on God.

Insecurity: Maybe in who you are and who God created you to be.

Psalm 139:13-14 – “For it was you who created my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I will praise you because I have been remarkably and wondrously made. Your works are wondrous, and I know this very well.”

God created you to be you, because He wanted a you. We are so incredibly valuable, that Jesus was willing to die for us, so that we can know Him. But not just did He create you for a relationship and make a way for you to be saved as well as give you the strength to put off the old self to pursue your true design in Him, He made you with purpose.

Ephesians 2:10 – “For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.”

We should never underestimate our call! We are not all called to do the same thing and we shouldn’t view your calling by comparing it to someone else’s

If the mouth had to stop working because it couldn’t see as well as the eyes or smell as well as the nose, the body would starve and die. But if we all live our calling as we were made, the whole body is strengthened. If you don’t know what you are called to, start on your front line: What should you do there where you are to give God glory? Who should you influence there where you are?

You are God’s masterpiece, and you are positioned to be used. So let us take off the masks of projection and hiding and be who God made us, so that He may be glorified and the whole world may be blessed.