

The Faces we put on

1- Objectives

- ❖ To know that we are putting faces in many times
- ❖ To learn how to avoid putting faces
- ❖ To learn to be faithful with God, with others and with ourselves

2- References

- ❖ The Holy Bible
- ❖ http://executableoutlines.com/matt/mt23_1.htm

3- Scriptural Verse

- ❖ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness” (Matthew 23: 27)

4- Lesson Outlines

Illustration

A young man saw an advertisement for a job at the zoo. When he went there, he was horrified to find that the only job they had open was for somebody to play the part of a gorilla. A lot of children were coming in the next few days and they loved gorillas. The zoo, having no gorilla, needed someone to impersonate one. Since money was tight, the man decided he would take the job. He arrived before sunrise, got into the gorilla outfit, and slipped into his cage. Finally, day dawned and the children came. All he had to do was pensively pace the floor, look rather adept at swinging between trees, and eat the peanuts and bananas whenever they were fed to him. After eight or ten hours, he became thoroughly exhausted and the bananas were getting the best of him. As he swung from one tree to another, rather nauseated, he slipped and fell into the lion’s den next door. He shouted, “Help! Help!” The lion leaned over and said, “Be quiet or we’ll both lose our jobs!”

- ❖ How honest are we with others, with ourselves and with God?
- ❖ Imagine if everyone around you could read your mind and heart? How would life be different?
- ❖ What are we hiding from each other? And why do we hide?

We are hiding our weakness because we are afraid

- ❖ “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings..... Then the Lord God

called to Adam and said to him, ‘Where are you?’ So he said, ‘I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself’ (Genesis 3:7-10).

We cannot hide from God

- ❖ “And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account” (Hebrews 4:13).
- ❖ Adam and Eve were still naked in the eyes of God even after they put on clothes.
- ❖ “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me” (Psalm 139: 7-10).

We can hide from each other

“They sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings”. They were no longer naked to each other physically and emotionally and accordingly, all people make coverings for themselves to hide their weakness:

- ❖ **Intelligent:** Using big words; understanding deep ideas; trying to sound smart in general and having a broad knowledge;
- ❖ **Attractive:** Being very concerned with our looks and our clothes; we get very upset when people see us when we are not in our top form; flirting with people to appear more attractive and likeable to them;
- ❖ **Popular:** We want to have many friends and always be included in activities; might lie about ourselves or accomplishments to get people to like us; peer pressure to drink, smoke, gossip, etc;
- ❖ **Funny:** We want to be fun and funny so that people will enjoy hanging out with us; always trying to be funny to attract people even at other’s expense;
- ❖ **Responsible/Dependable:** So people can rely on us; talk about our past responsibilities a lot and our great accomplishments trying to gain people’s trust;
- ❖ **Wise:** We can give good advice; try to sound very wise, talk about times in the past where people took our advice and it worked...problem solver, matchmaker, etc.;

We may fall into disobedience

- ❖ **Fake Good Works:** We want to appear that we are good people with good morals and principles “Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven” (Matthew 6:1).
- ❖ **Fake spirituality:** Acting very pious and religious and spiritual to make people think we are moral “Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad

countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly” (Matthew 6:16-18).

- ❖ **Act like the Pharisees:** “But all their works they do to be seen by men. They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi’” (Matthew 23:5-7).

Can we hide from ourselves?

We actually can hide from ourselves and this is the most dangerous.

- ❖ The Pharisees did not realize their dead spiritual state when the Lord Jesus told them: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness” (Matthew 23:27).
- ❖ “Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’” (Matthew 7: 22-23).

How can I know if I am hiding?

- ❖ Ask yourself: Do we spend all our time worrying about how we appear, and less time worrying about what we actually are?
- ❖ Look at the content of your confessions. Do we confess? Do we care more about justifying ourselves and hiding our sins? Are we honest with ourselves about who we are? Are we able to say the hard things (I do not love people around me; I am addicted to pornography; I love money; I care about ____ more than God ...).
- ❖ Denying the reality does not heal us from the disease as if we go the doctor claiming that we have no symptoms. Do I care more about being healthy or making sure everyone around me thinks I am healthy?
- ❖ Remember the divine words: “If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth” (1 John 1:6).

Consequences of faces

- ❖ Feeling fake.
- ❖ Stress to maintain the image.
- ❖ Constant fear of being found out.
- ❖ Low self-esteem.
- ❖ Judging others.

Conclusion

- ❖ God loves us regardless of who we are and what we do.
- ❖ We can't hide from God and we should not because He loves us still.
- ❖ We are all sinners and we should face this reality and not try to hide it.
- ❖ Commit to being honest to ourselves, God, and others; this will lead us to regularly judging ourselves and practicing true repentance and confession.

Activities / Discussion Points

- ❖ Make a chart of things that we can fake and everyone honestly and anonymously answer the questions before the lesson to know how much we are putting faces in our life
Ex.: "White lies; denying seeing or doing stuff; faking prayers....."