

Weaving the Word

Dirty Mouths

December 8, 2019

Welcome to where we're getting to the root of the problem!

Are you better known for criticism or compassion?

What do you think those who know you best think?

Now we're going to get personal: there's a sin to which we are mostly blind, and casually lead and follow others into often.

The big three Cs: condescending and criticizing and condemning.

It's a sneaky sin of seeing someone else as *less than me*.



It's an attitude that says: *you need Christ much more than I do!*

Remember the hypocritical surmisers who judge by what is apparent, instead of what is right?

You may recall, I had the best example of hypocritical judgment: Me! When I hypocritically misjudged *encouragement* as judgment.



We left Jesus in Capernaum, privately rebuking the self-righteous religious rulers who criticized His boys, and who prioritized self-serving tradition over God-pleasing obedience.

"Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don't wash their hands before they eat!" [A little something the elders had added to God's Word. And here's something they subtracted] Jesus replied, "And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? For God said, 'Honor your father and mother' and 'Anyone who [doesn't] ... must be put to death.' But you say that if a man says to his father or mother, 'Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is a gift devoted to God,' he is not to 'honor his father' with it." [But is to entrust it to these money lovers (Lk 16:14) who'll happily look after it on God's behalf!] – Matthew 15:2-6 NIV

So, beware of who you choose to listen to and follow after.

You can always tell where a person is headed by observing the spiritual fruit of those they allow as their influencers.

Are your biggest influencers critics or compassionators?

Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. What goes into a man’s mouth does not make him ‘unclean,’ but what comes out of his mouth, that is what makes him ‘unclean.’ If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!” [What comes out of our mouth lets us know what’s in our heart] After he had left the crowd and entered the house [His home office and headquarters in Capernaum], the disciples came to him and asked, “Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?” [Well, yeah. He just made the case that they should be put to death!] He replied, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. [Not to be rude, but how exactly is *that* an answer?]

Being uprooted and removed from the land is prophesied again and again in the OT, concerning God’s people who break or forsake the commands of God and speak with a dirty, dishonest, mouth. Both of which are Jesus’ points here.

If you turn away and ***forsake the*** decrees and ***commands I have given you*** ... then ***I will uproot Israel from my land***, – 2 Chronicles 7:19-20 NIV

You love every ***harmful word***, O you ***deceitful tongue!*** Surely God will bring you down to everlasting ruin ... ***he will uproot you from the land*** of the living. – Psalm 52:2-5 NIV



If we don’t get to the root of the problem, He will!

And, our mouth is the problem, but the root of the mouth is our heart.

Yahweh will **uproot** the house of the **proud**, - Proverbs 15:25a WEB

Leave them; they are blind guides. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit.



Ever been to the La Brea Tar Pits? They’ve got more than a million bones from those caught in its unforgiving black grip. **Motives and intentions didn’t matter. Didn’t matter who was leading or following.** The end result’s the same: **it’s near impossible to escape once you wade in.** And, we’re never more easily influenced to wander into the pit than by an attitude of fault-finding and finger-pointing.

It’s a pit of despair with a ruthless grip! So, **what do you suppose is the best way to deal with a pit? Stay as far away from the pit as possible!** “*But I have a knack of seeing other people’s faults.*”

Sorry, but *anyone* can spot a flaw; no special talent required. **Finding a fault isn’t a gift, it’s a tar pit!** But, confronting and dealing with sin in a merciful, loving, humble, understanding way, now *that’s* the gift! And that calls for a supernatural dose of humility!

In the Sermon on the Mount, on the day Jesus chose His twelve apprentices, He warned them with a parable about blind guides. (Lk 6:39-40) Now He says plainly: “These guys are those blind guides!”



I read the parable from Luke's Gospel in a Red Chairable video twelve years ago.



He also told them this parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? 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. "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. – Luke 6:39-42 NIV

The word that's usually translated "speck" or "splinter" is the word for "chaff", which was removed from wheat by tossing it into the air and dragging it under threshing planks or logs.

Pretty much everyone had tried to help someone remove chaff from their eye. But, the thought of doing it with a threshing plank sticking out of your own eye was hilarious.

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

They use their one good eye to pick at each other's sin. *They're one-eyed sin pickers!*

And when it comes to condescending, criticizing, and condemning, we deal always in partial truths, outward appearances, one-sided stories, and self-pleasing perspectives. In other words: We're blind! We're blind to their deepest, truest, inner motives. And, We're blind to the complete, complex, context for their actions.

So, how often do you follow others into the pit?

Worse yet, how often do you lead others into the pit?

We can be right and wrong at the same time.

It's common to have the facts right, and the reaction wrong!



We need to remember that it's really easy to see even the tiniest little faults and flaws of others; and really difficult to see even the biggest ol' faults and flaws of our own. These self-righteous religious rulers are so fixated on and blinded by their own expertise that they don't even consider considering the dangerous reality they might be blind to.

When we see ourselves as the know-all, it creates a huge blind spot, and it's usually right where the pit of despair is.



1981. UCLA parking garage.

I hear a car horn start blaring on the level right above me. And the big city people can't figure out how to shut it off.

Well, I grew up in a wrecking yard ... I certainly know how to disconnect a car horn.

By the time I got up to it, the owner was gone. It's a fancy, expensive, car. And the hood release isn't in the grill (it's 1981), and the doors are locked. But I see that the driver's wing window is open, so I reached in and unlocked the door. Now I can't find the hood release. So I figure I'll pull the fuse and leave it on the seat with a note. So I get under the dash, brush some broken glass aside, and go to work. As I'm lying there with my hands up under the dash, it hits me: The broken glass is from the wing window. And that's not a horn ... it's a car alarm (maybe the first one I ever heard in person). Someone just broke into this car. And I'm lying in it with my hands up under the dash. And if anyone's coming, they'd be arriving about now!

I jumped up out of that car, and ran for the nearest place to hide, and hid in the dark. Hey, that's what the thief must've done since I was blocking the exit on my way up. I ran to my car, raced home, and thanked god for protecting such an idiot. Talk about blind spots!

You see, **the goal is to help others remove their specks.**

It just requires right judgment, which is what Jesus warns us surmisers about:

Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment. – John 7:24 NIV

Right judgment seeks to restore and heal the one it examines.

His disciples asked him about this parable. “Are you still so dull?” Jesus asked them. “Don't you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? For it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body.” (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods “clean.”) He went on: *But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.'* For from within, out of the heart come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and are what make a man 'unclean.' but eating with unwashed hands does not make him 'unclean.’” – Mt 15:10-20; Mk 7:14-23 NIV

Did you hear about the guy with macular degeneration who fell in a well? He didn't see that well.

Removing our plank doesn't mean we've rid ourselves of all our sin; it means we're open and honest and transparent about them. And, when we're aware of own fallen faults and flaws, our eyes will open to empathize and sympathize with those around us.

And we'll see how compassion can heal what a critical spirit can't even touch.