

BEHIND THE MASKS

Why we fear being vulnerable.

No one likes a hypocrite. Discovering someone's actions don't line up with their beliefs often leads to disappointment and betrayal. As a result, we tend to distrust and distance ourselves from those who have misled us.

It's a natural reaction. But there's another reason we have such a visceral response to hypocrisy.

Another person's hypocrisy often forces us to confront our hypocrisy. It's very painful to go into the dark corners of our own lives and face the inconsistency between what we want others to see and what we know to be true about ourselves.

The term "hypocrite" comes from the Greek word meaning "mask-wearer." It was a way to describe actors in the theatre. They would wear masks to make it easier for the audience to believe the characters they were playing.

Our world revolves around image. We either hide behind masks for protection or create masks to be noticed. Hiding behind a mask creates a façade opposed to who we really are, leaving us feeling disconnected and insecure. On the other hand, creating a mask so that we can be admired creates a constant need to uphold an idealized and unrealistic version of ourselves.

Either way, we are hiding from our fragile selves, and it's exhausting and unsustainable.

The truth is, the fragility we try to hide isn't actually a flaw. It's a sign of our need for God. This is why Jesus invites us to remove our masks and discover our true identities with Him. It's where our fragility meets His strength that makes us complete. Only then can we stop striving and start living without the heavy weight of hypocrisy tied around our necks.

Jesus said, *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."*

If you need that rest, all you have to do is ask Him. Tell Him that you can't do this anymore. Because Jesus sees the real you, knows the real you, and loves the real you.