

## Relating to One Another as Sinners

**SCRIPTURE** Matthew 7:4-5: “Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.”

### APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Does the way we treat one another make much of Christ in the gospel? Describe how you would like to improve in this area specifically as it relates to this passage.

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2. Reflecting on Christ’s illustration, consider the following statement: “The log should blind us to the speck, but instead the speck blinds us to the log.” What is the point being made? Discuss how you might remedy this tendency. Read Matthew 18:21-35 and describe how this same principle is demonstrated there (hint: the sum of 10,000 talents is roughly equivalent to 5 lifetimes worth of daily wages; 100 denarii is roughly 3 months of daily wages).

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3. Discuss the contrasts between the meaning of a “speck” and a “log” from the sermon. The “log” is not noticed or “seen according to the mind”—what significance does this point have? The example of David was given in the sermon. How can you apply these principles to your daily thought-life?

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4. The question was posed in the sermon: “Why are we acutely irritated by the faults of others and so dreadfully blind to our own?” Discuss the answer given: “Evidently because we get along quite well with sin—just not when it’s in others.” Discuss also the question: “If we are truly ‘seeking first the

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kingdom of God and His righteousness', wouldn't our own sin be a greater obstacle to us than the sins of others?"

5. Jesus calls the man with the "log" seeking to help the one with the "speck" a hypocrite. It was stated that this is because he pretends to show a concern for righteousness. But if this were the case, wouldn't he be concerned about the "log" of unrighteousness in himself? From the sermon, what are the two things hypocrites draw attention to? This is a form of self-righteousness—that repulsive pride that makes much of self in the name of Christ. Discuss how you can practically take steps to make much of Christ instead of self when you encounter sin in another (not just in word and deed, but in thought).

6. Christ is illustrating that the whole paradigm is off center in the way we naturally relate to one another as sinners. When our view of sin starts with man, self inevitably: (a) makes his own standards; and (b) is more critical of others (as Jesus illustrated). But if we begin with God in our assessment of sin, then sin: (a) is judged by His standard, and (b) is felt more critically within (our own heart). Discuss what starting with God versus starting with man in our assessment of sin looks like (see also Psalm 51:4; 41:4; Luke 15:21). How does this change the way we relate to one another as sinners?

7. After we "take the log out of" our own eyes, what two things are we then able to do? We must remember that discernment requires clarity. How might this affect the way we respond to the sin of others?

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8. What is meant by the statement: “The speck still matters”? Discuss the following statement: “We have made it a sin to confront sin. If only we were as opposed to committing it as we are to confronting it.”

9. All that we do as a church should be purposed to make much of Christ. This includes lovingly helping one another against sin. We gather weekly to this end (Hebrews 10:23-24). We sing songs together to this end (Colossians 3:16). We devote ourselves together to the preaching of God’s word (2 Timothy 4:2). We exhort one another in our relationships within the church (Hebrews 3:13). But we must remember that we approach a brother or sister in sin not as a judge to condemn them but with humility, love, grace and concern to win them (Matthew 18:15). Just as the eye analogy suggests, we must be sensitive—sensitivity is essential in addressing someone else’s sin. Read Galatians 6:1-2. How does this passage teach us the biblical model of helping one another in love when one is caught in sin?

10. Read 1 Timothy 1:15. Do you believe like the apostle Paul? How can we view people who sin with a spirit of grace and concern rather than with a spirit of condemnation?

11. We are to be examples of Christ to the world. Not by thinking lightly of offenses and sin. Instead, we are to be like Christ and extend ourselves to remedy sin—to deal with sin in love. The beauty of Christ’s character should attract us here. The only one with the perfect right to judge came not to judge but to be judged. How does this truth affect your heart? How does it inform your thinking about this passage? How can you apply it to the discipline of your mind when personally offended or when you discover the sin of another?

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12. Does the way we treat one another make much of Christ in the gospel? How can we make much of Christ when a brother or sister sins? Describe how you would like to improve in this area specifically as it relates to this passage.

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