

SERIES: THE OTHER SIX DAYS
SERMON: REMOVE THE MASK
5-1-22

OPENER:

ILLUSTRATION:

Landon at Boston's Birthday party dressed up like Spiderman.

Perhaps you have had times in your life where you put on a mask. What were you hiding? Perhaps it was a loss, pain, a burden..... or a bad habit of sin, pride, selfishness or fear? Sometimes these masks help get us through the day.

**BUT THE MORE YOU WEAR THE MASK THE HARDER IT IS
TO TAKE IT OFF.**

**THE MORE YOU CONTINUE TO BURY YOUR WEAKNESS AND FAILURES AND
HIDE BEHIND WHAT
YOU THINK THE WORLD WANTS TO SEE - THE MORE YOU
RISK LOSING YOURSELF.**

GOD WANTS TO HELP YOU PEEL OFF THE MASK YOU HIDE BEHIND.

IT'S EASY TO PORTRAY AN ILLUSION

It's easy to portray an illusion of who you really are; to put on a mask and pretend to be someone that you aren't.

I think all of us are very hard on ourselves and most all of us have self-esteem issues. There are always things we aren't happy with and want to change about ourselves. We fail, we mess up, we aren't perfect, we are all a work in progress.

And then because of that we fear what others will think of us, how others will perceive us. We sometimes fear their words or their rejection. We fear the consequences of being too honest.

**SO IT IS EASIER TO HIDE WHO WE ARE AND LET OTHERS SEE WHO WE WANT
TO BE.**

2 Corinthians 4:2 (NLT) Therefore, since God in his mercy has given us this new way, we never give up. ² We reject all shameful deeds and underhanded methods. We don't try to trick anyone or distort the word of God. We tell the truth before God, and all who are honest know this.

**AS PAUL URGED US, WE NEED TO RENOUNCE DECEPTION AND WALK IN
TRUTH IN ALL THINGS.**

NO MATTER WHAT MASK WE TRY TO WEAR OR WHAT WE TRY TO HIDE, GOD KNOWS EVERYTHING ABOUT US.

**HE KNOWS THE TRUTH OF OUR THOUGHTS
AND THINGS DONE IN SECRET.
WE CANNOT FOOL HIM.**

1. GOD HATES DECEIT

The Bible leaves no doubt that God hates deceit.

Three times in the Book of Proverbs he states it bluntly.....

*Proverbs 6:16-19 (NLT) There are six things the Lord hates—
no, seven things he detests.....¹⁷ a lying tongue,..... ¹⁹ a false witness who pours out lies,*

Proverbs 12:22 (NLT) The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in those who tell the truth.

GOD HATES THE HIDDEN EVIL MOTIVES OF OUR HEART.....

Zechariah 8:17 (NLT) Don't scheme against each other. Stop your love of telling lies that you swear are the truth. I hate all these things, says the Lord."

**IT IS VERY CLEAR - GOD HATES ANY CONCEALMENT
OF THE TRUTH, - ANY DENIAL OF TRUTH - OR ANY
MISREPRESENTATION OF THE TRUTH.**

LYING IN ALL FORMS IS A SIN BEFORE GOD.

2. WHY GOD HATES DECEIT

God hates deceit because he so values truth. He so values truth because he himself is the source of all truth.

Jesus said....John 14:6 (NLT) I am the way, the truth and the life.

God's character is truth. His identity is truth. Truth is who He is. There is no deception in Him. He can be totally trusted. There is nothing false, nothing hidden, no underlying motive behind His agenda or plans. Nothing but truth and perfection with a goal to bless you and help you.

Lies, though, have a very different source, for as Jesus told the religious authorities of his day.....

John 8: 44-47 (NLT) For you are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has

always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.

ILLUSTRATION:

Lying and deception originated with Satan. There was no deception, there was nothing hidden in heaven until Satan began to deceive. He was one of the arch angels in heaven. He was before God leading and organizing worship, but somewhere he began to use his position with the hidden motive to exalt himself. He began to deceive and lie. He used his deception to turn one third of the angels against God.

I think that is why God hates it so much because Satan is the one who originated lying. Satan deceived God. He pretended to be for God in His worship and adoration, but all the time in his heart he actually had a hidden agenda.

**GOD IS THE FATHER OF TRUTH.
SATAN IS THE FATHER OF LIES.
NO WONDER THEN THAT GOD HATES DECEIT AND DECEIVERS.**

**TO DECEIVE IS THE NATURAL CONDITION OF THOSE WHOSE HEARTS IN ARE
IN REBELLION AGAINST GOD.**

As we turn away from God, we immediately begin to speak lies, misusing our ability to communicate to deceive one another. We hide. We conceal the truth. We portray an illusion and put on a mask.

Jesus said.....*Matthew 15:18-20 (NLT) But the words you speak come from the heart—that's what defiles you. ¹⁹ For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander. ²⁰ These are what defile you.*

WHEN WE SPEAK DECEPTIVELY WE SPEAK SATANICALLY.

**WHEN WE PRACTICE DECEPTION IT REVEALS A HEART IN REBELLION
AGAINST GOD.**

**WHO IS YOUR FATHER?
WHAT SEED ARE YOU BORN OF?**

3. TO DECEIVE OTHERS IS TO DECEIVE YOURSELF

ILLUSTRATION:

Landon could't see well with the mask on.

When you wear a mask, your sight is hindered, it hinders your perception. You are not able to see in full view what is actually happening around you. You cannot see as clearly as you need to. your perception is off, you can't see things

very well so to make good judgments or decisions. Just like Landon falling. He couldn't see clearly to avoid hurting himself.

**YOUR EFFORT TO DECEIVE OTHERS IS ACTUALLY
DECEIVING YOU.**

Hebrews 3:12-13 (NLT) Be careful then, dear brothers and sisters. Make sure that your own hearts are not evil and unbelieving, turning you away from the living God. ¹³ You must warn each other every day, while it is still "today," so that none of you will be deceived by sin and hardened against God.

**DECEPTION HARDENS YOUR HEART.
WHEN YOUR HEART IS HARDENED YOU DEVELOP SPIRITUAL INSENSITIVITY.**

PROCESS:

- > Insensitivity sets in when you stop looking to Jesus for your life.
- > When you stop looking to Christ, unbelief sets in.
- > And when unbelief sets in, you begin to practice sin..
- > When you sin you become tricked by the the deceitfulness of sin.

**WHEN YOUR HEART IS HARDENED BY SIN YOU'VE LOST YOUR ABILITY TO
FEEL CONVICTION.**

??How do you know when you're being spiritually insensitive?

Sin isn't as painful as it used to be. Before, when you sinned you were crushed. You had failed your Savior. You had the right heart attitude about your sin. But when spiritual insensitivity sets in, sin isn't that painful anymore. After all, everybody else is doing it. What hurts the heart of God doesn't hurt you the way it used to.

This is a dangerous condition, which is why the author of Hebrews gives the Holy Spirit's warning.....

Hebrews 3:8 (NLT) Do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me, as in the day of trial in the wilderness".

In plain terms a person who is deceived does not even know they are deceived! And this is the deadly effect of sin in our lives -- sin so alters our thinking that we do not even realize we are deceived when we sin!

- >How easy is it for you to lie?
- >How good of a liar are you?
- >Can others not tell when you are lying?
- > Is it easy for you to manipulate others?
- > Are you the same person at work as you are at church?

> Are you a different person at home than when you are around others?

4. TO BE FREE YOU MUST REMOVE THE MASK

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 (NLT) ¹⁷ For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.

When we come before the Lord beholding Him with our masks taken away and we are not afraid to look at our own evil capacity, admit our sin and failure, a wonderful thing happens. The Spirit of the Lord sets us free.

AS WE LOOK AT JESUS WITH NOTHING COVERED AND NOTHING HIDDEN; IN ALL TRUTH AND HONESTY, WE BECOME LIKE JESUS.

***Exodus 34:33-35* When Moses finished speaking with them, he covered his face with a veil. ³⁴ But whenever he went into the Tent of Meeting to speak with the Lord, he would remove the veil until he came out again. Then he would give the people whatever instructions the Lord had given him,**

***Exodus 33:11* Inside the Tent of Meeting, the Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. Afterward Moses would return to the camp, but the young man who assisted him, Joshua son of Nun, would remain behind in the Tent of Meeting.**

TO REFLECT THE NATURE OF GOD YOU MUST REMOVE THE MASK.

FACE TO FACE IS WHERE WE GROW.

As you keep your eyes on the glory of the Lord you suddenly discover the Spirit of God has been at work making gradual changes. You are becoming a loving person, easier to live with, more attractive, more compelling. Your life is deepening as it is losing its shallowness; you are more understanding of things. That is the work of the Spirit. Notice what he says: this “comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” It is not you who does it; it is He.

TO BEHOLD HIM IS TO BECOME LIKE HIM.

CLOSING:

Honesty and transparency are a must to this walk with God.

As a pastor, I say, give me someone honest and they can go far in God! But when someone is dishonest they will never possess the supernatural life of God.

1. What in your life do you work to cover up?

2. Pray and ask God to help you remove your mask.

In your life, be honest with God. Ask for His help to free you from deceitfulness and pretense. Be real, with Him and others. And make sure that you are not hiding behind a mask.

James 5:18 Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.

THERE IS NO HEALING IN HIDING.

**TO CONFESS TO OTHERS OUR FAILURES AND SIN IS TO REMOVE THE
DISGUISE AND BE HONEST WITH WHO
YOU REALLY ARE.**

**THROUGH TRANSPARENCY AND TRUTH WE FIND
FREEDOM IN CHRIST.**