

Altar Ego

You love to seen by men - In all the public places
And you always pick the best of the seats
You've got the social graces
And you look both ways before you pray
Just to see who's watching you today

It's just your Altar Ego - and it's so hard to know
Beneath the piety and hidden vanity begins to show
It's just your Altar Ego - and you don't even know
And you won't even grow 'til His Spirit strikes a blow
To your Altar Ego

Last month most of our men attended a Men's Tent Revival. The theme mostly concentrated on becoming the Christ centered man we are called to be. Every Tuesday our men's Bible study walks through the book of Proverbs and we are following that same theme. Then another thought came to mind about Halloween coming soon and all the masks that will see. This all reminded of another great song from the Christian Band PETRA.

As a kid who didn't love dressing up in costumes. I have many fond Halloween costume memories from being Green Lantern to a McDonald's Big Mac cardboard container. We never worried about what Halloween stood for because we were having fun. However, I distinctly remember there *was* something I did not love about those plastic masks once they were on. It was *suffocating*. The holes in the mask were small and made it hard to breathe, speak, or see clearly. And even though I proudly pranced around the neighborhood collecting my treats and showing off, once I was back home I was thankful to take off that mask and just *breathe*.

Most people are still wearing a mask. Today the mask looks a lot different—it covers emotions, sins, weaknesses, and fear of judgment—but *if we are really honest*, it is just as suffocating as a Halloween mask is. Still, we fear ripping off that mask for all to see because we would feel...well...*inadequate, exposed, vulnerable, and flawed*. And the truth is...I am *all* those things. But ripping off that mask and letting you see who I really am gives me room to *breathe*, room for God to move, to use me in the same way He created me—in His image. It also gives people room to judge me and all my flaws, **but I am willing to take that risk to stand before you as who I really am rather than a fake, plastic, masked version of my walk with Christ.** I want to be brave enough to rip off my mask, not so you can see my face, but so you can see His. Pride, insecurity, offense, perfection, and strength; these are all masks we wear. And there are so many more.

Masks are so easy to put on and so unbelievably hard to take off. But when we wear them and refuse to remove them for fear of *being seen*, we are not only blocking the world from seeing our beauty, but our Father's as well (Matthew 5:16).

Fight the Good Fight,

Bro. Andrew