

Impaired Vision

“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?” (Matthew 7:3)

We always know better — or so we think! We watch sporting events, and we always know the better play to call or the better pitch to throw. We evaluate politics, and we always have a better handle on what is best for the country. We look at our employers and are confident we know the ways to run the company more efficiently. We consider our teachers and are positive that if they were to take our advice they would be much better teachers.

This confidence washes over to our judgment of others. When we hear of a marriage crumbling we know that if the couple had only done this or that differently things would be much better. We look at those with deteriorating lives, and we see a history of alcoholism, drugs, free-living, or whatever and feel they simply “reaped what they sowed.” Finding fault is one of our most prominent skills. As children our faults were identified by parents and teachers. As adults we identify faults in our children and seek to correct them. And, in others we also identify faults — though we often are not in a position or proactive enough to initiate correction. Instead, we simply judge.

Self-righteous judging results in self-conscious people. The person who makes a mistake or does something “stupid” is convinced others will talk.

For this reason, some people lose their lives. In particular, unborn children die for this reason. Pregnancy outside of marriage, though increasingly accepted in society, is still taboo, especially within the church. Everyone knows that God’s Word speaks against such sexual relations and once a pregnancy begins it is hard to hide what was a “secret sin.” So, to avoid the wagging tongues and condescending looks, the unborn child dies.

The warning from Jesus is that we are not to refrain from judging others. In fact, Scripture tells us we are to judge and make determinations about sinful practices in the lives of fellow believers (see 1 Corinthians 5:12). Jesus’ warning, however, is that we are never to become *self-righteous* in our judging. Such self-righteous judging centers on the error rather than the resolution.

A self-righteous judgment about someone’s sin means our failure to recognize our own comparatively “minor sin” as equally damning before our perfect and just God. Therefore, God wants us to demonstrate we clearly care for others: by not just identifying sin but by helping others see their error, to repent of their sin and finally to help them cope with the consequences of their sin. After all, has not God done just that for each of us in Jesus?

For additional information and resources in dealing with this life topic, visit the Christian Life Resources website at www.ChristianLifeResources.com or call us at 1-800-729-9535.