

How to Be an Excellent Disciple, Humility

Luke 6:41-42

November 5, 2017

We're coming to the conclusion on the Sermon on the Mount. And we're actually in a little series here at the end of this Sermon on the Mount, identifying principles that lead us to excellence in discipleship. Jesus, as we've been saying, he gives us here four principles of discipleship in this final section, Luke 6:39-49.

It starts with the principle of authority, which we looked at last week, verses 39-40. The principle of humility, verses 41-42. That's where we're going to focus on today. The principle of fecundity, which is not a word we use a lot, but it means fruit bearing, verses 43-45. And then finally, the principle of fidelity. Fidelity to Christ, verses 46-49.

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If we understand those principles of discipleship, authority, humility, fecundity, and fidelity, and we walk according to those principles, we will grow into maturity, as good and faithful and joyful disciples of Jesus Christ. We'll be building our lives on a solid foundation.

We started our series last time by considering the principle of authority. We looked at the consequences of following ungodly authority. They're grave. We learned the principle of influence involved in following authority. And we considered the confidence that we can have in following good and godly authority, which puts us in a position, as we're saying, to thrive spiritually under qualified and godly leadership.

That was last week. Today, we're considering this second principle of pursuing excellence in discipleship, a principle of humility and it's set in contrast, really, to the sin of pride, which is manifest in spiritual hypocrisy. Jesus takes this metaphor of spiritual of vision, whether blindness or being able to see clearly, he takes this metaphor just a little bit further and frankly, he paints a pretty funny, almost cartoonish picture for us.

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And take a look at the verses there. We'll start reading in verse 39 and just read through the verses we're going to cover today. "He also told them a parable," verse 39. "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.

"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? How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye," and, "then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye."

You may remember back to last week. We read from Matthew 23 just as an illustration in how Jesus indicted the sins of the Pharisees. Matthew 23, he repeatedly accused the Pharisees there of spiritual blindness. They were blind guides, blind fools,

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blind men. Finally, he just says, "You blind Pharisee." In that passage, five times, he accused them of being spiritually blind.

But Jesus also used another moniker for the scribes and the pharisees there in Matthew 23. You remember what he called them commonly? Hypocrites. Hypocrites. Six times in Matthew 23, Jesus designated Israel's false spiritual leaders identifying them of by their characteristic sin. And every time it was the same designation. He started out the indictment this way, "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees," comma, "hypocrites." The exact same statement repeated six times.

Evidently, Jesus did not like hypocrisy. It's not just Jesus that doesn't like hypocrisy, is it? It's not just the absolutely perfect holy one who hates hypocrisy. Even for us, as defiled, depraved sinners, whether redeemed or not, we all recognize and hate the sin of hypocrisy. How many times have you heard non-Christians speak of their own opposition to the church on the basis of this moral superiority, they say, quote, "I could never join a church because it's filled with," what? "Hypocrites."

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And yet, while they moralize at you about religious hypocrisy in you and others, you know, obviously insinuating you yourself who go into a church are a hypocrite too. They fail to notice the wickedness in their own hearts, don't they? They overlook that. They overlook the depth of sins in their own lives. Oh, yes and including this sin of hypocrisy.

Lately, the internet has been flooded with news stories about Hollywood people. Producers, agents, powerbrokers, actors, they're all accusing one another. The accusations are flying all over the place about the rich and powerful and they're making inappropriate advances, sexual advances on those who seek acting roles in places in the business. There are cases of blatant sexual harassment, abuse of power and position to prey upon others who are weaker, smaller, even some charges of rape. Even some incidents with minors. Homosexuality, all of that.

We're not surprised, really, to find out that Hollywood's a cesspool. But the issue that concerns us is this issue of hypocrisy. Because so often whenever some reporter or journalist gives some actor a voice, we all have to sit there and endure a

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lecture about treating others with dignity and respect. Oh, yes, and definitely women with dignity and respect. We get a, a lecture about the decency and normalcy of loose sexual morals and homosexuality in particular.

And while all these Hollywood people have been moralizing at us, they've been abusing and degrading America's daughters, both on and, now we find out, off the screen and behind the screen.

Homosexual men have been preying upon the young. The wealthy and the powerful using their position to take advantage of the weak. The degree and consistency of their sinfulness is appalling. Level of blatant hypocrisy is pretty staggering, but the silence in confessing the guilt of it all is a deafening silence.

But we expect that kind of behavior from the world, don't we? None of that is new news to us. What we're concerned about is the church. The closer hypocrisy comes to the church, that's when we start to feel uncomfortable and rightly so. How sad it is when hypocrisy is exposed and identified in the church. And when the scandal is publicized and light is shed upon the

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blatant contradiction, it brings a reproach upon the church, upon Christianity and yes, even upon our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ted Haggard, as president of the National Association of Evangelicals and pastor of New Life Church in Colorado Springs. And he was the voice representing evangelicals, routinely condemning homosexuality as a part of the platform. But he was exposed in 2006, as you all know, by a male prostitute for carrying on an illicit relationship over more than a three-year span. The very behavior that he had publicly condemned, he was involved in.

Mark Driscoll, lead pastor of the Seattle based Mars Hill churches, president of the Acts 29 Church planting network, and resurgence and all the rest. He touted biblical manhood, integrity in ministry, godly authority. He was forced to resign all his positions in 2014 due to anger, misogyny, plagiarism, deceitful publishing practices, abuse of authority.

Tullian Tchividjian, grandson of Billy Graham, his full name is actually William Graham Tullian Tchividjian. He cut off the

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first two names and wanted to just go by Tullian Tchividjian. Would that he could have followed the moral integrity of his grandfather. Tullian was once the senior pastor of the famous Coral Ridge Presbyterian where the eminent D. James Kennedy, pastored faithfully for so many years. Tchividjian taught a less judgmental view of Christianity. He said, "Don't confront sin or command people to grow in holiness. That's judgmental. That's moralism. That's pharisaical. Just focus on what God has done for you. Be enamored with grace, motivated by joy and gratitude. God will lead you to righteousness without any effort."

It all sounded really, really good. Got a lot of followers and fans. Until his multiple adulteries came to light in 2015. Tchividjian tried to destroy his wife's reputation publicly, blame her for his adulteries. And then he divorced her. He's now married to one of his paramours and he's also returned to pastoral ministry, just like Ted Haggard and just like Mark Driscoll; all three of them are back in the saddle, back in pastoral ministry.

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Several evangelical counselors, men that I once considered to be faithful voices, they've had a hand in comforting and advising and vouching for the credibility of these fallen men. They've actually used their influence to help restore them into pastoral ministry, and thus, they share in the sin of restoring unqualified hypocrites into ministry.

In fact, they're telling us that Haggard and Driscoll and Tchividjian are now better pastors precisely because they have fallen into sin. Having gone through so much, having faced such embarrassment and shame, all paraded before the public, having endured this public scandal, these men can really feel people's pain. They're now able to be so much more compassionate and caring than those pastors who've never fallen.

There's one whom Hebrews 7:26 describes as holy, innocent, and undefiled. God seems to think that that one, having not fallen, would make the best of pastors, calling him The Great Shepherd of the sheep, Hebrews 13:20. Jesus has, by the Holy Spirit, through his holy apostles, he has provided standards of character for those who would ascend into positions of spiritual

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leadership in the church and living a life of hidden sin, living a life as a hypocrite is disqualifying.

Now sometimes people who hear me publicly naming names, as I just did, they ask me why I would do that. Some believe it's unkind, unnecessary, even unloving to attach a name and a face with spiritual charlatism and hypocrisy. It's judging and we should never do that.

I want you to imagine for a moment that you develop an, an irritation in your eye. It starts small. It's something that's gotten into your eye. And that itching has given way to burning. Now your vision's getting blurry. It's just not going away. So you visit the eye doctor's office, and they prescribe for you a minor procedure to have an ophthalmologist come into remove the irritant and to clear up your vision.

When the ophthalmologist arrives, you can't help but notice there is a six-inch railroad spike protruding out of his eye socket. He carries on normal chit chat as you fill out forms and he prepares his surgical tools. It's as if the spike didn't

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bother him at all. You're understandably concerned. You're totally puzzled and you're even a bit skeptical. How is he able to see well enough to perform a rather delicate surgery on something that really means a lot to me? Like my eyeball.

So you try to ask very delicately, how long has that railroad spike been sticking in your eye there, Doc? And how has he learned to perform surgery with such a significant impediment to his own vision? He turns to you and asks, what railroad spike? Let me ask you something. Are you going to stay in the chair for one more minute? Let him perform surgery on one of the most delicate parts of your body? Such an irreversible consequence to the condition of your vision should he get it wrong, which is likely?

What if after you leave the office, you conduct a bit of research, discover that he's destroyed the vision of many patients before you? Are you going to recommend that guy? Would you warn others using just principles, but not naming names? Or would you name names? You know who's going to be first, the first to expose this guy as a quack, as dangerous? Other

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ophthalmologists. Why? Because they don't want their good profession to be sullied by a guy like that. They don't want patients whom they care for to be ruined.

Now let me ask you a different question. What's the more sensitive and consequentially important part of us as human beings? Our sensitive eyes or our sensitive souls? In our time, in this secularized, materialistic age, we've placed a whole lot more value on body parts, which are temporal, rather than on our souls, which will live forever somewhere.

So you're going to have to excuse me when every now and again I warn you about bad spiritual physicians. The destruction of souls by blind physicians is happening all the time and that's exactly what Jesus is telling us here in Luke 6:39 and following. It's his concern to alert us to the reality of spiritual blindness and to the influence and consequence of following blind guides.

And here in verses 40, 41-42, Jesus addresses the nature of spiritual blindness, which is more dangerous than any physical

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blindness. Those who are physically blind, they know it. They understand. They realize they need at least one of those canes that helps them to navigate around obstacles. They need someone to lead them through dangerous areas. But those who are spiritually blind, according to verses 41 to 42, their condition is hidden from them because of what Jesus describes here as the sin of hypocrisy. Spiritual hypocrites do not realize they're blind. They think they see clearly.

In John 9, after Jesus had healed a man born blind and he was examined before the Pharisees, you may remember that the Pharisees, end of the chapter, they heard Jesus talking about spiritual blindness. And they overheard this, and got the sense, that he may be talking of them. And so they asked Jesus, "Are we also blind?" Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt, but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains."

That is to say, the sin of hypocrisy deceives those who are spiritually blind. Incredibly, they actually think they can see clearly. Listen, like that blind ophthalmologist I described, they want to keep on doing surgery. They don't realize they're

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blind. And that's what makes hypocrisy such a danger for Jesus' disciples, who will influence other people. We've got make our, make sure that our own vision is clear, that we're dealing with our own sins before we help other people.

You'll notice in verses 41 to 42 that Jesus had turned from the parable in verse 39 and the principle in verse 40, both of those, the parable, the principle, they're non-specific statements, generalizing, but in these verses, verses 41 and 42, Jesus is now speaking directly to us. He's teaching and exhorting us, his disciples. Notice there, the second person address and it's, I could tell you in the Greek, it's singular.

He's speaking to each of us individually. He says, "Why do you," that's singular, each one of you individually. "Why do you," personally, "see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but you," personally, individually, you "do not notice the log that's in your own eye?" This is us he's talking about. The verbs here are in the present tense, they're indicating habitual practice. Something that you and I, Jesus is saying, that we can be guilty of as a matter of course.

When we're practicing this sin that he describes here, that sized sins, we're guilty of hypocrisy, verse 42, he says it, "You hypocrite." So Jesus has turned from the blind leaders of the blind and now he's speaking directly to those who would follow him as disciples. He doesn't want his disciples acting like the rest of the world's religious leaders.

Most notably in their day, the scribes, and the Pharisees, they embodied this; they're the prototypical hypocrites. And Jesus is warning us, his true disciples, about the subtle sin of hypocrisy, which can creep up on all of us. Jesus wants us to be wary lest we become guilty of this sin of hyp, hypocrisy. For every would-be disciple of Jesus Christ, and especially for those of us in leadership, for every Christian leader who would influence others.

And by the way, Christians, every single Christian has some form of leadership because you know the Gospel and others don't. So you're going to be leading them by teaching them. Just by sharing the Gospel, you're leading. So Jesus, for every would-be

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disciple, for everybody with leadership, with everybody with influence, there must be no prideful hypocrisy. We must, instead, pursue the regular habit of practicing personal repentance. The habit of practicing a lifestyle of self-confrontational humility.

So let's consider the text before us. And learn to be wary of this tendency toward spiritual hypocrisy that's in all of us. That non-Christian who moralizes to you about sin of hypocrisy in the church, you've just got to say, you're right, but we're growing. You're right, but we're repenting. You're right, but we're confessing. What about you? Jesus Christ has forgiven us of all our hypocrisy and sins whether specks or beams. All of it is taken away and crucified in the cross. And that's what makes this Gospel such good news. That's what you need, my friend.

So we want to be wary, though, of this tendency toward hypocrisy. We want to find out how to promote spiritual humility, teachability. The practice of honest self-examination. Because this principle of humility, this is what is going to make us useful and productive as Christians. It's going to make us careful and obedient. It's going to make us genuine

disciples, maturing disciples of Jesus Christ. That's what we all need to be.

So like a divine ophthalmologist, really, Jesus Christ, the great physician, he's now teaching us here how to diagnose hypocrisy in verse 41, how to identify the symptoms of hypocrisy in verse 42. And then he provides us with the antidote to hypocrisy at the end of verse 42. So first point for this morning. Let's talk about the diagnosis. You can write down the word, identification, you can write, diagnosis, if you want to.

But it's, let's, identification and put, dash, the hidden cause of hypocrisy. Identification, number one, point number one, identification—the hidden cause of hypocrisy. Here's the bottom line: the hidden cause of spiritual hypocrisy is spiritual pride. Not too difficult. Hidden cause of spiritual hypocrisy is spiritual pride.

Look at verse 41. This famous metaphor of the mote and the beam. Mote, by the way is just a, I used to think when I was a kid when I heard about the mote and the beam, I used to think of a

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mote around the castle. And I thought, how does that make any sense at all? It doesn't. Mote is like an old word for a speck or a piece of sand or dust or whatever. Okay, so mote and the beam.

"Why do you see," verse 41, "the speck that's in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?" So again, this is a cartoonish picture. It's a ridiculously unreal contrast. Because no one walks around with a literal beam sticking out of their face. You can't, you would never see that. It's a laughable cartoonish picture.

A speck refers to something that's pretty insignificant. That's easy to see. It's a, the word *karphos* can refer to a, something as large as a piece of straw or chaff or, you know on the large end, it can be like a really small chip of wood like when you're whittling a stick and that little shaving comes off. It could be that big, but on the small end, it's more like a tiny piece of dust that's floating around in your drink. You notice it and you're like, Oh, I'm going to get that; kinda tap the surface and get that thing out of there. That's the idea.

In either case, whether it's a large or small *karphos*, *karphos* is something that's on the surface of your eye. And if it's on the surface of your eye, it's going to cause a little bit of irritation. But the log, by contrast, is quite noticeable, like that railroad spike. And it's very relevant. The word *dokos* is the word here. It's, refers to a large beam that was maybe if picture like in an old castle, a beam that was meant to bar the door or the gate to the city. That's the size.

Or it could be like a heavy timber that was used in roof construction. I remember when the guys were dealing with pulling out the walls back there behind the door, there's this huge beam and you do not want to cut into that beam because that's a loadbearing beam. You pull that thing out, this whole ceiling comes down like, you know, that Philistine hall on Samson. So we do not want that to happen.

But that thing's sticking out of your eye, that's noticeable, right? Loadbearing beam of the house, that's the idea of a *dokos*. One, one source actually cited the use of *dokos* by

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Josephus, who used the word to describe a, "a huge beam of wood," this is a quotation, "huge beam of wood as long and thick as the mast of a ship that was used by Vespasian for a battering ram."

So imagine this mast of a ship, Vespasian says, take that thing down and let's make that into a battering ram. This massive beam was armed with a huge piece of iron on the front that they would cast in the shape of a ram's head and the battering ram was so heavy and powerful that even one blow from it caused the mighty walls of Jerusalem to shake. Imagine that ship's mast battering ram sticking out of someone's eye socket. You get the picture.

Look, the only way you don't notice that, the only way you don't feel the pain of something that sizeable sticking out of your eye, the only way you don't notice the damage or recognize the significance that is to your vision as an impediment, the only way you don't notice that is due to one of two things. You're either dead, or you're dull.

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You're either a spiritual corpse, that is, you're not a Christian at all and thus, have no spiritual life, no feeling, no conscience, no spiritual nerves alerting you to the presence of such a large and significant foreign object or you've drifted so far from Christ in your sin that you're insulated from all spiritual feeling by your pride and your self-centeredness.

So you're either spiritually dead, or you're spiritually dull. But either way, it's a problem. And it's going to have an effect on the way you're able, are able or not able to see things. Repentance is in order, right? You simply must get the beam out of your eye.

So that first contrast, it's the obvious difference between a *karphos* and a *dokos*. It's the difference between the size and the relevance of sin represented by the mote and the beam. But there's another contrast here. It's a contrast to the verbs in verse 41. "Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is your own eye?"

See versus *notice*, it's another contrast. The word, *see*, is the word *blepo*, *blepo*. It refers to sense perception, just looking, just seeing, but when you use the word *blepo* here, we're talking about that which can be observed on the surface. The superficial thing that we can see or perceive with the naked eye. We all know that idiom, don't ever judge a book by its cover. It comes from the realization that we don't always judge rightly what we see superficially.

The next word here is translated as, *notice*, that's the verb *katanoeo*, *katanoeo*. And in con, set in contrast here to *blepo*, it refers to deeper insight, a more profound sense of spiritual perception. Now remember, the focus here that Jesus has, it's not on indicting the Pharisees at this point. Jesus is talking to us here. He's talking to his true disciples. He's talking to you and me.

As one commentator put it, quote, "In the hearts of all, including even Christ's followers to," to, the extent to which grace has not yet fully transformed them, they're houses of Pharisee." End quote. So the warning here is for you and me.

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Jesus is pointing out the tendency within every single one of us to become dull in our spiritual perception. The continuing presence of sin within us, this sin nature, this sin principle that still entices and deceives and seeks that which does not please God, that is very real.

When you're not actively and daily mortifying your sin, we're all in danger of dimming spiritual perception and even blatant spiritual hypocrisy. The contrast here between the verbs *blepo* and *katanoeo* is the contrast between that which is easy to see on the surface and that which requires more thoughtful insight to notice. That which is not so easily observed on the surface, namely our own thoughts and our attitudes of sin.

So "Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye?" Because the speck in his eye is easier for me to see. It does not take effort to see and observe the sin of others. Right? You see your brother's sins. You see your sister's failures. No congratulations are in order for that. Anyone, even an unbeliever, can point out the sins of others.

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But on the other hand, “Why do you not notice the log that is in your own eye?” Because that’s harder to see, isn’t it? That takes more effort. The uncomfortable practice of self-confrontation, which is the fruit of the spirit-produced virtue of humility. Much harder for us. You have to be intentional to notice your own sins. You must have a habit of daily self-examination. You have to be committed as a conviction to personal repentance for a lifetime.

You have to be committed to pursuing righteousness before God in thought and word and deed. That kind of commitment, beloved, is found only among those who are Christians. And only among those who are humble enough to know that they, although redeemed, they’re wretched sinners in need of daily grace.

Listen, this practice of self-examination, it’s essential for Christian, healthy Christian discipleship and the way to avoid the practice of blinding spiritual hypocrisy is to revisit repentance. Self-examination requires an internal attitude of humility, which is the fruit of those who remain amazed by God’s amazing grace. I know you probably have seen this, just as I

have, that we continually run into Christians who seem to lose that amazement.

But they cease to be wowed and wooed by the cross. It's so disappointing. We just need to revisit the Gospel, don't we? All the time. Because those who know the depth of their sins and those who reflect on what God did to forgive them. God crucified his own beloved son on the cross as an atoning sacrifice for the guilt of me, for the guilt of all guilty sinners. They're the ones who are filled with thanksgiving.

They're not interested in casting a disparaging eye at the sins of others, looking down on other people, all that's plainly visible on the outside. They're too busy with repentance, considering what's in their own hearts, which causes them shame and dismay. So in response to this incredible gift of salvation, the redeeming grace of God in which we daily walk, we pursue repentance.

We reflect on our sins that came, cost Christ his life, we reflect on our sins, we reflect on the cost of our forgiveness,

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we reflect on our gratitude and all that is evident in an attitude of meekness. We're possessed then of a, a cautious, teachable spirit that's eager to learn, eager to repent, eager to pursue holiness in the fear of Christ. Listen, beloved, we should be eager, never reticent, but eager to receive correction and instruction.

Those who don't want to be corrected by anybody, that's a danger sign, beloved. That's a danger sign. Don't fall into it. We should long for instruction in righteousness, that we might confront ourselves first. And then consider how to love by instructing our brother. That's what this is all about. Love.

So Jesus here begins by helping us with the diagnosis. He looks beyond the symptoms as only the great physician can do. And he says, let me tell you what's going on in the heart. Let me tell you the cause of all these symptoms you see. It's pride. It's pride. He identifies the hidden cause of hypocrisy, which is pride. So we need to cultivate a heart of humility to combat the pride.

He also develops, or helps us to develop here, discernment. He teaches us to observe the outward and visible signs of hypocrisy. So that's a second point for your outline. You can put down the word observation. Point number two, observation, the visible symptoms of hypocrisy. Observation, the visible symptoms of hypocrisy.

There are several observable signs of hypocrisy, which are symptoms of the hidden disease of spiritual pride. Most often, spiritual pride is the result of dead religion. That is, no regeneration. It's the bad fruit of a rotten tree. Proof positive that regeneration has not happened. But even Christians can fall into patterns of sin, which they become blinded to due to the dullness caused by spiritual pride.

Jesus here, in verse 42 asks another rhetorical question. He says, "How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye?" You may not pick it up, but Jesus is here expressing dismay. The grammar is clear that Jesus is here offended at this blatant show of hypocrisy. "How is it

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that you are able to say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove the speck.'"

And then here's the literal way this is written for emphasis, but you yourself, the in your eye log or beam or mast of a ship battering ram, you're not seeing it! It's the idea of, how could you? Listen, this hypocrisy offends him. It's not just a fact of trying to remove the speck while being blind to your own log-sized sins. It's the fact that you would presume to do this to a brother. That's the issue.

You say, where else would you be making these kinds of judgments but in the church and among brothers? Right? After all, we're not running around trying to confront all the sins of the unregenerate, unbelieving world. True, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 5:12, "What do we have to do with judging outsiders? God judges them and they are in fact already under the just wrath and condemnation of God." So we do not need to run around shooting at easy targets like Hollywood, like Washington D.C., or wherever. Those people are our mission field, right?

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Our prayer and interest is in the salvation of those kinds of sinners because such were some of you, right? Their condemnation is so clear. And their sin is so crippling and destructive, degrading. We want to see them saved. So, yes, it's true the context of this presumption of trying to remove the speck when you've got the beam, this, the context of this presumption to conduct spiritual eye surgery on the lesser offense while being blind to your own greater offense. Yes, this happens in the church. And it happens among so-called brothers.

So why does Jesus seem to be so offended here? The offense is this: the hypocrite presumes to correct others in order to put on a show of fake spiritual maturity. That's the issue. The hypocrite is actually presuming and preying upon the affection and receptivity of a fellow brother, because a fellow brother is wide open to your correction. He's taking advantage of the spiritual sensitivity of another disciple who is by nature prone to self-examination.

So to abuse a brother's spiritual sensitivity, to take advantage of the humility and tenderness of a Christian all for the sake

of posturing, all for the sake of reinforcing your own spiritual pride and position, that stirs up the indignation of Christ. It's not just the injustice that is the one who's in truth immature and blind, hypocritical, and perhaps, even unsaved. Such is the injustice of that kind of guy pretending to be mature.

What offends Jesus here is that someone would dare take advantage of the spiritual sensitivity and tenderness of his beloved sheep for whom he died. How dare you! That angers him. And believe me, you do not want to be around when Jesus comes to recompense unrepentant hypocrites who take advantage of the sheep to fake their own holiness.

So in verse 42, let's just take and make a list of symptoms that come from this verse. We use it as a little, little checklist for examining our own lives, for these kinds of symptoms of spiritual hypocrisy, but we also want to grow in discernment, so that we take note of those who would pretend maturity in our midst, seek to gain a foothold of influence over our spiritual lives, so they could take advantage of us.

First symptom: A clear sign or symptom of spiritual hypocrisy is the focus on somebody else's sins and not on one's own sins. You've had this happen to you, right? All this talk of hey, brother this and brother that, right? But the conversation's always about you and your issues; never about his, never about hers.

Those who just try to disciple you by posturing that way, by pretending maturity, by keeping you down instead of brother to brother. Minor on their own offenses. Speaking in vague and general terms about their sins. Oh, yes, brother, we'll all sinners. I'm a great sinner, too, saved by grace. But there's nothing concrete, nothing specific, no admission of personal guilt, no admission of personal offense to you, no humble recognition of actual offenses, that is a symptom of spiritual hypocrisy.

Second sign: Another sign or symptom of spiritual hypocrisy is feigning brotherly affection. You know what I mean by feigning; it's a feint, it's a fake. Feigning brotherly affection when no

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true brotherly affection actually exists. This is related to the first one, but again, there's, there's all this talk about brother this and brother that and sister this and sister that, but no true brotherliness.

There's a show of closeness and intimacy, words to that effect, with the use of brotherly language, but no true transparency. No intimacy. No regard or lasting and loving concern. No effort of love. And that's due to the absence of a true brotherly love. That becomes clear when in a third symptom of spiritual hypocrisy, when there's no acknowledgment or recognition, no remorse or sorrow over personal sin.

This is different than the first one, not acknowledging sin to posture over you. But this one is just, has the fact that there is no sorrow at all. Like that blind ophthalmologist we talked about earlier. He's got no spiritual nerves that are alerting him to the painful presence of a railroad spike sticking out of his eye socket. There's no conscience alerting him, this hypocrite, to the clear and obvious sin that's noticed not just

by you, but by others as well. No confession, no repentance, because there's no remorse, no sadness, and sorrow.

One more symptom of spiritual hypocrisy we can infer from verse 42 and this, that's this fourth. The hypocrite doesn't actually give sound spiritual counsel. Like the guy with the beam sticking out of his eye trying to meddle in your eyeball to get that little piece of dust or whatever. You think that's going to work? His advice doesn't work. But attempting to help you with the speck, whatever he says is so vague and ambiguous that it's confusing or contradictory or causes more harm than good.

Why is that? Because he is the blind ophthalmologist attempting to perform a delicate eye surgery. How could he not shred somebody else's eyeball, end up hurting or even blinding someone with his helpful advice. Or if he stays away from the eyeball knowing that he's going to risk doing that and be exposed as a hypocrite, he just stays away. You come in to see him, hey, help me with this speck, and he says, you know, you should probably drink more fluids. You know, it's probably fibromyalgia. You

know, just something. That's not helpful. I really do have an irritant in my eye.

Other signs and symptoms of spiritual hypocrisy, they're even less subtle than what Jesus described there in verse 42, but they're just as clear. When you can see and listen in the church to somebody's sins, like the inveterate gossip. That's a sign or a symptom of hypocrisy. The gossip's always interested in muckraking, in spreading dirt about other people, but never paying attention to his or her own wicked speech.

Or like the chronic slanderer always focusing on the guilt of others, always insinuating evil motives. Always attacking character, always denigrating and defaming, but never noticing the destructive patterns of his or her speech. Or like the perpetual critic. The armchair quarterback who is always, never in the game, never do, helping you do the heavy lifting. But he's always there to second guess decisions, always quick to point out mistakes, always noting points of doctrinal imprecision or some slight infraction of practice.

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All those destructive sins come from the heart of the spiritual hypocrite. They are clear and obvious signs and symptoms of spiritual hypocrisy. They are utterly vile and extremely offensive to Jesus Christ, which is why we need to be watchful for them in our own hearts and lives.

So Jesus has identified for us the hidden cause of hypocrisy. He's helped us to grow in discernment so we can learn to observe, to look for visible symptoms of hypocrisy in others, yes, but in ourselves first. Now let's look at the good news. I love this point because this is the good news, this is the antidote. This is the third and final point. We talked about the identification, the observation. Now, the prescription.

Here's the prescription. The potent antidote for hypocrisy, potent or powerful antidote for hypocrisy. Third point. Look at verse 42 again. Jesus has asked, "How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that's in your own eye?" And then this, the antidote to that kind of hypocrisy. "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye and then

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you will see clearly to take out the speck that's in your brother's eye."

I'm afraid the, this solution, or the solution to spiritual hypocrisy, the way to avoid it for many sensitive minded, sensitive hearted evangelicals has been to avoid spiritual hypocrisy by refusing to voice any criticism whatsoever. That's the judge-not-lest-ye-be-judged crowd, right? They simply refuse to confront sin. They simply back off and they're not going to name names. They're not going to rebuke. They're not going to confront. They're not going to correct. Why? Because that's risk. They're risk adverse, which is blatant self-centeredness, isn't it?

That's the ostrich approach to stick the head in the sand, bury yourself to people and their problems. Ignore it. Ignore the spiritual lives and conditions of other Christians. Some may pretend that that sounds loving to tolerate sin. Or to let sin go unchallenged, to let one's own good example influence others without a word. I'm just going to the Francis of Assisi approach. Preach the Gospel and when necessary, use words,

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right? They say don't confront sin, just let my little light shine and they'll get the point.

That may sound noble, may sound tolerant, it may sound like the voice of wisdom and patience and Christian maturity, but listen, when Jesus just said, "Remove the log." Why? "So you can remove your brother's speck." He intends that we help our brother by dealing with sin, not letting it go. So what may sound loving and noble is in fact arrogance and presumption. It's an act of blatant rebellion against the prescription of Jesus Christ.

"If your brother sins against you," Matthew 18:15, "go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you've gained your brother." That's not a suggestion. That's a command. Or on the other hand, "If you are," at your, "at the altar offering your gift at the altar and you there remember your brother has something against you, leave your gift there," and, "before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother and then come offer your gift." That's Matthew 5:23-24.

Jesus does not give us the option of ignoring sin. He doesn't allow us to be indifferent to sin, whether logs or specks, whether our own sins or the sins of others against us. He commands us to love one another by removing the log and by removing the speck, too. He's not indifferent to sin no matter what the size. William Hendriksen wrote, "It was not in Christ's purpose to discourage mutual discipline. On the contrary, both self-discipline and mutual discipline are encouraged in this saying."

Now, as we ask about the prescription, this potent antidote to spiritual hypocrisy, it may seem like Jesus has prescribed a two-step process. First take the log out, second take the speck out and that's basically true, if that's how you want to remember it. That's fine. That'll help. But I think it misses one important vital first step. And I'm going to make this the first step. Here it is, first step: acknowledge and confess your sin. Acknowledge and confess your sin.

We need to acknowledge our hypocrisy for what it is and then confess it. We need to accept Jesus' word of confrontation and

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condemnation, which, which comes in this: You hypocrite. We need to let that judgment sink in. To let that sting, to feel the burn and the hurt of that accusation, that confrontation.

Listen, this is what the chronic unregenerate hypocrite will never do, is to acknowledge and confess his own sin. But it's what we must do as true disciples of Jesus Christ. It's so important, beloved, before removing logs and dealing with specks, it's so important we do not rush forward without stopping to acknowledge and own and confess our sin. We must feel remorse over this. There must be the element of sorrow. When Jesus accuses us, his beloved disciples, of being hypocrites, listen, we need to stop and feel that pain.

Did my gracious Lord, did the meek and humble Savior, did he just call me a hypocrite? But, we need to own that. We need to feel it because he is, he's saying something pretty stark to us, pretty confrontational and it needs to hurt. He's here wounding us, intentionally awakening our consciences that he might heal us, right? Our consciences were so dull here that we didn't feel

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the presence of a massive beam of wood the size of a ship's mast sticking out of our eye.

And that's why this sin, this painful act of rebuking love, Jesus says, "You hypocrite." We need to hear those words. We need to understand the depth of our own offenses against our loving and holy Lord, as Hosea said to Israel, "Come, let us return to the Lord for he has torn us that he may heal us. He has struck us down that he will bind us up."

That's why acknowledging, confessing our sins, and particularly this offensive sin of hypocrisy, that is the essential first step in Jesus' prescription. We need to feel how offensive it is to Christ in the hope that we pursue the kind of humble self-examination that's going to keep us far from those beam-sized sins and hypocrisy in the future.

Second step. Here's the second step: repent of your sin. Pretty easy. First acknowledge and confess your sin. Second repent of your sin. Yes, we need to be repentant of the sinful hypocrisy, that's true, but hypocrisy, that's just the coverup sin. Lie,

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it's a lie really. It's faking something and deceiving others. That's what hypocrisy is. And lies are always secondary cover over sins. You don't lie when you're completely guiltfree. You lie because your conscience is troubling you and you want to deflect and shift attention, so you lie and deceive. Secondary sin. Same thing with hypocrisy.

We need to go beyond the hypocrisy, and examine the heart and the life for hidden sins. Things that we hadn't noticed before. We need to reflect deeply on this. Things that have been masked by that here, spiritual hypocrisy. Colossians 3:5 says, "Put to death therefore whatever is earthly in you." That's the word mortify; put to death, mortify, what's earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

So expose those sins. Bring them to the light. Work out repentance in the fear of Christ. Repentance isn't merely confessing your sin and resolving to never do that thing again. That's a good thing, but repentance goes further. It involves putting off of sin and putting on righteousness. Repentance

isn't just about not doing the wrong thing. Repentance is about replacing the wrong thing with the righteous counterpart and then walking in righteousness, in that area, in that issue.

Let me show this having you turn over to the book of Ephesians. Book of Ephesians. There's a, there are a lot of places you can go to in the Bible. But here in Ephesians, it's such a clear and obvious presentation of this pattern. Looking at Ephesians and starting in Ephesians 4:20, Ephesians 4:20. Look at it there, "This is not the way you learned Christ." Paul's referring back to the way of the Gentiles, which is polluted, defiled, darkened in their understanding, calloused and all that.

"That's not the way you learned Christ!" Verse 21, "assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus." Verse 22, "to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness."

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That's the pattern right there. To put off, put on. You have put off your old self. So repentance involves putting off old self behaviors, old and sinful patterns of thinking and speaking, of acting and behaving. And to do that, you must be, verse 23, "continually renewing your mind." That's the verb tense there. Be continually being renewed in your mind by reading, studying, meditating on Scripture. That's got to be your continual constant habit, your lifelong practice.

Since you have then, verse 24, "put on the new self," by and being continually renewed in your mind, you're going to pursue the new self behaviors. New patterns of thinking, speaking, acting behaving, which conform to the character of God and true righteousness and holiness. What does that look like practically? Look at verse 25. Verses 25-32. Listen out. In verses 25-32 listen out for this put off/put on pattern. This is the outworking of true biblical repentance.

"Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another." That's one. "Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down

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on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil." That's another one. "Let the thief no longer steal, but let, rather let him labor, doing honest work with his hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need." Then, "let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may," gave, "give grace to those who hear."

And finally, "do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you." So going back through that, verses 25-32, lying is replaced by speaking truth, sinful anger is replaced by being self, by self-controlled indignation. Yes, indignation, but self-controlled.

Stealing replaced by honest work and generous giving. Corrupting speech replaced by careful, targeted, edifying speech. And then acts and attitudes that grieve the Holy Spirit, all those replaced by acts and attitudes of kindness, tenderheartedness,

forgiveness. That's how we practice repentance, putting off and putting on.

Back to Luke 6:42. Step one: Acknowledge and confess the hypocrisy and the sin. Step two: Repent of the hypocrisy and the sin, which means put off the sin, put on the righteous replacement. Here's the third step, final step: Truly love your brother. Truly love your brother. Do not feign brotherly affection with Christinese. You know what I'm saying? Don't use churchy language. Oh, brother, I'm just so blessed, that kind of stuff and just dripping with hypocrisy. Don't use that.

I mean, if you really mean it, brother, sister, fine, no problem. Truly love your brother, right? By taking your own sin seriously. Truly love your brother by taking your own sin seriously, so that you can provide actual spiritual help and counsel to your struggling brother. As Jesus' final concern here that we become agents of practical good to our brother who's in need. The speck is an issue he's concerned about, too.

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"First take the log out of your own eye, then you'll see clearly to take out the speck that's in your brother's eye." In other words, he wants us to help our brothers and sisters with their specks. He's just concerned that we see clearly first. This is so vital. Not just so we avoid the charge of spiritual hypocrisy, but even more practically so we are of the greatest use to our brothers and sisters who are struggling with sin.

You don't want to let that go. If we've learned how to identify and repent of our own sins, we'll actually have something useful to say to help others with theirs. And not only that, but we who are in the regular habit of confessing and repenting of sin, we're best equipped to be compassionate with people, to be sympathetic, even empathetic with others who struggle with sin.

My friend, I've, I've had that problem, too. Let me tell you how to deal with it. Here's how Christ helped me to overcome it by the Word. Let me walk you through that. I get it. We understand where they're coming from. We understand how hard it is. We understand the challenges they face. And so we want to strive together. Not like this. Not like this. Arms around the

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shoulders bringing them forward. Strive together to grow in righteousness.

We noted earlier that we have a great high priest, the great physician who is holy innocent and undefiled, Hebrews 7:26.

"He's separated from sinners, and he is exalted above the heavens." And yet this Jesus is "not a high priest who's unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but he is one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin." Who better to help us?

He has loved us, and he saved us when we're, we were at our absolute worst. And now his manner of dealing with us, is it rough? Is it painful and hurtful? Does he bash us over the head? No. If he ever does that, it's rare. But if he ever does that, it's to just knock us to our senses so that he can bring us back to a path of leading us in paths of righteousness for his name's sake, right? Like a gentle shepherd.

Most of the time even in severest sins and I've, as I've seen in my life, he's been very gentle in restoring me, very gentle in

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confronting my sin, very gentle in exposing. Very kind. His manner of dealing with us is, ever since salvation, is gentle and patient. Those who have humbly received Jesus' correction to remove all manners of, manner of beams and splinters from their lives, they are imminently and immediately useful in the lives of other people.

The one who's taken time to identify and remove the beam. If you've done that in your life, well you know how painful it is. You know how sensitive an organ are your eyes and how careful one must be in dealing with the eyes, dealing with the vision, and dealing with the soul. So the person who can humbly, carefully, compassionately help someone else is the one who's dealt with their own sins.

Notice our Lord intends in us in the interest in love to help others remove specks and beams. It's not loving to let sin go, never confront it, never identify it biblically, never address compassionately, honestly, carefully. That is not love. That's either indifference, which is the coldest form of hatred. Or

it's outright laziness, which is the most cowardly form of self-centeredness.

We need to love one another by removing our beams and then helping others with their specks and their splinters. But let us do so with great care. That was the heart of David, who, after confessing acts of terrible iniquity in Psalm 51. Remember when God had graciously removed the beams from his eyes using Nathan. And after God restored David, after he confessed in Psalm 51 and repented and expressed that, David knew then he could influence others again. He prayed in that way, asked God to use him in that way.

Psalm 51:10-13, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, renew a right spirit within me.[...] Restore to me the joy of your salvation, uphold me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you." Remove the beam. Then help sinners remove the specks. Deal with your own sin first and then you'll be of great benefit to sinners who need to return to Christ.

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Doctor Martyn Lloyd Jones, the great Welsh preacher who ministered for many years in Westminster Chapel in London, before he was a pastor, the sincerest most powerful of preachers, he was a physician, a medical doctor. And because of his background as a medical doctor, when he makes analogies between care for the body and care for souls, I pay close attention. There's a rather longish quotation from his famous commentary on the Sermon on the Mount. Here's what he wrote.

"The procedure for getting a mote out of an eye is a very difficult operation. There is no organ that is more sensitive than the eye. The moment the finger touches it, it closes up. It is so delicate. What you require above everything else in dealing with it is sympathy, patience, calmness, coolness. That is what is required because of the delicacy of the operation. Transfer all that into the spiritual realm. You're going to handle a soul. You're going to touch the most sensitive thing in man. How can we get the little mote out?

"There's only one thing that matters at that point and that is that you should be humble, you should be sympathetic, you should

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be so conscience of your own sin and your own unworthiness that when you find it in another, far from condemning, you feel like weeping. You're full of sympathy and compassion. You really do want to help. You've so enjoyed getting rid of the thing in yourself that you want him to have the same pleasure and the same joy. You cannot be a spiritual oculist until you yourself have clear sight. Thus, when we face ourselves and have got rid of this beam and have judged and condemned ourselves and are in this humble understanding, sympathetic, generous, charitable state, we shall then be able, as the Scripture puts it, to speak the truth in love to another and thereby to help him." End quote.

As one commentator, well said, "The purpose of Jesus' saying here is not spiritual introspection but making ourselves of service to others." It's true. This is the spiritual humility in discipleship, leads, which leads us to a true love of others and helping them with their sins by dealing with our own. So, beloved, acknowledge and confess your sin. Repent of your sin. Truly love your brother. That is the heart of humility, which is the potent antidote to spiritual hypocrisy. It's also one of the most fundamental key principles of discipleship.

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Let's pray. Oh, Father, we just ask that you would make us tender physicians to one another, very concerned about sin, yes. Both motes and beams, but we pray that you'd help us to be quick to examine ourselves first. We pray that you'd help us to be humble, teachable, reflective. Not for the sake of navel gazing and introspection that we can never get out of but, but really for the purpose of helping other people. We pray that you give us great wisdom in this and just give us compassion for one another.