to often learn to love. But I am hear speaking of the type of books that have stood throughout the ages and the music that grew out of hearts and souls of men. When we have reached this stage our lives will become well-rounded. And then we will no longer desire the evil things of life for our mind will be lost in those thing which are high and noble.

Finally, we may master our evil selves by developing a continuous prayer and devotional life. Through this process the soul of man will become united with the life of God. Yes this is possible. [Man?] can know God. This has been the ringing cry of the mystic throughout the ages. God is not “wholly other.” God is not a process projected somewhere the lofty blue. God is not a divine hermit hiding himself in a cosmic cave. But God is forever present with us. The God of religion is the God of life. He somehow transcends the world, yet at the same time he is immanent in the world. And so by identifying ourselves with this knowable God our wills will somehow become his will. We will no longer think of our selfish desires. We will somehow rise above evil thoughts. We will no longer possess two personalities but only one. We will be true, because God is truth; we will be just, because God is justice; we will love, because God is love; we will be good, because God is goodness; we will be wise, because God is wisdom.

My friends, there is an evil way opened to you and there is a good way open to you in the final analysis you must desid which way your soul will go. God grant that you will choose your good self thereby mastering your evil self. Rember the words of John Oxenham.

Poem

AD. CSKC: Sermon file, folder 110, "Mastering Our Evil Selves."

---

24 July 1949

Why do you note the Splinter in your brother’s eye and fail to see the plank in your own eye? (Matt. 7:3) (MOFFATT).²

These words of our text found in a recent translation of the New Testament, do nothing to change the meaning of the words found in the Authorized Version; Rather they place this familiar question in a modern frameword.³ This text is presented in words that modern man is well familiar with. We know splinters. We frequently run them through our fingers. Sometimes they are so small that we can hardly see them. Moreover, we know planks. We know that in many instances a plank is large enough to stop a street car.

This figure of speech used by Jesus might seem for the moment quite exaggerated. But if we stop for the moment and analyze human actions with a disinterested eye, we will find that this contrast is not big enough, for it is a common human trait to see the weaknesses of others and never see ones own weakness.

The splinter and plank scandal has presented itself throughout human history. In colonial Virginia a man could be sent to jail for failing to attend church twice on [Sundays?], while at the same time the slave trade went on with the sanction of the church and religions.

Many parents of today spend much time denouncing the actions modern youth and at the same time they fail to supply an example of true Christian living. Sociologists have reminded us that juvenile delinquency has its origin in adult delinquency. But how easy it is for the adult to see the splinter in young peoples eye and fail to see the plank in their own eyes.

Remember how this familiar situation expressed itself in Biblical times. One day the scribes and Pharisees brought unto Jesus a woman [strikeout illegible] who had committed adultery. In an attempt to follow the Mosaic law they had decided to stone her. Adultery always stood out in ancient times Hebrew society as a great sin. Before stoning the woman they decided to question Jesus on the issue. Of course they were all but sure that Jesus would sanction the stoning of this woman. But his reply to this question was quite different; it was a reply filled with psychological meaning. In substance he says, "He who is without sin cast the first stone."⁴ Here Jesus is expressing the well known truth that when it comes to prue and undefied morality we all fall short of the mark. It seems that sin is a well of water that each of us has drawn from

---


³ The King James Version renders this text: "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?"

⁴ John 8:7.
or to change the figure, sin is an ever present shower that sprinkles every one of us. And so none can boast of total purity.

The irony of Jesus still comes to our own day with blistering truth. Let us look on the international scene. [Take the conflict between Russia and America] Our criticism of Russia have been quite severe. We have argued that Russian Communism is the most injurious force in the world today. Any reader of the American newspaper is left with the impression that America is all right and Russia is all wrong. We are forever talking of the imperialistic tendencies of Russia. We talk glibly about her denial of individual freedoms. We dwell on the fact that Communism denies the existence of God. And so our criticisms of the weaknesses of Russia go on ad infinitum. But when we turn the coin to the other side the picture is quite different. We never find ourselves seeing the weaknesses of America. I am not at all saying that there are not some weaknesses in the Russian form of government. I must admit that it does not appeal to me directly. But have we not failed to see the gigantic planks in our eyes. While we see the splinters in Russia’s eye we fail to see the great plank of racial segregation and discrimination which is blocking the progress of America.

2. National scene
   Race relation
   Negroes see the splinters in the white man’s eye and fail to see the planks in their own eye
   1. segreting and discriminating each other.
   2.

3. Church life
   We as church members see the splinter in the worlds eye and fail to see the blank in our own eye.

4. Personal lives
5. [Cxn?]—Jesus as an example.

Only by removing the splinter planks from our eyes can we see clearly how to remove the splinters in our brothers eye.

We must attract people into goodness. Remember the words of Jesus, “If I be lifted up from the earth I will draw all men unto me”.

It is this same Jesus who has become the most influential character in Western Civilization etc.


5. John 12:32; see also Johnson Oatman’s hymn “Lift Him Up.”