

# The Beam in My Own Eye

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

## Introduction:

A. In 1969, a pear-shaped diamond, weighing in at 69.42 carats, was purchased at auction for a then record price of \$1,050,000 by Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor. For a brief period it was put on display in Cartier's store in New York. More than 6,000 people a day came to the store to get a glimpse at the record setting gem. A newspaper ran an article about the comments of people who viewed the diamond. One man looked at the stone and said, "I see a flaw there, but I wouldn't want to say anything." An affluent appearing lady commented, "It isn't really that beautiful, but I wouldn't mind having it." Another woman said, "It's too large." A security guard posted near the stone said, "I've heard more sour grapes about that stone in the last two days than about anything else in my whole life." Unfortunately, some people are equipped with a super-hero vision that enables them to see the negative even in what appears to be nearly perfect.

1. "Any fool can criticize, condemn, and complain; and, most of them do."  
(Dale Carnegie)
  2. I've read the entire New Testament often, and contrary to how some act, I have not found criticism listed there as a work of righteousness or a fruit of the Spirit.
- B. Matt. 7:1-6 - Jesus is critical of judgmentalism, but He did not condemn all forms of judgment.
1. There are circumstances where judgments must be made, or else we would be derelict in our duty.
    - a. Matt. 7:6 implies judgment is to be made regarding the selfish and deliberately immoral.
    - b. Matt. 7:15-20 implies judgments must be made in identifying false teachers.
  2. Jesus taught people to judge with righteous judgment - John 7:24
  3. Christians have the responsibility to judge on behalf of who are in the local church - 1Cor. 5:9-13
  4. We are taught by the apostle of love (John) to make judgments about the soundness and attitudes of teachers - 1John 4:1
- C. I have been very forthcoming in preaching and teaching about judgmentalism.
1. In a surprising development, I discovered a troubling spirit among those who believe themselves to be victims of other's judgment.
  2. They don't just condemn those who are judgmental; they condemn everyone who makes judgments, including those who follow the Lord's command to judge with righteous judgment.
  3. In fact, they exhibit the same kinds of attitudes and use the same kinds of words as the people they accuse of being judgmental.
  4. This not merely ironically amusing, it is frightening. In condemning judgmentalism, they have become judgmental, and will share the same eternal destination as those they denounce.
  5. What is often overlooked is that we may feel we are being judged, when in reality we are not being judged.

6. Simply because we feel we may be judged is not an entitlement to charge another Christian with being judgmental.
- D. Those who charge others with the sin of judgmentalism must understand that:
  1. Jesus commanded us to make judgments; however, they must be based on righteousness,
  2. If we truly are being judged, we cannot descend to their level by acting the same way toward them,
  3. And, being a victim does not give us the right to act out - 1Peter 2:23
- E. How we react to criticism defines who we are - Prov. 9:7-8; Acts 13:45-46

## I. JESUS DEFINED UNRIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT

- A. Judging when one is blind to his or her own faults - Luke 6:41-42
  1. "Jesus is saying that it is wrong for anyone to concentrate his attention on the speck in his brother's eye, and while thus occupied, to ignore the beam in his own eye." (Hendriksen)
  2. Paul taught proper introspection when helping others - Gal. 6:1
- B. Judging without mercy and love - Luke 6:36-37; James 2:13
  1. "The Lord is here condemning the spirit of censoriousness, judging harshly, self-righteously, without mercy, without love." (Hendriksen)

## II. WHAT IS THE BEAM IN MY OWN EYE?

- A. I believe in keeping everything in its context; what is the context of Matthew 7?
- B. Being consumed with the faults of others
  1. Luke 6:41 - "why do you **look at** the speck in your brother's eye"
  2. Look at, beholdst: "Blepo - to look at, behold, beware, look on, perceive, regard, see, sight, take heed, gaze intently" (Strong's)
  3. It is one thing to notice the faults in others, it is another thing to stare at and obsess over the shortcomings in another person's life.
  4. "Some people find faults like there's a reward for it." (Zig Ziglar)
  5. There are some who honestly believe that God has appointed them to fault finding. They look around the church with discriminating eyes, gazing at the shortcomings of those sitting around them.
  6. They can tell you what is wrong with their neighbor's marriage, why your teenager is in trouble, what the preacher is not doing, and what is wrong in your own life.
  7. Jesus asks, "Why are you staring at the mote in your brother's eye?"
- C. Being openly critical of the faults of others
  1. Luke 6:42 - "How can you say to your brother?"
  2. They don't mind sharing with you what they believe to be wrong with you and everybody else. They often preface their criticisms with "You know, if you would just listen to me...", as if their perspective is the same as God's own.
  3. But what is going on in this context? Focusing on others to avoid looking at one's self
  4. Even though the judgmental person claims to be trying to help, very often they only want to help themselves. Their criticism is the means by which they overlook their own faults.

5. "It is easier to be critical than to be correct." (Former British prime minister, Benjamin Disraeli)
  6. Jesus addressed those who choose the easy road of criticism over the difficult road of self-examination.
- D. Why the semi-amusing illustration of a beam and a mote?
1. One man is walking around with a large chunk of wood in front of his eyes, and he says to someone else, "Hold still, I think I see a little splinter in your eye. Let me get my tweezers and get that out for you."
  2. The Lord intended this story to be exaggeratedly ridiculous to show how silly it is when flawed creatures criticize other flawed creatures.
- E. It is a common problem; Jesus is not addressing some obscure sin that only applies to a few people.
1. How very often is it that those who are the most critical have faults in their own lives that are worthy of criticism?
  2. The sister who doesn't like the way the teenagers are dressing seems to have forgotten that her gossiping tongue is more offensive to a God than the holes in those kid's jeans.
  3. That dear brother that is so quick to pass judgment on the drug addicted seems to have forgotten that his unwillingness to seek and teach them is as disgusting to God as their addictions.

### III. WHAT DOES JESUS WANT US TO DO?

- A. "Never make a judgment about someone else!" Wrong. "Never mention someone else's sins!" Wrong. One extreme is no better than the other.
- B. Examine our own selves first, from our attitude on the inside to our words and actions on the outside.
  1. James said the word of God is a mirror, not binoculars - James 1:23-25
- C. Eliminate our own sins.
  1. Gal. 6:1 - "You who are spiritual..." Before we can ever be of a real spiritual help to others, we need to pursue spiritual help for ourselves.
- D. Judge with righteous judgment, mercy, and love; the way you expect others to judge you - Matt. 7:12
- E. Speak from the heart with love and tenderness - 2Tim. 2:24-26

#### Conclusion:

- A. "When you judge others, you do not define them; you define yourself" (Earl Nightingale)
- B. "When I am sharply judgmental of any other person, it's because I sense or see reflected in them some aspect of myself or an trying to avoid something with me that I don't want to acknowledge." (Gabor Maté)
- C. 1Thes. 5:14 - "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all."