



Beneficial Value of Self-Examination

“... first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye” (Matthew 7:5).

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“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 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? 5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye” (Matthew 7:3-5).

The general tendency in majority of people in contemporary times is to find fault with everything and everyone except themselves. Their general attitude is:

- 1) I am right, you are wrong;
- 2) I am holier than thou;
- 3) It is your fault, you need to change, there is nothing wrong with me.
- 4) I am on the right path, but you are not.

We found this exemplified in the story of David when confronted by prophet Nathan. David was quick on passing judgment on the proverbial character in Nathan's story, until the prophet pointed out to him saying “Thou art the man” (2 Samuel 12:7). It has rightly been said that when a person points an accusing index finger on another person, the rest of his/her four fingers are pointing back at him/her.

Through self-righteousness:

- 1) The Jews mistook their Messiah for an imposter, killed Him and forfeited their salvation “Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God” (Romans 10:1-3).
- 2) The messengers of the Lord become blind while claiming to be perfect “Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant?” (Isaiah 42:19).
- 3) Religious leaders become a source of danger to themselves and their followers “Let them alone:

“... how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?” (Matthew 7:4).

they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch” (Matthew 15:14).

Jesus is admonishing in this scripture that examination must first begin with ourselves before we attempt to examine others. Similarly, we first need to correct ourselves before we can see clearly to correct others aright. The prayer of King David in Psalms 51:1-19 is worth consideration in the process of self cleansing

“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. 4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. 5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. 6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. 9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. 11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. 12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. 13 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. 14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. 15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. 16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. 18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem. 19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar”.

David became a better leader of others after he was cleansed. And you too can be the same.