

# Finding Freedom From The Mask

Quick question for you: “How are you doing?” “Good,” you say? Well, what does “good” mean? You don’t have any hurts, fears, or secret sins in your heart? I’m sorry, you say you have “a lot” of those? You struggle to believe you are worth anything? You’re a sinner who is trying to make everyone from church believe you’re perfect? You’re really struggling in your relationship with God? Then please explain why you say you are doing “good”?

Oh, I see. You feel a lot of pressure to appear like you are doing well. You think that Christians are “supposed to live perfect lives.” You want to hide all of your imperfections so nobody will think badly about you. I understand what you are saying. I wore the “good” mask for longer than I care to tell. In fact, I am still tempted to use it sometimes. Yet, I have come to hate this mask, for it keeps me from real life.

If you are tired of wearing your “good” mask, I’ve got truly good news for you. You don’t have to! Contrary to a common misconception, the Bible does not expect perfect performances out of Christians. In fact, it demands an admission of weakness. Romans 3:23 reveals our dark identity to anyone who cares to read it. We are all sinners! We are deceiving ourselves if we believe that we are not! (1 John 1:9) To take off our “good” masks, we must be honest with ourselves, with God, and with others about our sinful state. The longer we pretend to be good, the less we see our sin. Our “good” mask blinds us to the truth of our miserable condition. (Rev. 3:17) We must ask God to search our heart, and take a long look at ourselves in the mirror of His Word, to discover who we are behind our masks.

This process is very difficult when we don’t like the person we begin to discover. If you have become quite comfortable with the good-looking mask on your face, you might mourn when you see the ugly expression behind it. I wept when my mask was first removed, and the darkness of my heart was exposed to my dad. As my tears of confession flowed, they washed away that mask that I had carried for so long. At last I felt that there was nothing hidden. After my dad prayed with me and my tears ceased,

I felt alive in a way that I did not know possible. For my darkness had been brought to light, and my confession had freed me from the power of the lie I was living. Speaking the truth

about who I was with my dad, and turning to God in prayer, gave me hope. For so long I had feared what people would think if they knew what I was really like, and now that fear’s power was broken. I was not hopelessly alone. My dad was there for me. God was there for me. I had hope!

You can experience the same hope today, no matter what you are facing.

Ask God to give you strength to talk to your parents, or a born again believer in Christ, about your hidden trouble. If it is sin, confess it. If it is hurt, acknowledge it. If it is fear, confront it. Christ longs to set you free from sin, to touch and heal your hurts, and to give you peace in every circumstance. But He will not touch a problem that you pretend is not there! If you are blind to any need to change, ask your family or someone who knows you well, to help you see problem areas. If you resent the thought of doing this, your pride has already been unmasked. If you know your area of need, remove your mask in the presence of God and a friend who you trust. Ask God to make you “good” from the inside out, instead of trying so hard to be good from the outside in. God has the power to change us in His time. We must simply come as we are, and find freedom from the mask. **BB**

## TEEN TALK

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