

TLP 528: If You Want to See Change in Your Family, You Absolutely Must

I. What truth do we need to learn?

- Luke 6:39-42
- We can't teach our children beyond our own spiritual maturity.
- Left to us, our children's spiritual maturity will never rise above our own.
- We *must* address immaturity in our children.
- However, we must first address our own immaturity.

II. How can we better understand this truth?

- The totality of Jesus' teaching in this passage is designed to be understood within the context of one incapable person trying to help another incapable person and the consequences that will occur if they do so. As we relate this to our parenting, we absolutely must grapple with the fact that we can never help our kids be more mature than we currently are.
- There is—in fact—a speck in your child's eye, and yes, it does need addressing. Dealing with the speck in your child's eye is precisely what you should be doing, but if you attempt to do so without first searching your own heart, then you are no better than a blind man who's leading your child to certain doom.
- Jesus actually describes the spiritual issue in our own life as being bigger than the issue in the child's life. He talks about a speck in the other person's eye and a log in our own.
- Jesus says that when we try to deal with our children's spiritual immaturity without first dealing with our own, we are being hypocrites.
- You actually can't see someone's speck if you actually have a log in your eye. And in a very similar way, we are incapable of understanding what the real speck in our kids' life is the we have our own issues with which we're not dealing. We're going to see it wrong every single time.
- There is hope in all of this. By God's grace and His strength, we can deal with the log in our own eye and then successfully help our kids deal with the specks that are in theirs.

III. What does it look like to believe this truth?

- If we truly believe the Bible, we absolutely must judge all of our parenting by whether or not what we're teaching our kids conforms to the righteousness and holiness commanded in the Scriptures. If you truly *believe* that God demands that you teach your kids how to be godly in their daily-living, then you are actually going to do that.
- But Jesus isn't just talking about *what* we teach our kids. *How* we teach those truths is equally important. It doesn't matter how wicked your child is being or how biblical the truth you're trying to give him, if you are not being biblically grateful, joyful, content, peaceful, and obedient, then you are sinning against God and your child. In fact, the log swinging out of your head at that moment is actually bigger than the speck in your son's eye—the very speck you're using to justify your own sinful behavior. If we really believe this truth, we have to make sure that we're not simply parenting with the right content, we absolutely must parent in the right way. This means no sinful anger, no sinful fear, no hatefulness, and no selfishness.
- You have to teach the right thing, and you have to teach it the right way, but—most importantly—you have to teach it for the right reason.

- In order to not be a blind man who is about to drop my kids and me into a giant hole, I have to have one—and only one—goal. In that moment, I'm not trying to remove my kid's speck because I want them to stop what they're doing. I can't try to pull the dust out because I believe it will make them more successful in life. My one and only motivation for addressing their splinter has to be God's honor and glory.
- My child absolutely needs to work hard, follow instructions, flee fornication, speak honestly, be kind, read their Bibles, eat their asparagus, and all the other things that are righteous, but my child needs to do those things simply because they are an act of worship to their Creator. God deserves from them that they do their best and submit to His expectations for their lives.
- So, when I see a speck in my child's eye, I have to want to help them remove it simply because God deserves for them to have clear vision. When the Lord is my sole motivation, I won't be selfishly motivated. It will be very easy to have peace, joy, contentment, and gratitude because I know Who God is, I know His expectations, the situation is not about me, and I can rest on His sovereign control as I faithfully parent for his glory.
- If I truly believe what Jesus is commanding in this passage, I absolutely need to stop myself and consciously evaluate my parenting matter, method, and motivation. If I find that I am not responding in a spiritually mature way, I must address that before I can lead my children around the consequences before them.
- In conclusion, if you want to do more than simply know and understand this parenting command, you have to actually change the way you parent. You need to communicate biblical truth in Christ-honoring ways—for God's sole honor and glory. If you are parenting like that, you don't have a log in your eye. Your vision is clear to see the pitfalls ahead and lead your children to safety.
 - **Recognize that you will almost always have something in your eye.**
 - We're all sinners, and our sin natures are constantly rearing their ugly heads. We mustn't be ignorant nor arrogant enough to think that we can simply jump into a parenting challenge and not at least be *tempted* to do the wrong thing in the wrong way for the wrong reason. We definitely will be tempted. When we start humbly acknowledging that it is easier to parent with a log in our eyes than it is to enter a parenting encounter with perfectly clear vision, we're being honest about our situation and setting ourselves up for success.
 - **Look for the log in your own eye before you deal with the speck in your child's.**
 - This is *not* to say that we ignore our kids' sin or allow physically and/or spiritually dangerous behavior simply because we have to take some time for self-reflection. What I'm saying is that you owe it to God and your children to parent for Him. It is desperately important for you to do your best through the power of the Holy Spirit to parent in holiness. Therefore, you absolutely must make the time for honest, humble, biblical introspection.
 - **Deal with the log in your own eye before you deal with the speck in your child's.**
 - As you enter the challenge, pray. Ask the Lord to convict you of your own log and provide a way to escape the temptation you're going to face (or maybe are already facing). And then immediately implement the truth you know and the advice you've been given about how to avoid the log.
 - Of course, don't slip back into arrogance or ignorance. Just because you start well, doesn't mean you'll end well. Therefore, as you continue parenting your child, continue to check your eye. Those logs can appear out of nowhere and completely blind us. We start parenting as an ambassador of God, but then within minutes we're parenting for our own glory.