

Step Two: Remove Your Plank

Scripture Reading — Matthew 7:1-5

“You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”

—Matthew 7:5 —

Kristy and Matt enjoyed confessing each other’s sins. For every failure on their own part, they eagerly described a bigger one to blame on their partner. The peace in their relationship was decreasing, and their hostility was increasing.

“Do not judge, or you too will be judged” is one of the most misquoted verses in the Bible. People use it to escape criticism. But Jesus is not saying we cannot criticize one another. He is saying that first we must deal with our own wrongdoing. In fact, the “plank” in our own life may be greater in its sinful effect when compared with the “speck” in another person’s.

Only after we take responsibility for our faults can we help others see theirs. We must confront our own sin, confess it, ask for forgiveness, and get it under control. Then we can better help someone else deal with their problems. If we don’t, we will always have a selfish, distorted view of the issues we’re fighting over.

How can we remove our planks? We must ask God to reveal our sins. He sees us perfectly. We must also study God’s Word to discern where we are falling short of obeying his commands. It’s powerful to expose our innermost thoughts and desires. Finally, spiritually mature friends can help open our eyes to see where we have failed.

Prayer

“Search me, God, and know my heart … See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Psalm 139:23-24). Amen.

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