

Weaving the Word

One-Eyed Sin Pickers

Part 47 – October 4, 2015

Welcome to where we diagnose the deceptions that blind us to the truth.

Which universal sin are believers quickest to commit? I got'a go with **judging**, as in: **condescending** and **condemning**. It's the sneaky sin of seeing someone else as **less than me**.



Matthew's account, of the Sermon on the Mount, weaves seamlessly with Mark and Luke's accounts of the *crowds* at the lake, the miraculous catch, and the hillside appointing of the twelve.¹

And, it's quite clear that **Jesus' words are aimed at His young apprentices**², whom He refers to as **His "children"**. (Mark 10:24; John 13:33)



And, **it all ties into what they'd experienced that week**: like the abuse and slander they'd received from the respected religious *teachers* at the showdown in the synagogue. (Mark 3:6)

Now, having just seen the miraculous catch authenticating the authority of *their Teacher*, **do you suppose they might be a skosh judgmental?**



"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." – Matthew 7:1-2 NIV

Luke fits in a couple comments that would've hit home with Peter, who fell, ashamed, at Jesus' knees (***He was covered to His lap in fish***) and told Him to go away; but was instead invited to **give away his boat-sinking catch**, and was *appointed as an Apostle!* (Luke 5:8-11)



"Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. *Give*, and it will be **given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into **your lap**. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."** – Luke 6:37b-38 NIV



"So, what'll it be, boys: *judgment for you or mercy for all?*"

Don't get Jesus wrong; **He didn't tolerate sin for a second.**

¹ See "Weaving the Word: Apprenticeship Training", 11/9/14

² "His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them" (Mat 5:1-2); "Looking at his disciples, he said" (Luke 6:20)

But, He treated it the way a doctor treats fractures and broken bones.

He focused on *repairing* those *suffering* from brokenness.



As long as they, like Peter, would simply confess their condition.

Jesus [later] said, “For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who [claim to] see will become blind.” Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, “What? Are we blind too?” Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.” – John 9:39-41 NIV

Dr. Luke sets another unique piece right in here, on the hill.

He also told them this parable: “**Can a blind man lead a blind man?** [He likely would’ve paused ... “Yes or no? ... Yes! He’s blind, not lame. However ...”] **Will they not both fall into a pit?** A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.” – Luke 6:39-40 NIV

A teacher might be respected, might be religious, but if they’re blind, the best a pupil can hope for *is no broken bones!* So, **beware of who you choose to listen to and follow after.**

When it comes to condemning, we deal in partial truths, outward appearances, one-sided stories, and self-centered perspectives.



We’re blind to someone’s true inner motives. We’re blind to the complete, complex, context for their actions.

How often do you *follow* someone, as a pupil, into a pit?

How often do you *lead* someone, as a blind guide, into a pit?

They’ve retrieved more than a *million bones* from those caught in the unforgiving black grip of the La Brea Tar Pits. It didn’t matter if they were leading or following. End result’s the same: **it’s *pert’near impossible* to escape once you wade in.** So, here’s an idea: *don’t wade into the pit!*



And, the boys weren’t just judging their enemies.

“Why do you look at the **speck of sawdust** [karphos: lit. **chaff; straw**] in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?” – Matthew 7:3 NIV (Luke 6:41)

Pretty much everyone had tried to help someone remove chaff from their eye.

You thresh wheat by tossing it into the wind with a basket or a winnowing fork.



Or, you drag it under *threshing planks*. He *could've* said you have a *pitchfork* in your eye; but that's just gross. Plank is funny.

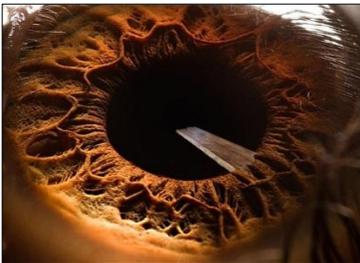
“How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck [chaff] out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a [threshing] plank in your own eye?” – Matthew 7:4 NIV (Luke 6:42a)



Even though their *blind eye* robs 'em of perspective, they use what truth they see with their one good eye to pick at each other's sin.

They're one-eyed sin pickers! And, it will be measured back.

[Jesus had just finished saying] “If your **eye is bad**, your whole body will be **full of darkness**. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!” – Matthew 6:23 NAS



If our eye is bad we'll be full of darkness. And, if we're full of darkness we'll be blind. And, if we're blind we'll fall into a pit.

Wanna see the pit of great darkness?

Wanna walk the plank into the pit?



Several Bibles translate it as *beam*. **Know what kind of beam?**

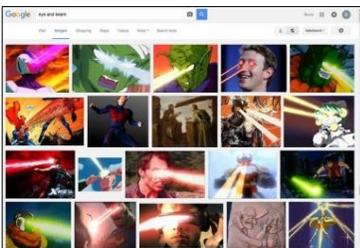
An I-beam. The focus is all on me, baby!

You see, we're filled with darkness when we're full of our self!



When Adam and Eve sinned, their eyes were opened. But, their eyes were opened *before* they sinned too. So, what's the difference?

There are two ways we open our eyes. Our *lids* can open and shut, and our *pupils* can dilate. We know their *lids* were open, *the fruit was pleasing to the eye*, (Gen 3:6) so **maybe their eyes dilated to the darkness their sin ushered in.**



Did their pupils automatically adjust to the absence of God's glory? Do yours? If so, it's hard to know how dark it really is.

Know what you get by Googling “eye” and “beam”? People's eyes shooting laser beams. And, *this* is pretty much what Jesus is warning us not to do: ***Don't shoot your lights out!***

You'll end up filled with *great darkness*. Don't laser in on the infractions of others while blinding out the big ol' elephant-in-the-pit sin you're committing in the process.

One forgiven sinner condemning another might be the height of hypocrisy!

“You hypocrite, **first** take the plank out of your own eye, [look at yourself, deal with your own darkness, and correct your perception] and **then** you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.” – Matthew 7:5 NIV (Luke 6:42b)



You see, **the goal is to help remove those specks.** But, this requires judgment; *good judgment.* **We’re called to judge rightly.**

It’s not a sin to sit on a jury ... unless you’re being judgmental.

[As Jesus warned the crowds at the Feast] “Stop judging by mere appearances, and make **a right judgment.**” – John 7:24 NIV

A “right judgment” seeks to restore and heal the one it examines.

We must learn to judge without being judgmental: hypercritical, hypocritical, self-superior, condemning, accusatory, and gossipy.

[As Jesus warns the boys on the hill as He closes the topic] “Do not give **dogs** what is **sacred** [i.e. *holy*]; do not throw your **pearls** to **pigs**. If you do, they may **trample them** under their feet, and then turn and **tear you to pieces.**” – Matthew 7:6 NIV

Not only do we have a responsibility to be transparent and authentic, and forgiving and generous, *but also timely.* **Be sure your brother is open to your concern.**

We can’t force truth into those who refuse to open their eyes.

Those abusive religious teachers will be judging Jesus at the cross, and they’re prophetically described, in Psalm 22:16, as **“dogs”**. And, of course, Jesus is the only truly holy and **“sacred”**.

And, Jesus compares His kingdom to a merchant of **“pearls”**. (Mat 13:45-46)

And, in Psalm 80, the Vine that God raises up for himself is **“uprooted”** and **“devoured”** by the **“swine of the forest”**. (Psalm 80:8-15)

Anyone can spot a flaw, it’s not a gift it’s a trap.

But, addressing it in a merciful, meaningful, timely fashion ... *now that’s a gift!*

And, **that’s when we’re most “like our Teacher,”** who made it all the way to the cross, and not one of His bones was broken. (John 19:36)

He is the Light that fills our heart so we are able to say:

“I was blind but now I see!” – John 9:25 NIV