

Wrington & Lynch Chapels

Minister's Website Article September 2020

Do you like those masks we wear? The PPE? I don't mean, do you like the patterns. After all, some people go to town with elaborate pictures. No, I mean, how do you feel when you wear it, or when you meet other people wearing theirs?

I don't like them. For a start, my mask makes my glasses steam up. I know there are expensive ones I could buy to prevent that, but I'm a cheapskate. But, mostly, I don't like masks because I can't read other people. Their emotions are almost completely covered - no smiles, no sneers, nothing to tell how they feel - other than eyes and eyebrows.

That makes me think of our Christian faith. You see, God doesn't like masks either. He doesn't want us to pretend to be other than ourselves. We hide so often, under a pretence. Normally it's because of fear: frightened of what other people might say, what they might think, what the consequences might be to relationships.

The Bible knows all about that. And it's incredibly honest about people. I mean, I wouldn't have written the Bible the way God has. I wouldn't have proclaimed the greed. I wouldn't have shown the adultery, the cowardice, the hypocrisy. In fact, we even have a report, by the Apostle Paul, about Peter, a leader in the church at the time, being like that. It's in Galatians 2 if you want to read. He's being a hypocrite, wearing a mask.

We all do it. It's universal. Nobody escapes it. Part of the socialisation process of children is that we learn to play roles. We learn to wear masks.

One major plus point about Christianity is that it declares a solution to all this hiding, this hypocrisy. I don't mean Christians are wonderful. In fact, there is just as much self-righteousness and arrogance in the church. So, don't turn religious. No, the answer is that, when we turn to Jesus, and follow him, he crucifies us. In some way, the old me dies.

That doesn't mean I'm instantly perfect. But God commits himself to doing a work in me. I'm ugly and sinful. And that's why Christ died for me. In him, I'm getting better. God creates character within me.

That process is fantastic, but it can take a lifetime. The problem is masks. Every time you pretend to be something you aren't, you interfere with the process. Every time you wear a mask, every time you smile when you want to spit, you cut the legs off the character God is creating.

So, start with God. Run to him. He understands and knows the real you anyway. So you can be completely honest in front of him. He won't tell you off or complain. If you shout at him because you're angry, he won't get upset. Then listen to him, and let him slowly peel all the masks off you - the ones you wear to other people. Only when we trust him, and walk the way of Jesus, do we get better.

If you want to know more, make contact through this website.

Every blessing

Duncan