



Masks

Scripture: Luke 7:36-50

Read the account of Jesus' encounter with the woman in 7:36-50. This passage is full of interpersonal dynamics between Jesus, a woman and a Pharisee. Read the passage a second time and enter into the story. For instance, imagine you are a fly on the wall observing the scene, or you may be one of the disciples standing nearby. After sitting in the passage awhile, respond to the following questions in your journal:

- What do you notice about the attitude and feelings of the woman toward Jesus in this passage?
- Describe the Pharisee's reaction to Jesus. What might the Pharisee's attitude have been toward the woman?
- What was Jesus' attitude and response toward the woman? What was Jesus' response to the Pharisee?
- Note what Jesus said in verse 44. He asks the Pharisee, "*Do you see this woman?*" It is almost as if Jesus was saying to him, "do you really **see** this woman?" Do you see her as a human being, a child loved by God or do you write her off as an object and identify her only by her sin.
- How do you think Jesus saw the woman?
- Now, focus on the woman. Imagine yourself in her place. What are you feeling as you interact with Jesus, out of your true self, wearing no masks; your sinfulness and giftedness laid bare at His feet? How does it feel to realize that you are *seen* by God **not** for your sinfulness, rather you are seen for who you are truly created to be?

Reflection:

On Friday night of your WWWC weekend you were asked to state "the lie I live" and share it with your sisters. During this exercise you were challenged to search your heart and identify an area of your life where you wore a mask which covered up the "true" you. Remember how you answered the statement, "The lie I live is _____. The truth is _____."

Prayerfully ask the Lord, "What is the lie I live today, in this moment?" In which circumstances or relationships are you projecting an image that is not truly you? What is the truth that this mask or image is covering up? As you identify this area in which you are living out of your "less- than-authentic self," prayerfully confess it to the Lord. Ask Him to help take off this old self and to forgive you. Now ask Him to reveal the truth, and put on who you are created to be. Write down a scripture verse that confirms this truth. Thank Him for loving you unconditionally. You are wonderfully and beautifully created. Write down several more true statements describing who He has created you to be in Christ.



Jesus Christ lived on earth with nothing to hide. He wore no masks, no facades. He was authentically Himself in every situation, and with every person He encountered. Jesus always spoke truth and He treated everyone with *unconditional love*. People from all walks of life wanted to hang out and spend time with him; yet Jesus did not waver in who he was or how he behaved. He was consistently himself, no matter what the circumstances. The scripture tells us we have this same power to live in authenticity and in truth for, "*we have died and our life is now hidden with Christ in God.*"(Colossians 3:3) We have the freedom to no longer live out of our old self. "*Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices and have put on our new self which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator.*" (Colossian 3: 9-10)

Soul Training:

We are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved! (Col 3:12) When we get our identity from God and learn who HE says we are in Christ, we can heal from the deceiving voices which whisper half-truths about our identity. In this soul training, we will be focusing on the truth of who we were created to be as seen through the eyes of God. Throughout the Bible, there are verses that affirm the fact that in Christ, God sees us and calls us His Beloved.

Read Colossians 3:1-17. This is a beautiful, concise explanation of what your life in Christ looks like. Each morning and night this week, prayerfully read through this passage and be aware of what word or verse God is highlighting to you. Picture Him sitting right next to you speaking these words to you. Ask the Lord to reveal new ways of how He sees you as His Beloved. Notice your response to Him, then talk to Him about your feelings. Start a list of Bible verses and promises that speak to you about who you are in Christ. The book of John is a great place to start.

Take some time this week to really **see** others as a child loved by God and journal about it.

Prayer: Lord, thank you that you have made me new in Christ. 2Corinthians 5:17says, "*Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*" I praise you God for making all things new in Christ! AMEN