"The prayer that precedes all prayers is - may it be the real me who prays."
- C. S. Lewis
Introduction

Something doesn’t feel right
Movie clips - illustrations of subtlety
Satan’s “Plan B” for Christians
You’re in the hands of an expert:
• my False Self credentials

It’s not so much that we tell lies, as that we live them.
- David Benner
False Self: Layers of an Onion

A Definition of the False Self (next slide)

Outer Marketing Layers:
- Charming - fear motivated
- Bluffing - pride motivated

Inner Identity Layers:
- Reaction
- Agreement / Fulfillment
- Resignation
The False Self: A Definition

❖ Any **Mask** we hide behind in order to get what we want in life and avoid what we don’t

❖ Any **Disguise** we construct to cover our pride, fear, wounds and needs

❖ Any **Identity** we accept other than our true identity in Christ - the forgiven and unconditionally beloved child of God
The Journey:

False  ✳  Real  ✳  True

į To the degree we acknowledge and understand our False Self...
į And live humbly and hopefully in the unavoidable tension our Real Self...
į God releases our True Self, deepening our intimacy with Him and others and propelling us toward our created potential
Philippians 2:13: “For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.”

“...while we were still [living in our false self], Christ died for us.”

A Helpful (& true) Perspective
A Journey Worth Taking...

- God desires Truth
- False Self - the ‘face’ of our Flesh
- God won’t relate to our False Self
- False Self - a massive drain of energy, potential, creativity and time
False Self - An Internal Divide

Psalms 51:6
Surely you desire **truth in the inmost parts**...

Psalms 86:11
Teach me **your way**, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth; **give me an undivided heart**, that I may fear your name.
False Self: The Costs

No man, for any considerable period, can wear one face to himself, and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be true.

- Nathaniel Hawthorne
What this process is not:
- Search & Destroy mission
- Looking for Scapegoats
- Excusing or Condoning Our Choices
- Navel-gazing
- Striving
False Self: Terminology

Biblical Terms: Greek word “sarx”

False Self - a key expression of:
the Flesh, the Old Self, the Old Nature, Living in the Flesh...

Popular & Psychological Terms:
Mask, the Impostor, Persona, the Poser, Neurotic Self, Illusory Self, Private Self
False Self in the Bible
An Elaborate Fig Leaf:

In Genesis 3:10 Adam said to God:

“I heard the sound of You in the Garden, and

• I was afraid...
• because I was naked...
• so I hid myself.”
Every one of us is shadowed by an illusory person: a false self. This is the man I want myself to be but who cannot exist, because God does not know anything about him. And to be unknown of God is altogether too much privacy. My false and private self is the one who wants to exist outside the reach of God’s will and God’s love – outside of reality and outside of life. And such a self cannot help but be an illusion… A life devoted to the cult of this shadow is what is called a life of sin...

- Thomas Merton
To the degree we acknowledge and understand our **False Self**...

And live humbly and hopefully in the unavoidable tension our **Real Self**...

God releases our **True Self**, deepening our intimacy with Him and others and propelling us toward our created potential
- Break -

Between False Self
Part I & Part II
Part II - The False Self

Nathan S. Shattuck
Soul Care Christian Counseling

“The prayer that precedes all prayers is - may it be the real me who prays.”

- C. S. Lewis
Review of False Self - Part I

- Satan’s PLAN B for Christians
- Definition of the False Self
- An Expression of our Flesh
- God Won’t Relate to our False Self
- Massive Drain of Energy & Potential

“It’s not so much that we tell lies... as that we live them.” - David Benner
The False Self: A Definition

- Any **Mask** we hide behind to get what we want in life and avoid what we don’t.
- Any **Disguise** we construct to cover our sin, wounds and needs.
- Any **Identity** we accept other than our real identity in Christ - the forgiven and unconditionally beloved child of God.
The Journey:

False ✧ Real ✧ True

✧ To the degree we acknowledge and understand our False Self...

✧ And live humbly and hopefully in the unavoidable tension our Real Self...

✧ God releases our True Self, deepening our intimacy with Him and others and propelling us toward our created potential
False Self : The Matrix

- Like a splinter in your soul...
- No one can be told, you have to see it for yourself...
- First, we must pinpoint your location
- Your very own life-sucking Red Pod
False Self: Why it Exists
Psychological Factors:

- A Defense Against Pain
- East of Eden: Pain in a Fallen World
- A Constructed Self
- The Story of Little “Timmy”
- Disproportionate Staying Power
False Self: Why it Exists
Spiritual Factors:

❖ Original Sin in a Fallen World:
  ❖ Pride: Autonomy, Self-Reference, Control
  ❖ Fear: Anxious Striving, Panicked Response to Vulnerability

❖ Adam: “I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid” (Gen 3:10)

❖ Back to “Timmy” now an Adult
There is no substance under the things with which my False Self is clothed. I wind experiences around myself and cover myself with pleasures and glory like bandages in order to make myself perceptible to myself and to the world. As if I could only become visible when something visible covered my surface. I am hollow...and when my bandages are gone there will be nothing left of me but my own nakedness, emptiness and hollowness to tell me that I am my own mistake.

- Thomas Merton
Creating the Illusion of Substance
Creating the Illusion of Substance
False Self & Masculinity

- Male False Self ‘Types’:
  - The ‘Take Care of Me’ Little Boy
  - The Passively Aggressive Nice Guy
  - The Self-Sufficient Distant Man
  - The ‘Bull in China Shop’ Macho Jerk
# False Self: Two Broad Categories

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<th>Motivation for False Self</th>
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Our Fortress became Our Prison

To do for yourself the best you have it in you to do – to grit your teeth and clench your fists in order to survive the world at its harshest and worst – is, by that very act, to be unable to let something be done for you and in you that is more wonderful still.

The trouble with steeling yourself against the harshness of reality is that the same steel that secures your life against being destroyed secures your life also against being opened up and transformed.”

- Frederick Buechner
Our Fortress became Our Prison

The Joke’s On Us:

- Can’t Receive Love
- Doesn’t Trust Others
- Tons of Wasted Energy
- A Life of Anger & Resentment
To look away from profound disappointment requires that we lose touch with the liveliest part of who we are. Protection against pain blunts our capacity to love.

- Larry Crabb
Our Fortress became Our Prison

“Skills Learned In Danger...
...Require Danger to Be Useful “
Our Fortress became Our Prison

Skills that “beautifully equip us to deal with a world that no longer exists.”

“What got you here, won’t get you there”

“The system you now have in place is perfectly designed to yield the results you are now getting...”
Sooner or later we must distinguish between what we are not and what we are. We must accept the fact that we are not what we would like to be. We must cast off our false, exterior self like the cheap and showy garment that it is. We must find our real self, in all it’s elemental poverty but also in its great and very simple dignity: created to be the child of God, and capable of loving with something of God’s own sincerity and His unselfishness.

- Thomas Merton
Next: The Real Self

To the degree we honestly face our False Self...

And live humbly and hopefully in our Real Self...

God releases our True Self, deepening our intimacy with Him and others and propelling us toward our created potential.