

## **\*\*Vid bumper – Faking it at Church**

Coming up later this month, on October 31<sup>st</sup>, it will not be strange to see people dressed up in unusual ways. In America there is a day many celebrate called Halloween. Many children and some adults will celebrate by putting on costumes.. Some will dress up like Ninja Turtles, a Disney princess... a monster like Dracula or a super hero like ironman.

What is a costume? Let's define it for our series.

**A costume is something you wear that hides your true identity.**

By putting on a mask or a cape they portray a different identity.

**Have you ever dressed up in a costume?** Text us on our anonymous text line. 214 856 0550. We want to know what your favorite costume was.. Save this text line number and feel free to ask us your questions about faith, life, or Redemption Church anonymously.

It is normal to wear costumes on Halloween.. but not so much any other day of the year.

**A costume is something you wear that hides your true identity.**

The truth is that we often wear costumes to disguise our true identity.

- Next week – Self Deception. Sometimes we wear the costume so long that we forget our true identity.. we forget we can take off the costume...
- Financial Fakers – putting up a façade of having material gain in order to hide the emptiness in your life.

- Hiding shame & hurt – We hide our shame & hurt behind these costumes, but they are never truly healed until we expose them

Chances are very good that you have become very good at wearing costumes. Here are some of mine..

- Holy Chris
- Happy Chris
- Cool/successful Chris
- Smart Chris

Sometimes we get into situations where we wear multiple costumes in a single day. This can get really complex. We have different costumes for different people groups or situations.

- School
- Work
- Family
- Friends
- Church

Life is a whole lot simpler without the masks... Wouldn't it be easier... wouldn't it be a happier more fulfilling life if we would get rid of these costumes and just be who we really are?

## **God created the world without costumes...**

In Genesis we read about God's good creation. He created light, He created dry land, He created stars, He created animals, He created man & woman... It was good. There were no costumes... There was no need to hide one's true identity.

Genesis 2:23 The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."(NIV)

Genesis 2:24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.(NIV)

Genesis 2:25 The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.(NIV)

The man and his wife were both... (naked) and the felt no... (shame)

Have you ever had a dream where you are at school without clothes? That is the worst dream. You are begging for the nightmare to end.. I remember the first time I had that dream, I purposed in my heart that I would never accidentally leave the house without clothes on..

In Genesis 2 Adam & Eve had no pants.. but it wasn't a nightmare. There was no shame, embarrassment, there was no reason to hide, it was not awkward.

THIS IS THE WORLD GOD CREATED. THEY WERE NAKED AND FELT NO SHAME.

Before sin there was no shame. The Hebrew word for shame is

**BUWSH** (boosh) and this word means to be ashamed, disappointed, confused, or to become dry.

The world that God created had no shame, no disappointment, no confusion, and no dried up wilting and dying - nothing less than full of life & vitality. This state of being covered Adam & Eve. It covered who they were... it covered their relationship with each other... it covered their relationship with God.

There was no sin. There was no shame (no buwsh). There were no reasons to hide. There were no games. There were no costumes.

But then the evil one came in the form of a serpent and tempted Eve. He convinced her that God's Word was less than true and to eat of the tree of knowledge.

The serpent came along and questioned God; 'Did God really say (which is what our spiritual enemy will do to you over and over

again); did God really say, I mean, is it really going to hurt you if you do?'

Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge and look what happened...

Genesis 3:7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.(NIV)

Notice the difference..

Genesis 2:25 The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.(NIV)

They were naked but – They were not ashamed. They weren't afraid. They didn't panic and seek to change the situation.. They didn't seek to change each other. They were naked BUT ACCEPTED.

Genesis 3:7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.(NIV)

They were naked. This didn't change. But their eyes were open to themselves. How they saw themselves.. how they saw each other changed. They began to judge themselves and each other.

And they panicked! They were fearful and attempted to cover themselves. They sewed fig leaves together to hide their true identity.. THIS IS MANKIND'S FIRST COSTUME.

Sin brings shame. Shame brings the desire to hide. We create costumes..

Jesus in the New Testament seemed to be harder on hypocrites than anyone else. If there was a sinner who was honest, Jesus showed them love and grace. The Hypocrites he treated them very directly and even called them names.. Jesus sometimes seemed like he was being mean..

The Greek word for hypocrites is **'hupokrites'** (hoop-ok-ree-tace'); and this word, it was literally this word that was used to

describe the actors in Greek plays. This word means; an actor playing a role, someone wearing a costume to misrepresent reality.

It wasn't that Jesus was being mean to hypocrites. He was trying to get them to take the costume off. Stop lying to others and yourself. Stop trying to hide behind a mask.

## Why the costume?

Why did Adam & Eve hide behind a costume? Why the play acting hypocrisy? Why do we try to cover ourselves in a false reality?

## \*\*VID ILLUSTRATION – WHY THE COSTUME

You see, if you knew the 'real me'; how insecure I am, how sinful I am, how unworthy I feel, you probably wouldn't love me because my spiritual enemy, through his lies, has convinced me that because of what I've done, I am now a bad person and because I'm a bad person, the only way to be safe is to hide. Satan, our spiritual enemy has been defeating us at what I call The Shame Game.

## Why the costume?

Why did Adam & Eve seek to hide? Why do seek to hide? You know people that are in trouble and you want to help them... but they hide behind.. excuses, situations, their schedule.. behind fake costumes.

Have you experience something painful or sinful? You don't need to hide.. You need healing.

Do you connect what you did with who you are? You don't need to hide the real you. The real you is who God loves. The real you is who Christ died for. The real you is worth forgiving. Do not define yourself by your past actions or by what others say about you... define yourself by what God says about you.

Do you believe the only way to be safe is to hide? Do you really feel safe in that costume?

## **Your life is better without the costume**

Is your life better with peace? Is your life better without shame? Is your life better without fear? Is your life better without having to keep up a lie?

It is exhausting trying to keep up the masquerade.. You need to decide you want to take off the costume today.

God has a better life for you than this. Can you trust Him?

Genesis 3:8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.(NIV)

Sin brought shame & fear. It drove the man & woman into hiding. Hiding behind fig leaves and among the trees.

## **We Hide but HE seeks**

This important relationship Adam & Eve had with the creator.. they were willing to throw it all away and to hide from Him. Your costume will cause you to throw away your most important relationships.

Adam & Eve hid.. but God sought them out.

Genesis 3:9 But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"(NIV)

Did God not know where they were? No! God is Omniscient, He knows everything. God is Omni-present He is everywhere. Proverbs 15:3 says "The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good."

God absolutely knew where they were even though they hid.

You may be hiding behind a costume. You might have everyone fooled. BUT NOT GOD! God knows where you are...

But yet God asks... "where are you?" Why does God do this?

## **God wants you to reveal yourself**

God wanted Adam & Eve to reveal themselves. He wanted them to take off their costumes. He wanted them to stop hiding. He wanted them to confess.

God wanted them... and He wants us today to reveal ourselves.

Are you ready to take your costume off?

Here is what happens when you reveal yourself to God...

Genesis 3:21 The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.(NIV)

God did not strike them dead.

God did not make fun of them.

God did not leave them like He found them..

They were naked and afraid... So God covered them.

Don't be afraid. God will cover you.

As we come to the altar to talk to God I want us to come with this focus... Let's pray this scripture.

Psalm 139:23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.(NIV)

Psalm 139:24 See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.(NIV)