

## The Road To Recovery Week 2 – “Taking Off The Mask”

I didn't plan it this way but this message “Taking off the masks” just so happens to be here close to Halloween.

What is it that everybody likes to do at Halloween? Wear Masks...

Why do we wear masks? To hide our identity...

How many of you have had the experience of someone jokingly saying, oh are you wearing that same mask for Halloween? And of course you didn't have a mask on...

**We all wear masks and we do it for a number of reasons.**

**Thomas Parkin** – show picture

Thomas inherited his mother's 2 million dollar Brownstone in New York. Only problem is it wasn't paid for and Thomas couldn't make the payments.

He began dressing like this, forged his mother's social security checks, and cashed in close to \$100,000.00

He was finally caught because they said he didn't sound or walk like an 80 year old woman.

We all wear masks, now maybe not for the same reason Tomas Harkin wore a mask, but we all wear them.

**WHY?** Because we have some secret we want to hide from the people around us.

We all have...

Skeletons in the closet

Things we're not proud of...

Habits that harm us...

**We HIDE because the pressure to be NORMAL is HUGE.**

Have you ever noticed that NORMAL is on a fluctuating scale?

**Don't be Normal, be who God called you to be.**

## Genesis 3 – Story of the first Masks that were worn by people in the Bible...

God created mankind, Adam and Eve we are told and **He created them and US will this thing called Free Will.**

He placed them in this Beautiful garden with all these trees that bore fruit and he said to them. Now, there are lots of trees here, you can eat from any of them except this one. The one here right in the middle of the garden.

**How many of you will testify that all someone has to do is say, NOT THIS ONE and you're going for that one.**

Go to a car dealer and the salesperson says, you can have any car here EXCEPT THAT ONE.

### Genesis 3:1

The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, "**Did God really say** you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?"

#### #1. Did God really say that?

The first thing that happens when we are tempted to do something we were not supposed to do is to Question, Did God really say that?

Our friends will come along and say, come on, did God really say that?

We start to question and look for a way around it and the first place we go is now is that really what God said.

#### #2. Did God really mean what He said?

<sup>2</sup>"Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. <sup>3</sup>"It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.'"

<sup>4</sup>"You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman. <sup>5</sup>"God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil."

**Did God really mean that sex outside of the covenant of marriage makes 2 people become 1?**

**Did God really mean that too much alcohol consumption makes us a fool?**

**Did God really mean what He said?**

**#3. It won't hurt just to look at it.**

<sup>6</sup>The woman was convinced. **She saw** that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too.

**She looked at it...**

**It looked good...**

**She wanted it...**

**She took it...**

**She gave it to others...**

It all starts in the Eye. Guard your eyes. Guard your heart. Don't expose yourself to things that God said to stay away from!

**#4. Then comes the shame and the masks.**

<sup>7</sup>At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they **sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.**

<sup>8</sup>When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the LORD God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the LORD God among the trees. <sup>9</sup>Then the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"

<sup>10</sup>He replied, "I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked."

**The Fig Leaves**, they were the first masks mankind ever wore.

**Our natural reaction, when we have done something we shouldn't have done is to HIDE, to put on a MASK.**

**#5. Then we have to decide how to deal with the shame**

<sup>11</sup>"Who told you that you were naked?" the LORD God asked. "Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?"

<sup>12</sup> The man replied, “It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it.”

<sup>13</sup> Then the LORD God asked the woman, “What have you done?”

“The serpent deceived me,” she replied. “That’s why I ate it.”

**We have looked.**

**We liked what we saw.**

**We took it.**

**We now feel the shame.**

**Adam said, “God, it’s your fault! God, it was that woman You gave to me... it is her fault**

**How are you dealing with your shame?**

**Genesis 3: 8-9**

<sup>8</sup> When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the LORD God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the LORD God among the trees. <sup>9</sup> Then the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

**God is always seeking us, always coming to us with the question, “Where are you?**

**Why are you hiding?”**

**Nathaniel Hawthorne Scarlet Letter**

“No man for any considerable amount of time can wear one face to himself and another to the multitude without finally getting bewildered as to which one is the truth.”

**The real reason we wear masks is FEAR**

Fear of what others will think of us. (please hear me, it doesn’t matter what others think)

If they really knew me, they wouldn’t love me.

Fear that God could never love and forgive someone like me, not with what I have done.

**We wear masks because of a false idea of what others will think and who God is.**

**God loves you and He wants to have a relationship with you.**

**No matter what you have done.**

**No matter where you have been.**

**“You cannot out sin the Cross of Christ”**

### **Romans 5: 8-11**

**Romans 5:8-11 (NLT)**

<sup>8</sup> But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us **while we were still sinners.** <sup>9</sup> And **since we have been made right in God’s sight** by the blood of Christ, **he will certainly save us from God’s condemnation.** <sup>10</sup> For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, **we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son.** <sup>11</sup> So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.

**Since Jesus died for us in spite of our sin – We can take off the Masks**

**Since Jesus death makes us friends of God – We can take off the Masks**

**Since we are saved only because of what Christ has done and nothing that we can ever, could ever do will save us...We can take off the MASKS.**

### **TAKE OFF THE MASKS**

**Our masks don’t stop God from knowing us...they stop us from Knowing God.**

The scariest thing I know is opening up to someone else.

**Our secrets make us sick but God can set you free from that today.**

Maybe today you want to take that mask off by coming forward and praying.

Before we share in communion the Praise Team is going to come and sing. You don’t have to come up here to do business with God but some of you may need to.