

Authentic or Fake

A Lord's Flock General Assembly Topic
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An authentic person is not afraid to be true. However, most of us have perfected the fine art of "masking"- wearing masks of hypocrisy and projecting an image ("pakitang tao"). God is calling for authenticity. We need to yank-off the masks that are hiding our true selves. The veil must be removed, so that the reflection of Jesus Christ will be revealed through us. We must rid ourselves of the old self which has been corrupted, and must be created in righteousness. We must stop lying to one another and put on a new self (Col. 3:8-9).

1. There are Four Truths

- 1.1. **We all have struggles.** To claim to have no sin is deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us (1John 1:8,). Everyday we are being tested by satan. We may be renewed, but we are still in the world; thus, the battle with sin will not go away. An authentic Christian will always say "I am a recovering sinner." Even when we come to serve, we will continue to struggle with trials. The Lord Himself says we must prepare ourselves for the spiritual journey that will not be easy.
- 1.2. **Confession brings cleansing** (1John 1:9). We need to acknowledge and name our sins of omission or commission. God promises to forgive our sins, no matter how big they are (Mic. 7:19; Heb.8:12). Confession brings mercy (Prov. 28:13).
- 1.3. **God knows our past.** The Lord knows us. We are the sinners that He would like to find and save (Isa. 43:1). It is authentic to admit that we experience anger or pain. But let us not nurture them for so long. If we deny the sinfulness of our past, we are liars. Despite God's thorough knowledge of the terrible things we have done, Christ died for us (1John 4:19). When we share our sinfulness, we magnify God's grace and inspire others.
- 1.4. **Jesus is enough for the sins of the world.** The Lord says "sin no more." He is the only

One who is sufficient to cover our sins (1John 2:2). However, this does not mean sins are automatically forgiven. Each individual needs to repent, and personally receive God's gift (John 14:23-27)

2. **We can be AUTHENTIC CHRISTIANS when we...**
 - 2.1. **change ourself inside, from the heart.** Real transformation means a life of change. Then, attributes of authenticity appear in our lives which will begin to bear fruit (Gal. 5: 22-23).
 - 2.2. **begin to forgive someone.** When Jesus is in us, we can do the most humble and have the likeness of Jesus.
 - 2.3. **love God and our neighbor.** (Dt 6:5; Mt 22:37-38). We obey Him and we love others as we love ourselves. Everyone who hates his brother or sister is a murderer (1John 3:15).
 - 2.4. **lead an obedient life (sign of conversion)** (John 14:31). We are sure if we keep His commands, and follow Him. He will change our heart of stone to a heart of flesh (Eze. 36:26).
 - 2.5. **Engage in fellowship.** The call from Jesus is to follow Him; let us have a personal relationship with Him. He has now called us for a mission, to save souls. We are the salt and light. Let our light shine so that others will see our good works and glorify the Father. Christ commissioned the church not to be simply an organism but to be alive. God gave His Son so that those who believe will have eternal life (Jn. 3:16).

Conclusion:

There are too many fakes today. Let us be genuine in our love. The agape love of Jesus is unconditional, pure, not asking for anything in return. Let us remove our masks. Finally, I am a sinner, and I am recovering as a sinner.

Reflection:

1. What "masks" are you wearing?
2. How will you change your life to be authentic?

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