True Faced

Title: *True Faced: Trust God and Others With Who You Really Are*

Author: Bill Thrall, Bruce McNicol, and John Lynch

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Book Description:

In a sincere but misguided attempt to please God, many of us strive to "fix our sin." We soon discover that it doesn't "fix" very well or for very long. And se we try to hide it and pretend like it isn't there. But this only leads to more hiding, pretending, and despair—and nothing ever changes. We fear that God is almost never pleased. TrueFaced draws a clear distinction between two very different underlying motives: our determination to please God or to trust him. The resulting difference from these two starting points could not be more profound. One results in a striving that never feels it has done enough to please him. The other results in a trust that experiences his full pleasure. Our motives as followers of Christ will either keep us in unresolved sin and immaturity or free us into God's astonishing dream for our lives.

Book Quotes:

God dreams that you would discover your destiny and walk into the reasons he placed you on this earth. (13)

People wear masks for all sorts of reasons. Some of us opt for a mask because we fear we might not be accepted or, worse, that we may be viewed as unworthy of acceptance because we have already proven ourselves unacceptable. Perhaps we wear a mask because we fear that others won't protect us and might leave us feeling naked and alone. Or we fear that others will protect us, but our protection will come at the price of their control. (14)

So, here's the not- so- small print that maybe you never read at the start of your journey: God's dreams for you are ultimately not really about you. Oh, don't misunderstand. They'll bring you some of the best days of your life; you will be fulfilled beyond any imaginable expectations. But God's dreams take form only when they are about others, for the benefit of others. (14)

We wrote TrueFaced for those who pant for a life worth living. We wrote TrueFaced for those who have tasted of their destiny, but have lost its flavor in brokenhearted disappointment. We wrote TrueFaced for those suffocating under hope- stifling masks. We wrote TrueFaced for those longing to see their God with eyes no longer filtered with fear, self- disgust, and desperate proving. (15)

In a very real sense, we are all performers. Because of sin we've lost confidence that we will always please our audience, and so we put on a mask. (16)

We believe that if others could spend a moment inside of us they would be disgusted by what they discover. We're appalled because we have already discovered it. And we are deeply afraid that they will discover the truth about us. So we pretend to be someone we are not. And this hidden, pretend person disgusts us most. (18)

So, were not just actors. We are also directors in a badly styled play, teaching those we love how to pose and masquerade, memorize fake lines, rehearse expressions, and produce false tears on command. (21)

We deny that we even wear a mask, but the truth about us is this: Those who know us best wish they could tell us that, while our resume is impressive, our mask is coming apart. They long to get past our mask so that they could love us and know us and know our love, but we have kept them at such a distance that they have given up. We are truly emperors wearing no clothes. (23)

We may try to ignore it or stuff it away, but though it may lie dormant for a while, unresolved sin is always buried alive. (24)

Six of the many damaging behaviors resulting from unresolved sin: 1. I become highly sensitized to my own sin and judge the sin of others. 2. I lose my objectivity in a crisis and I become the issue. 3. I hide my sinful behavior and become vulnerable to more sin. 4. I am unable to be loved or to love. 5. I become susceptible to wrong life choices. 6. I attempt to control others. (26)

But like plaque, cholesterol, or unanswered e- mail, unresolved sin builds up. (29)

It is very expensive to wear a mask. For one thing, no one–not even those I love–ever gets to see my face. There are moments when some hint of the real me bleeds through, but mostly I just confuse them. Worse yet, I never experience the love of others because when I wear a mask, only my mask receives love! (30)

Guilt is a good thing. God has graciously etched a benchmark in our hearts. A standard. God calls it a conscience. It roars to life in order to make us aware of sin we have committed. (30)

Whenever we sin and don't resolve that sin, either because we don't know how or choose not to, we release an inevitable force that will drain confidence in who we really are. (34)

The decision to ignore our sin creates unresolved sin, which is like an undiagnosed disease that quietly spreads poison throughout our bloodstream. (35)

Many people say, "I just don't know why I get so angry." Most often they don't know because they have never traced their anger back to its root—to unresolved sin, either from hurt or guilt. (40)

Our motive as followers of Christ will either keep us in unresolved sin and immaturity or it will free us into God's astonishing life for us. (44)

Many have spent their entire lives serving God, yet they are broken, defeated, lonely, and full of despair. They have embraced a theology of "rebuilding their old barns"; they have placed all their efforts in "trying to be good." (46)

So it is with us. God has given us the DNA of godliness. We are saints. Righteous. Nothing we do will make us more righteous than we already are. Nothing we do will alter this reality. God knows our DNA. He knows that we are "Christ in me." And now he is asking us to join him in what he knows is true! (48)

When we put on a mask due to unresolved sin, we lost our objectivity in a crisis. Everything revolves around this subjective, distorted, and idealized picture we now have of ourselves. We react out of that warped self-portrait. (53)

No matter how deep we try to bury it, unresolved sin doesn't die. It is always alive and well, inflaming more sin. Hiding creates a double whammy: It prevents us from maturing, and it makes us vulnerable to even more sin. (56)

If we could remember this simple principle—the more influence we have, the more we are tempted to hide our true self for fear we will lose that influence—we might become less susceptible to damage in organizations, churches, or workplaces can cause when they wear masks. (57)

It will always be true: the greater the privilege of influence, the greater the temptation to hide. (58)

Many of us hold this same presumption: God and I can work alone on my stuff. I can keep this private. There is no need for disclosure to anyone else. Hiding is a really dangerous plan. (59)

We believe that a major cause of burnout in Americans is not overwork, over- scheduling, or over activity. It is bitterness. The load from all the unhealed wounds we carry eventually takes its toll. The breakdowns are real and rest alone cannot heal them. (61)

Humility requires trust. It is her core feature. Humility believes that I can trust God to teach, direct, and protect me. Humility also believes that God has provided others in my life to do the same. (62)

This is why we define humility as trusting God and others with me. (62)

Pride shuts grace down. In contrast, humility allows us to boldly trust how God sees us, and it ushers us into this amazing room that specializes in resolving our sin, maturing us, and freeing us into God's destiny for us. (63)

Unresolved sin always causes preoccupation with our own lives. We want so badly to be mature and selfless, but our unresolved sin just keeps triggering self- centeredness. (67)

Mask- wearers are the loneliest people on the planet. (68)

But grace is much more than a theological position. Equally and simultaneously, grace is an actual environment, a realm, a present- tense reality that weaves around and through every moment of even our worst day. (69)

Grace wonderfully reorients all our relationships. (71)

People living in the middle of the inevitable effects of unresolved sin find it impossible to submit to another, to trust another, or to allow themselves to need another person's love, because they have to be in control. (71)

Controllers create a performance- driven environment through their endless demands on how people should live, behave, and conform. You know you're around a controller by the uneasy sense that the controller's acceptance of you can be broken without a moment's notice by a wrong behavior, a wrong allegiance, or a wrong opinion. Controllers create guarded, fearful and edgy environments. This controlling dominance in a home, marriage, a church, or a workplace will produce the very system Jesus condemned in the first century. Performance- driven cultures can never promote healing. Rather, they create more wounding. (73)

God's final objective for us is not resolving sin or "getting well." God's ultimate goal is maturing us into who he says we are, and then releasing us into the dreams he designed for us before the world began. (74)

Note well this sequence of truths: • We cannot profoundly influence others without maturing. • We cannot mature without finding resolution to our sin issues. • We cannot find resolution to our sin issues without trusting who God says we are. (75)

When we have unresolved sin, we rob others of the opportunity to heal and mature in those same areas of our unresolved sin. One of the greatest opportunities we have as humans is to give others hope that the painful

and destructive issues of life can be resolved. But if we have unresolved sin, we can never transfer the reality of that hope. We also cannot give direction or true correction to others struggling with sin when we are trapped in our own. (76- 77)

For every issue, every unresolved sin, every wound, God has created a gift specifically to meet that need, resolve that sin, and heal that wound. (83)

When we are ready to receive love, we will know, because we will begin to experience a process with the following steps: 1. I understand that I have needs. 2. I realize that having my needs met is experiencing love. 3. I freely admit that I desire to be loved. 4. I choose to let you love me. 5. I let you love me–on your terms, not mine. 6. I am fulfilled when I have experienced love. 7. I am now able to love others out of my own fulfillment. (85)

Our motive as followers of Christ will either keep us in unresolved sin and immaturity or free us into God's astonishing life for us. (88- 89)

Many of us have spent years perfecting our self- protection routines. We have carefully, stone by stone, erected a drafty castle that we thought would safeguard us from the pain of broken relationship. Some of us had "good reason" to erect that castle. But we now know that these walls have never truly protected us- - they have just kept us isolated and alone. (89)

People who are unable to trust will never experience love. Ever. (90)

Learning to let others love us on their terms is part of what it means to "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." (91)

So it is with us. God has given us the DNA of godliness. We are saints. Righteous. Nothing we do will make us more godly or saintly than we already are. Nothing we do will alter this reality. God knows our DNA. He knows that we are "Christ in me." And now he is asking us to join him in what he knows is true! (94)

In God's world, receiving love comes before giving love. (97)

The degree to which I let you love me is the degree to which you can love me, no matter how much love you have for me. (98)

Remember, trusting God with ourselves allows us to receive love–his love and the love of others. And because we're loved, we can face what we have done to others and ourselves without having to retreat to a cave of hiddenness. (103)

Humility requires trust. Humility believes that what God and others have to teach me is worthy of my dependent trust. (110)

So, if a relationship or community lacks grace, that relationship or community is low on trust. One simply cannot nurture a realm of grace without trust. (110)

God, here we go. Here is a sin I trust you to do something about. I am convinced I cannot deal with this sin. I trust what you did at the Cross is powerful enough, not only to bring me to heaven one day, but powerful enough that it can break this very sin's power that is now plaguing my life. (115)

Forgiveness breaks down walls, frees hearts, mends countries, restores families, and draws out the best in us. It can turn hatred into tenderness and the desire to destroy into a passion to protect. It is more powerful than any weapon, government, or wealth. (117)

When people forgive, their hearts are woven together in love. (118)

In contrast, an environment of grace is full of light—not darkness. Grace creates authenticity. Why is that important? Authenticity melts masks, and reveals our true face. (118)

We see one another as saints who sin, rather than as sinners who are saved. (121)

The Keys of Forgiveness:

KEY #1: Admit Something Happened!

KEY #2: Forgive the Consequences of the Act Done Against You • Harboring enables the sin that was committed against us to define us. Remember, unresolved sins are buried alive, including the ones done against us.

KEY #3: Tell God What Happened to You

KEY #4: Forgive the Offender for Your Benefit • Forgiveness has an order- - we must initiate the vertical transaction with God before we move into the horizontal transaction with others.

• How will we know if we've forgiven someone? When we know we can offer that person our love.

KEY #5: Forgive the Offender When They Repent, for Their Sake

• The one who sinned against us must repent for his or her own sake- - to be healed from sin. Upon the other person's repentance, we can forgive. We forgive our offender with the goal of restoring the relationship, not just resolving the conflict.

• We can pursue reconciliation, but we can't force it. We can't demand repentance.

• When we forgive the offender, for his or her sake, it prepares the way for the relationship to be restored.

KEY #6: Distinguish Between Forgiving and Trusting Your Offender

• As forgiveness prepares the way for the relationship to be restored, it is important to understand that forgiveness does not mean that we have to trust the other person yet.

• But forgiving the person and trusting the person again are always separate issues.

• Forgiveness carries the hope of renewed trust in the offender, but it does not mandate or guarantee it.

KEY #7: Seek Reconciliation, Not Just Conflict Resolution

• Reconciliation belongs to a completely different stratosphere than mere conflict resolution.

• Grace always invites rather than demands reconciliation. An apology may make the issue go away for the present time, but it won't heal the relationship. (120- 127)

Note well this sequence of truths: • We cannot profoundly influence others without maturing. • We cannot mature without finding resolution to our sin issues. • We cannot find resolution to our sin issues without trusting who God says we are. (125)

Resolving sin is not the ultimate goal of grace; maturing and destiny are the endgame—God's dreams for us.

(125)

For every issue, every unresolved sin, every wound, God has created a gift specifically to meet that need, resolve that sin, and heal that wound. (131)

As we've said all along, God's goal for us is never just healing, safety, rest, or even receiving love, as astounding and stunning as those gifts are. His goal is that we be released into these dreams we've not been able to shake all of our lives. (133)

Our weaknesses are actually those attitudes and behaviors that emerge because of the unresolved sin in us. (134)

Most of all, the mature have a childlike joy and freedom. (136)

Repentance isn't doing something about our sin; rather, it means admitting that we can't do anything about our sin. (152)

When our "repentance" functions in isolation rather than in community, it almost always indicates that we remain more concerned about personal appearances than the resolution of sin. (159)

Forgiveness forms the foundation of our relationship with God and sustains our relationships with each other. (173)

We cannot forgive until we admit we have been sinned against. (177)

We fully acknowledge the wrong done to us, and we place both the act and the consequences into his hands. The whole incident—the facts, thoughts, feelings, judgments, and resulting pain—moves out of our sphere into God's. (181)

As forgiveness prepares the way for the relationship to be restored, it is important to understand that forgiveness does not mean we have to trust the other person yet. (183)