

3 Keys to Tear Off the Mask That Keeps You From Going Deep in God

It is disconcerting watching a scene play out where a character keeps making things harder for themselves because they refuse to face reality. They pretend they don't need help. They pretend everything is going great, when in reality, it isn't. They wear a "tough guy" facade to cover their pain. They portray themselves as not needing anybody: they are self-sufficient and self-made. You can see that they are making themselves and those they love more and more miserable. If they do admit issues and someone reaches out and offers help, they act as if they don't want to bother anyone. So they remain aloof and continue to dig a lonely hole of defeat. As you watch the movie, read the book, or observe real life, your heart breaks because they continue to live broken when they could be made whole. You know if they would only humble themselves, stretch a little and peel off the mask, their life would be so much better.

The reality is that many times it isn't just others, it is us. We all wear masks at times. Sometimes we are well aware of the masks we wear, but other times we are so accustomed to them that we believe it is our true identity. Bishop Tony Miller gets to the heart of the issue, "We never discover our true identity in God as long as we project our facades!" It is time to find out who we are meant to be and let God bring our true identity to the surface.

Look at what the Holy Spirit says through Paul in 2 Corinthians 3:16-18: "Nevertheless when anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, seeing the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces, as in a

mirror, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord.”

Living Mask-Free

The passage we just read gives us three important keys to living free from the facades that rob our true identity:

First, God’s great design for us is to become like Jesus! He didn’t come to the cross, taking our sin and our death, just to rescue us from hell and get us to Heaven one day! For much of the church, salvation means little more than a “get out of hell free” card and a golden ticket to paradise. But God has a far greater plan! Paul writes it this way: “For those whom He foreknew, He predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that He might be the firstborn among many brothers” (Rom. 8:29). This is the heart of the Gospel! Jesus came to become like us so that when we can become like Him. He gives us His DNA, and we begin to look like Him in our thinking, motivation, talking and doing. We share the family likeness. Wow! Hallelujah—this is salvation’s purpose!

Second, our becoming like Jesus only comes to maturity through the power of His Word and the Holy Spirit. As a believer looks and keeps on looking into the Word, he or she transforms into the image of the Word. The key to freedom is to continue in the Word; to look and keep on looking! “If you remain in My word, then you are truly My disciples. You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free” (John 8:31-32). Make the decision today that the Word is the first priority and final authority in your life! We must choose to let the Bible we mark, mark us! How by looking carefully and continually into the word and allowing it to work in me. (See James 1:21-25.)

This transformation through the Word only happens by the power of the Spirit. As the Holy Spirit declared, “Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord of Hosts” (Zech.

4:6). Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. The letter of the word kills but it is the Spirit that gives life. Jesus promised that He would come to us and live in us through the Holy Spirit. Learn to yield to Him and let Him live big in you today! You have the greatest Teacher of all time living in you. The Author of the book delights to reveal its meaning to those who will learn. (See 2 Corinthians 3:6 and John 14:16-18.)

The third key is this: it is in our turning to Christ that the facade falls off! You and I can't free ourselves. We don't have the power in ourselves to live in real freedom. Jesus does! He accomplishes it for us and in us by the power of grace as we turn to Him. This must be more than a one-time decision! It is learning to look to Jesus in each and every situation. We must continue to turn to Christ and trust His love to lift us from one degree of glory to the next degree of glory, until one day we look just like Him. It's time to take the mask off and be who He is making us! {eoa}

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