ESSAY · JUNE 16, 2016

Are you open to correction?

Written by Bill Perkins

If we're not open to correction then we’re inauthentic. The religious leaders of Jesus' day had developed an elaborate system of rituals (masks) that enabled them to appear better on the outside than they were on the inside. Over time they convinced themselves they were truly righteous people since they so diligently obeyed all of their man-made rules.

Jesus unleashed his harshest words on them because they professed a high ethic but didn't put it into practice. He told them, "Even so you outwardly appear righteous to people, but inwardly you’re full of hypocrisy and iniquity. “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous 30 and say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we wouldn’t have joined them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’" (Matthew 23:27-28)

Like Bad Breath

You've probably noticed that hypocrisy is one of those sins most of us can spot in others without seeing it in ourselves. It's like bad breath. If somebody else has it you want to keep your distance. But nobody can tell if their own breath is sweet or sour.

Look in a Mirror

Now, go look in a mirror. As you gaze at your reflection, ask yourself, "Do I have weaknesses others can see that I refuse to face. Weaknesses I pretend are absent or under control? Or, am I the kind of person who is comfortable with my strengths and weaknesses and allows others to see both?"

If after gazing at your image in the mirror you're not sure, ask your spouse or a close friend, "Do you see weaknesses in my character that you don't think I see?" Becoming like Jesus demands we seek to be the same on the inside as we appear on the outside. Achieving such character isn't a solo act; it requires the support of family and friends. While the process may be painful, it's worth it.