



## Luke 6:41-42

(41) And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? (42) Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove the speck that *is* in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the plank that *is* in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother's eye.

*New King James Version*

We each have our own "planks" that distort our discernment of the truth about others. Criticizing others for their faults makes us hypocrites. Indeed, if we try to lead them out of their faults before working to remove our own glaring sins, we will be much like the blind leading the blind into the ditch, which [Jesus](#) describes in [Luke 6:39](#). While we are all sinful creatures, we need to make sure that we cast our most discerning gazes on ourselves and, in all humility, refrain from "fixing" others, especially when we have similar problems!

What kind of adjustments can we make to compensate for our innate blindness to see what is really going on in another's life? The physically vision-impaired person may wear glasses or contact lenses or undergo eye surgery to improve his sight problems. But no eyeglasses in [the world](#) can help us to see another person's heart. Laser surgery is worthless against our ignorance of another's background or circumstances. Is there anything we can do?

Years ago, a friend came to church services with a patch over his eye. Concluding that he had injured it, I thought little more about it until he showed up a few weeks later with the patch over the *other* eye. He explained that he was exercising his eyes to improve his vision.

Here is our answer! We must exercise ourselves in the skill of discernment. We must train ourselves in how to "look" at other people. If nothing else, we can "squint," trying to see beyond what we normally and habitually imagine of others. Paul writes in [Acts 24:16](#) (*The Amplified Bible*, AMP): "Therefore I always exercise and discipline myself [mortifying my body, deadening my carnal affections, bodily appetites, and worldly desires, endeavoring in all respects] to have a clear (unshaken, blameless) conscience, void of [offense](#) toward [God](#) and toward men."

The apostle Peter provides us some ground rules for our training in [1 Peter 3:8-12](#):

Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; [love](#) as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. For

"He who would love life and see good days,  
Let him refrain his tongue from evil,  
And his lips from speaking deceit.  
Let him turn away from evil and do good;  
Let him seek [peace](#) and pursue it.  
For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous,  
And His ears are open to their prayers;  
But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil."

To begin recovering from our blindness, then, we must start with true, godly love for our brethren. We have to add sympathy and courtesy and a good measure of helpfulness. We must make sure to bite our tongues, bury our hatchets, and swallow our pride. Most of all, we must remember that God the Judge is watching, and He rewards those who do good and punishes those who cause harm.

In summary, unlike God, we cannot know or understand everything that comes within our view; it is far beyond our capabilities. We have great difficulty seeing beyond our prejudices and opinions. So, we must be careful about what we say and how we react to what we think we have seen. Only

God sees all and knows all, and He is our righteous judge. We need to get out of His way and out of His business!

We need to take pains to improve our judgment and sincerely try to act and react to others in love. We will not do it well every time; it will take consistent effort and commitment. But if we keep at it, our experiences will begin to develop in us a keener "eye" for what others are really like and what they are going through.

It sounds like a lot of work, a lot to bear in mind. But what is it worth to see the truth?

— Dan Elmore

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