

Weekend Recap - Discussion Guide

James: Living a Genuine Life - Week 1
August 11-14

Title: Becoming the Real Deal

Big Idea: All deception is a counterfeit of truth.

Optional Ice Breaker: Pastor Cal shared this past weekend two embarrassing parenting moments that left him asking, "What was I thinking??" Share a funny "What was I thinking??" moment you've had recently.

Discuss

1. Have you ever bought something that was billed as genuine but later you found out was not? What was it and how did you respond?
2. Share some ideas of what you think might have been going on in Ananias and Sapphira's heart from Acts 5 that led to their deception?
3. Though masks may feel like they are protecting us, what is the real cost of not living an authentic life?
4. Have you ever shared something that was hard in your life with someone you trusted, and they gave you a safe place and met you right where you were? What did showing beneath the mask do for your heart and relationship?
5. What would Christianity look like if we just took off all the masks?

For Students: Technology like TikTok and Snapchat filters have made it to where we can even hide what we truly look like making it so easy to live a life where no one knows who we truly are. Do you think it's harder, easier, or just different to be real and authentic in today's world? Why?

Challenge

1. Taking off masks doesn't mean you share your deepest hurts, regrets, and secrets with everyone you meet. But there should be a person or two in your life that you can be real and authentic with. Take a moment and reflect on who that is.
 - a. If you have someone that you can be real and honest with, that's great! Take some time this week and thank that person for who they are to you.
 - b. If you have a person in mind but never shared anything that is under your "mask" with them, connect with them this week and share something they don't know about you. It doesn't have to be your deepest secret but maybe something that lets them a little closer to the real you. (Make it real by texting them right now to set up a time to chat this week - yes like right now!)
 - c. If you couldn't think of anyone this will be a great time to ask God to show you who that person could be in the coming months.

Scriptures

1. James 1:1, "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings."
2. Matthew 23:1-3, "Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach."
3. Matthew 23:27-28, "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside, you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness."
4. John 17:17, "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth."
5. James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

Prayer

1. There is a lot of deception and counterfeit in this world and as a result Pastor Cal encouraged us this weekend to pray for our world and country. Don't just pray for your "side" - pray for the side or sides even that you disagree with.
2. Ask God to reveal to you where you wear masks in your life.