

I am handicapped by that big beam sticking out of my eye and even if the person would ask me to help them to clean his eye or take out a piece of dust, I can't as that big beam is in the way and blocking my sight and the sheer size of it makes it impossible to get close to the other. **That beam is so hard to see in our personal eyes, as that beam is our blinding "self-goodness" which is the reason it's so hard for us to discern it.** Thinking we are better than others, work harder than others, are more sacrificial than others. 'Be not wise in your own arrogance.' (Rom.12:16) We compare ourselves amongst ourselves and so are not wise. (2Cor.10:12) Our comparison should be with Jesus as then we'll follow the right standard.

That beam blinded and blocked us, when we were first told that we were sinners. "I am not a bad person, I am not a sinner; I did not kill anybody, or rob the bank, although I would have liked to, I did not; so I am okay." That beam is like the prerecording of a bad lawyer that is trying to defend us against God's Spirit.

Job had that beam too. He said, "I was eyes to the blind; people listened to me when I spoke. I was a good man and God has it in for me" He was more or less saying, 'I was God's gift to mankind...' But it was not until he acknowledged that, 'I am vile and I repent in dust and ashes' that the Lord rewarded him and gave him back double of what he possessed before it got all taken away from him. (Job 42:1,3,5,6)



The minute, no the second, that we exalt ourselves we set ourselves up for a fall... The classic sample is Simon Peter, 'Though all men shall be offended because of you, yet will I never be offended.' (Mat.26:33) It is statements like this that will take us down. The more we elevate ourselves the harder we fall.

And ouch, a few hours later he denied Jesus three times. Now that hurt badly and he went out and wept bitterly. (Mt.26:75) But he held on and he came through with flying colours.

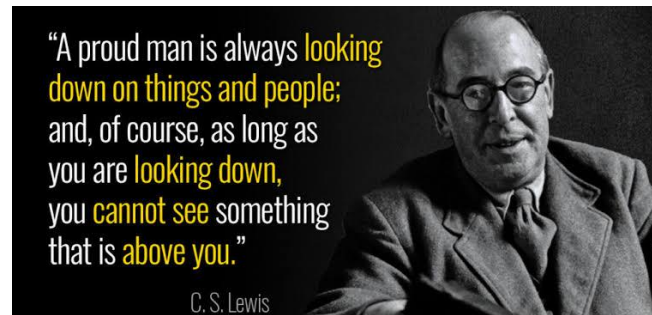


Once we allow the breaking process to help us see the light and the tears wash our eyes then we might see men walking as trees. But slowly if we keep asking Jesus to help us and refuse to judge people, then things become clearer into focus like the blind man that Jesus healed. (Mark 8:24,25)

Pride and self-goodness is like a monster that says it is our friend and that it makes us feel good.

Forget it; it is out to destroy our life and especially our spiritual walk with the Lord.

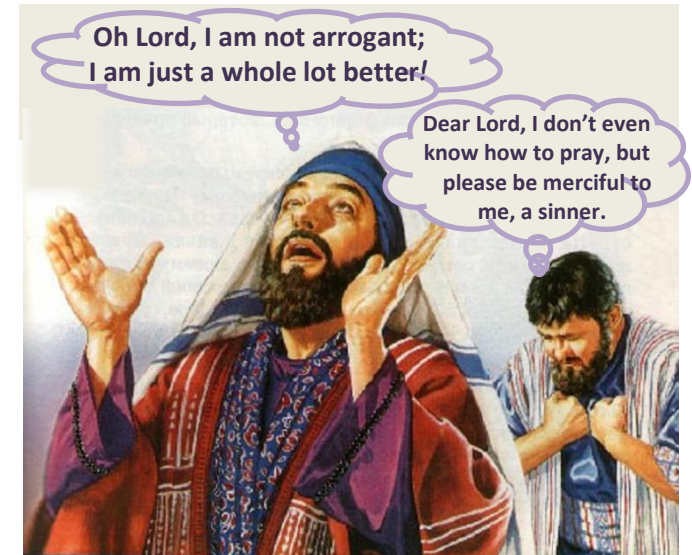
It is a monster with many heads. Prowess, speed, looks, spiritual seniority, work ethics, race, colour, ethnicity, education, titles, religion, blood line, cars, possessions, finances, housing, family, etc., etc. You chop off one head and before you know it the next one is entangling you. We can fight these things all our life and never achieve victory.



That is why the simplest but hardest thing for our pride is to bow our head; go to Jesus and tell him "Jesus I am tired of fighting these things; I am tired of it and I come to you with all my weaknesses and shortcomings; my difficulty with pride and I want to lay it all at your feet. I surrender my all to you. Please take me just the way I am and be merciful unto me, as I can't fight this spiritual menace on my own. I come to

you, I want to be with you and love you and I don't want anything that is not of you. You said in 'everything give thanks' so I want to thank you that I am self-righteous and I would be a black hole if it was not for you. So, if anything and I mean anything good will come from me then it is you, and only your doing. Thank you for that. I give myself totally to you and you do with me whatever you think is best for me to do. I will close here by saying that I am yours and yours alone. It is my humble request that you will keep and watch over me for yourself, for your love and service."

'He spoke unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were good people, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank you, that I **am not as other men are**, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.



And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, **God be merciful to me a sinner.** I tell you; this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalts himself

shall be abased; and he that humbles himself shall be exalted.' (Luke 18:9-14)

And Jesus said, 'For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.'

And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, 'Are we blind also?' Jesus said unto them, 'If you were blind, you should have no sin: but now you say, We see; therefore your sin remains.' (John 9:39-41)

There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness. (Prov.30:12) 'They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not.' (Psalms 135:16)

By having to hold up that heavy beam, you cannot really enjoy life.

You cannot dance, you cannot sing, neither can you get close to anyone as that rotten beam is in the way and you spend



all your energy and strength to keep that beam of self-goodness in front of you. Hoping and thinking that people will respect and admire you for being such a "well-respected good and righteous person."

'Not everyone that says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven... Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? and in your name have cast out devils? and in your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity.' (Mat.7:21-23)

I could never come close to you, as you always kept me at a distance with that big beam of your self-goodness pointing at me and sticking it in my face.

He hated religious hypocrisy more than anything else. Hypocrites, is what Jesus called them, using that word 16 times in the book of Matthew alone. He exposed and blasted them many a time, which cost him his life.

'He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; so they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. (Jn.12:40) It doesn't look like Jesus truly wants to heal them, unless they **see their sin of not believing on him** (Jn 16:9) and see how **despicable** they are with their **condescending and condemning "holiness"**.

And yet we give so much of our strength to uphold that beam. 'What will the neighbours say? We need to keep up with the Joneses.' - 'Get thee behind me Satan because you respect the things of men and not what is of God.' (Mark 8:33) It is that self-goodness-beam that handicaps us. When we pass over into forever land, all that matters then, will be the love, kindness and helping hand that we have given others.

Jesus was full of understanding and love towards the sinners who came to him for mercy. Look at Zaccheus. (Luke 19:5-10) The woman that washed his feet with her tears. (Luke 7:36-48) His compassion for the woman caught in adultery. (John 8:3-11) The Samaritan woman who had five husbands. (John 4:18) Not once was he disrespectful and definitely did not call any of them 'trash'. He ought to have thrown stones at the leper as was the habit, but he touched and healed him.

These women should have been sent to hell but he loved them right into heaven. What a God, what a Man, what a Life-saver... understanding completely how we stumbled into the deepest of hell, but full of compassion he stretches out his hand and if we grab onto it, he pulls us up into his dimension where love and forgiveness are the ground rules and the all-covering, encompassing blanket of protection.

"The believer who stops repenting, stops growing..."

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What did Jesus mean by the BEAM in your eye?



And why do you see the mote (or speck of dust) that is in your brother's eye, but do not consider the beam that is in your own eye? Or how will you say to your brother, Let me pull out the mote out of your eye; and, behold, a beam is in your own eye?

You hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of your own eye; and then you shall clearly see how to take the mote out of your brother's eye. (Mat. 7:3-5)

I have often wondered what that beam meant

although I understood the general principle of what Jesus was trying to say, but I never understood clearly what that beam was that was obstructing me to help others.

This morning it was clear as a bell that beam is my self-righteousness. Self-righteousness is my personal goodness thinking that I am better than others; and because I am better than others, I can't understand them and lovingly help them. Although I can see that something is bothering the person I can preach on the subject, but when I think about it, I don't really put my arm around them and lovingly help, like Jesus did.