



Many men try to hide and pretend they are not broken. But this only leads to more hiding, pretending, and despair—and nothing ever changes. We fear that God is almost never pleased. This study will lead us into the light between two very different underlying motives: our determination to please God or to trust him. One results in a striving that never feels it has done enough to please him. The other results in a trust that experiences his full pleasure. Our motives as Jesus followers will either keep us enslaved in our hiding or free us into God's Adventure for our lives. Let's discover the Open Road of Grace together!

Ride ON!

LIFE BEHIND THE MASK – PART II

Galatians 5:1 Romans 5:20, 21 Ephesians 2:8-10

Highland Colony Men's Roundtable
www.MensTable.com

FREE TO BE A MAN

July 07, 2022

TAKE THE MASK OFF AND WALK THE OPEN ROAD OF GRACE!

Bible Verses: Romans 5:20, 21; Ephesians 2:8-10; Luke 12:1-5; I Kings 22:16-18; I Peter 2:21-25; I Peter 4:17-19

Music: Celtic Woman - Amazing Grace
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HsCp5LG_zNE

Resources: *TrueFaced – Trust God and Others with Who You Really Are* by Bill Thrall, Bruce McNicol, and John Lynch.
The Cure: What If God Isn't Who You Think He Is and Neither Are You? By Bill Thrall, Bruce McNicol, and John Lynch.
Video: A Clip from Amazing Grace
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uss1TwbE7I>

TAKE THE MASK OFF – SEEING OURSELVES BEHIND THE MASK!

When we don't access God's remedy to deal with sin, those *ugly destructive effects* join forces inside us and enslave us. REMEMBER: Three-Phase Process = Act of Sin → Involuntary Response → Inevitable Effect.

Our involuntary responses to inevitable effects unreleases pain, inner turmoil, and mask-wearing (Luke 12:1-5).

1. **Shame** = Guilt produces shame when I fail to acknowledge what I have done wrong. Hurt produces shame in the form of feeling demeaned and humiliated.
2. **Blame** = We can blame others because we feel shame, or we can feel shame because of blame.
3. **Fear** = Guilt creates a barrier in relationships. Hurt convinces us that others cannot be trusted.
4. **Denial** = Prevents us from facing the truth about ourselves. If we are the offender, it allows us to deny that we've done anything wrong. If we are the offended, it allows us to deny that the sin done to us has affected us.
5. **Anger** = Brings a heroic sense of purpose to our guilt or our hurt. It gives us energy, explosive, and unpredictable energy. "Somebody's gonna pay!" It allows us to play the victim or demand justice. It prevents the truth from being known or embraced.

TAKE THE MASK OFF – SEEING OURSELVES BEHIND THE MASK! - SIX INEVITABLE EFFECTS:

1. **JUDGEMENT** → We become highly sensitive to our own sin and judge the sin of others.
2. **BLAME & CRITICISM** → We lose our objectivity in a crisis, and we become the issue.
3. **HIDE** → We hide our sinful behavior and become vulnerable to more sin.
4. **CUT OFF FROM LOVE** → We are unable to be loved or to love.
5. **LOSS OF DIRECTION** → We become susceptible to wrong life choices.
6. **CONTROL** → We attempt to control others.

TAKE THE MASK OFF – TOXIC EFFECTS OF NOT DEALING WITH SIN!

4. _____ → Unresolved sin always causes preoccupation with our own lives. We want so badly to be mature and selfless, but our unresolved sin just keeps triggering self-centeredness (I Kings 22:16-18). When we are preoccupied with ourselves, we don't see that our masquerade incites fear in those around us—that we are porcupines to be around. We gesture for people to come close with one hand, and with the other we signal, "Stay away." No wonder others consciously or unconsciously fear being intimate with us or entrusting themselves to us (I Peter 2:21-24; 4:19). "Unless we allow others to meet our needs, we cannot receive their love."
5. _____ → Caught in the trap of unresolved sin issues, we often begin to make a string of poor life choices, causing us even more harm (Luke 15:11-32). In our unresolved and unidentified sin, we're now blindly reacting to life, without perspective, guidance, or wisdom. We close to truth that could stop the raging *inevitable effects*, while we open to seductive, self-vindicating reasoning.
6. _____ → When we have been hurt or have hurt another, a deep need to be validated grows within us. We must, at all costs, hold onto our "righteousness," and so we strive to control every area in our life. Control validates our "rightness" and soothes our anger. If we give up any form of control to another, we have somehow proven we must not be right, and our anger will emerge. Not only must we remain in control of ourselves, but we must also control others to ensure that we don't get hurt again. Controllers must be "right!" (Luke 11:37-44).

ACTION: Journal This!

1. Think of a time when you acted in sin or when an act of sin was committed against you.
2. Describe what the sin was (the act of sin) and its initial impact on you (the involuntary responses)—either guilt or hurt.
3. If you haven't resolved the guilt or hurt, describe why. What caused God's healing to get skipped, moving you from the involuntary responses right into the involuntary effects of shame, blame, fear, denial, or anger?
4. What specific life patterns ensnared you as a result?

“Amazing Grace” by Celtic Women

<p align="center">Amazing grace How sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me I once was lost, but now I'm found Was blind, but now I see 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear And grace my fears relieved How precious did that grace appear The hour I first believed</p>	<p align="center">Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come; 'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, And grace will lead me home. The Lord has promised good to me, His Word my hope secures; He will my Shield and Portion be, As long as life endures. Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail, And mortal life shall cease,</p>	<p align="center">I shall possess, within the veil, A life of joy and peace. The earth shall soon dissolve like snow, The sun forbear to shine; But God, who called me here below, Will be forever mine. When we've been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun, We've no less days to sing God's praise Than when we'd first begun.</p>
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Bible Verses – The Message

Romans 5:20, 21- 20 All that passing laws against sin did was produce more lawbreakers. But sin didn't, and doesn't, have a chance in competition with the aggressive forgiveness we call *grace*. When it's sin versus grace, grace wins hands down. 21 All sin can do is threaten us with death, and that's the end of it. Grace, because God is putting everything together again through the Messiah, invites us into life—a life that goes on and on and on, world without end.

Ephesians 2:8-10- 8 Saving is all his idea, and all his work. All we do is trust him enough to let him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish! 9 We don't play the major role. If we did, we'd probably go around bragging that we'd done the whole thing! 10 No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving. He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing.

Luke 12:1-5 - 1 By this time the crowd, unwieldy and stepping on each other's toes, numbered into the thousands. But Jesus' primary concern was his disciples. He said to them, "Watch yourselves carefully so you don't get contaminated with Pharisee yeast, Pharisee phoniness. 2 You can't keep your true self hidden forever; before long you'll be exposed. You can't hide behind a religious mask forever; sooner or later the mask will slip and your true face will be known. 3 You can't whisper one thing in private and preach the opposite in public; the day's coming when those whispers will be repeated all over town. 4 "I'm speaking to you as dear friends. Don't be bluffed into silence or insincerity by the threats of religious bullies. True, they can kill you, but then what can they do? There's nothing they can do to your soul, your core being. 5 Save your fear for God, who holds your entire life - body and soul - in his hands.

I Kings 22:16-18 - 16 "Not so fast," said the king. "How many times have I made you promise under oath to tell me the truth and nothing but the truth?" 17 "All right," said Micaiah, "since you insist. I saw all of Israel scattered over the hills, sheep with no shepherd. Then God spoke: 'These poor people have no one to tell them what to do. Let them go home and do the best they can for themselves.'" 18 Then the king of Israel turned to Jehoshaphat, "See! What did I tell you? He never has a good word for me from God, only doom."

I Peter 2:21-25 - 21 This is the kind of life you've been invited into, the kind of life Christ lived. He suffered everything that came his way so you would know that it could be done, and also know how to do it, step-by-step. 22 He never did one thing wrong, Not once said anything amiss. 23 They called him every name in the book and he said nothing back. He suffered in silence, content to let God set things right. 24 He used his servant body to carry our sins to the Cross so we could be rid of sin, free to live the right way. His wounds became your healing. 25 You were lost sheep with no idea who you were or where you were going. Now you're named and kept for good by the Shepherd of your souls.

I Peter 4:17-19 - 17 It's judgment time for Christians. We're first in line. If it starts with us, think what it's going to be like for those who refuse God's Message! 18 If good people barely make it, What's in store for the bad? 19 So if you find life difficult because you're doing what God said, take it in stride. Trust him. He knows what he's doing, and he'll keep on doing it.