

Do the Work | Week 2 - How to Confront Your Own Failures

Message Big Idea

To restore relationships, we must do the work of self-awareness.

Scripture

Matthew 7:3-6, James 4:1-2, Proverbs 14:8, Proverbs 20:5

Opening Questions

1. How have you been able to B.L.E.S.S. someone this week?
2. When you are home alone, do you need the stereo, radio, or TV turned on? Or do you prefer the quiet? Explain.
3. Relationships are challenging. When we think about restoring relationships, it can be tempting to think about how the other person needs to change without thinking about the work we can do on ourselves. Some of the most important work we can do is the work of self-awareness. We could define self-awareness: The ability to identify your emotions, the motivations driving those emotions, and how those emotions are reflected in your actions. How does this definition strike you? In what ways have you grown in self-awareness? How would you like to grow in this area?

Bible Discussion

4. Read Matthew 7:1-6. What do you notice? What does it mean to judge someone else?
5. Look at verses 3-5. Imagine someone with a 2x4 sticking out of their eye trying to pinpoint a speck of sawdust in someone else's eye. What does someone need to do to get a plank out of their own eye?
6. How does "having a plank in your eye" obscure how you see yourself and others?
7. Look at verse 6. The point here isn't that some people are dogs or pigs; the point is that those animals can't eat pearls. Giving our pearls of advice to others can be another way of judging and condemning. See Dallas Willard on this: "What a picture this is of our efforts to correct and control others by pouring our good things, often truly precious things, upon them—things that they nevertheless simply cannot ingest and use to nourish themselves. Often we do not even listen to them. We 'know' without listening. Jesus saw it going on around him all the time, as we do today. And the outcome is usually exactly the same as with the pig and the dog. Our good intentions make little difference. The needy person will finally become angry and attack us. The point is not the waste of the 'pearl' but that the person given the pearl is not helped." What do you think of Willard's thoughts on this verse?

Life Application

8. Last week we practiced a breath prayer. What was it like to try that this week?
9. As we've talked about self-awareness, is there a relationship in mind where you could be more self-aware?
10. The point of self-awareness isn't to be harsh with ourselves but to notice where we need to grow and ask for help from God and others. We want to incorporate a new breath prayer this week to help us "Do the Work." This week let's breathe in and say, "God, show me you." Then as we breathe out, we can pray, "God, show me, me." Can we all commit to trying this prayer for the next week?
11. How can we be helpful to one another? How can we support one another in this effort?