

## Looking in the Mirror

### *Is it more difficult than looking across the table?*

I am *not* a selfish person...or so I thought. A few years into our marriage it was obvious – at least to me – that it was Gary who always put his agenda ahead of all others in our marriage. I felt that I was expected to follow along. That perspective readily lent itself to the role of martyrdom, a role that I assumed, of course, with a great deal of “grace and humility.”

In truth, I was looking across the table and putting most of the blame for our marital difficulties on Gary. I was so busy “defending” myself that I failed to personalize the message in Matthew 7:3 – “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye.” As long as my focus remained on Gary, I didn’t have to face my part in our struggles. Both of us became very good at identifying the other’s “specks” and constantly reminded one another of those irritating flaws.

As I began drawing closer to God, He began putting people in my life who displayed behaviors that were uncannily similar to mine. God opened my eyes to see how those behaviors were selfish or self-serving. For example, I had never noticed how frustrating it was to be interrupted or not be able to get a word into a conversation. I began to see the many ways in which I also put my agenda or priorities before those of my marriage and family. It was painful to begin looking in the mirror, but the greatest growth came from recognizing the truth. I can only change one person...and that wasn’t Gary. As I began to focus on the ways in which I hurt my husband and our marriage, God graciously changed my heart.

Removing the “planks” from our eyes is a life-long process...accomplished only with the grace-filled assistance from God. As both my husband and I became willing to look in our respective mirrors, God opened our hearts to becoming the individuals He desired us to be. And, most importantly, looking across the table was no longer an exercise of criticism and finger-pointing but, rather, an act of love.

Are you willing to look in the mirror...and leave your husband’s changes to God?