

# 2023 DANIEL FAST

## R.E.A.L.

Relationships Everyone's Always Looking for

### DAY 13

**Romans 12:9-12** [The Voice Translation] *"Love others well, and **don't hide behind a mask**; love authentically. Despise evil; pursue what is good as if your life depends on it. <sup>10</sup> Live in true devotion to one another, loving each other as sisters and brothers. Be first to honor others by putting them first. <sup>11</sup> Do not slack in your faithfulness and hard work. Let your spirit be on fire, bubbling up and boiling over, as you serve the Lord. <sup>12</sup> Do not forget to rejoice, for hope is always just around the corner. Hold up through the hard times that are coming and devote yourselves to prayer. <sup>13</sup> Share what you have with the saints, so they lack nothing; take every opportunity to open your life and home to others."*

Loving others well involves individuals not hiding behind a mask. The word "well" in the Greek language means, sincere. But originally it was a word that meant "to pretend" and "inexperienced in the art of acting." Loving others well implores us to not put on a mask and pretend that we care.

To "hide behind a mask" doesn't allow others that you are ministering God's love to the opportunity to get to know the "real" you. Hiding behind a mask hinders people from connecting with one another. We will not be able to effectively articulate and demonstrate the love of God to those in need of His love if we ourselves put on a mask that hinders us from building relationships and making friends.

The Church, for too long, has been criticized by those inside and outside of the Church as being fake. Their comment is that the Church doesn't really care. We, you, and I, need to change that perspective. We need to love others well, refusing to put on a mask and hiding behind a false narrative of love and devotion when that is not really the motive for what we do.

Hiding behind a mask not only hinders others from getting to know us, but it also hinders you and I in forging new relationships, strengthening current friendships, and the possibility of renewing passed or even broken relationships. People want to know the real you. If you find yourself wearing a mask, pull it off and let's see what God has in store for others who get to know the real you as you love others well.

It's time to build Relationships Everyone's Always Looking for!

## Worship Song:

"Knowing You" (All I Once held Dear) – From the PK 202 virtual Event

<https://youtu.be/c1-sviAzdhw>

## "Don't hide behind a mask."

Quote by Pastor Rick Warren, *"Wearing a mask wears you out. Faking it is fatiguing. The most exhausting activity is pretending to be what you know you aren't."*

## Scripture Readings:

2 Corinthians 4:1-2 [The Message Bible] *"Since God has so generously let us in on what He is doing, we're not about to throw up our hands and walk off the job just because we run into occasional hard times. <sup>2</sup> **We refuse to wear masks** and play games. We don't maneuver and manipulate behind the scenes. And we don't twist God's Word to suit ourselves."*

James 1:22 [New International Version] *"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. **Do what it says.**"*

## Prayer:

Father, I do not desire to be something or to be someone I am not. It is not my hearts desire to live with wearing a mask that hinders people from knowing the real me. I want to love others well and I realize that I cannot do that if I am not truly able to be myself. Help me to understand who I am and who I am to become. I pray for all the people who know me to know the real me. I will no longer wear a mask, deceiving myself and others. Thank you for your power in my life. From this day forward anyone I know or can know will be able to experience a relationship with me, minus the mask. In the Name of Jesus I pray, amen!

## Today, I need to pray for:

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## What is God telling me today?

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