

“Get the Log out of your Eye” - Matthew 7:1-5

Pastor Burt Garwood - April 23, 2017

Have you ever had a sliver stuck in your skin? It hurts and it's difficult to get out...and sometimes requires a little bit of digging into your skin. We've all had dust blow into our eye. Isn't it amazing how a tiny speck of dust can cause incredible discomfort to your eye?

- Keeping this in mind, it enhances how we read the following statement from Jesus: *“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?”* (Matthew 7:3)
- We pretty much all run for the water faucet and the mirror to wash a speck out of our eye. It's kind of a traumatic experience. There is no denying...no overlooking the fact that a speck of dust is causing so much discomfort.
- That's why Jesus' statement is so powerful. You've got to be pretty focused on someone else's issues that you forget about the plank in your eye.
- That's the problem with being self-righteous. You're blind to your own faults while all the time, you're nit-picking another person. When you do this, you have a bad case of “plankeye.”

I. Plankeye

- Pinkeye: An infection of the mucous membrane that lines the inner surface of the eyelid.
- Plankeye: It's obvious. It sticks out like, well, a large plank protruding from your eye.

In John 8, we hear about some people who had a serious case of plankeye...

- The religious leaders who opposed Jesus brought a woman to him who had been caught in sin. They wanted to see how Jesus would respond, knowing the law was that this woman should be stoned to death.
- But Jesus used it as an opportunity to teach the fact that all people sin, and that we should be careful not to condemn others, while all the time we are filled with sin ourselves. *“If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.”* (John 8:7)
- These self-righteous religious hypocrites were stunned. I can imagine the silence...all you can hear is the sound of stone after stone gently falling from each hand, as each person, convicted by his own sin, turned and walked away.

Some people need to remove a critical, negative, self-righteous attitude that leads to unnecessary conflict.

- It's selfish pride, overlooking or covering up your faults, denial, feelings of superiority, over-inflated ego, a tendency to point at others' faults without first taking care of your own.
- It's the person who is never wrong...they are always right...and you're always wrong. Do you know someone like that?
- You might be thinking, “Pastor, that's extreme. I don't do any of that.” You're fooling yourself if you think you aren't guilty of this at some level.
- Do you have plankeye? Truth is, we all do, in some shape or form.

II. The Cure for Plankeye

- Luke 6:36 Jesus said, *“Be merciful just as your Father in heaven is merciful.”*
- Proverbs 19:11 *“It is to a man's glory to overlook an offense.”*

Here are 5 things you can do...

1. Take an honest look at yourself, by letting God search you (Psalm 139:23-24).
2. Ask others to point out your mistakes/sins.
 - There is something powerful about having the right type of friends who you give permission to, ahead of time, to call you out on things.
3. Take ownership of your mistakes.
 - Too many people play the victim, deny their involvement or place the blame on someone else: *“It's all your fault. You forced me to do this.”*
 - Jesus is very clear: *“You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye.”* (Matthew 7:5) He's telling you to admit your sin and own up to it.
 - You go to the person you're in conflict with, admit your mistake, and let them know you realize your shortcomings. Tell that person how you contributed to the problem. Confess to them and apologize.
 - Don't just generally apologize: *“I'm sorry if I've hurt you in anyway...”* That is so shallow! Admit the specific things that caused them pain. *“I realize that I've...”*
4. Forgiveness in Christ. The grace of God awaits those who follow through with this (2 Corinthians 7:10). Ask forgiveness: *“Would you please forgive me?”*
 - Never make a confession to get a burden off your chest, gain comfort for yourself, or minimize the consequences of your sin.
 - Rather, your goal should always be to glorify God and bring healing to the person you have wronged. The person you are involved with should be brought closer to Jesus because of the process.
5. Change your attitude and your behavior (Romans 12:2 & James 1:23)
 - Part of the healing time is their watching your behavior over time, as your consistent good behavior builds trust and heals wounds.
6. Accept the consequences. There are consequences for our actions.
 - An apology doesn't get us off the hook. Discipline is good for us (Proverbs 15:32, 19:19, Luke 19:8)

Do you ever wonder why the other person clams up or walks away or simply gets upset when you confront them? It's because you started out wrong...you made it all about their sin while overlooking yours. Start with these steps. When all this is done...when you have removed the plank from your eye...then you are ready to gently confront them with their wrongs.

Leading another person to repentance means that you yourself need to have walked that path in order to show them the way.