

How to Be an Excellent Disciple, Humility, Part 2

Luke 6:41-42

Luke 6:39-49, "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."

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 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.

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

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 unconfrosted, 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,

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 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 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, 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."

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 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 Christinesse. 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.

"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 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 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.

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 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.

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

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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.