

The SPECK *and the* PLANK

Matthew 7:1-5

The STORIES

JESUS  TOLD

— INTRO

WELCOME TO WEEK TWO OF THE STORIES JESUS TOLD SERIES!

As you get ready to dig into the parable of The Speck and the Plank, take a moment to refresh yourself on (or even bookmark) the [COMA Overview](#) and [Worksheet](#) to help you navigate your group time together.

READ



AS A GROUP, READ MATTHEW 7:1-5

One person could read the whole passage, or you could take turns reading verse by verse. Note any initial thoughts or questions that come to mind. It's okay if you aren't super confident or clear; the Context and Message sections below will help clarify your journey through the text.

CONTEXT

After noting your initial observations, read through the context of the passage provided below. Note how these insights challenge or clarify your understanding of the story.

In this parable, Jesus expands upon prevailing Jewish wisdom of the time. In the first century, rabbis taught from the scriptures we now call the Old Testament, and they saw morality from a "reap-what-you-sow" perspective (Exodus 21:23-27, Proverbs 19:17). In its simplest sense, it meant you follow the rules and judge those who don't.

But, Jesus casts a new vision of his coming kingdom in the parable - one marked by humility, love, and self-sacrifice (Philippians 2:3-8). Judgment looks different when its desired finish line is grace. To get his point across as vividly as possible, Jesus uses exaggeration in the story of the plank and the speck. The story's absurdity should shock us into a discovery: that the judgmental attitudes and behaviors we carry with us daily are far more ridiculous than we want to believe.

OBSERVATION

With the text's context in mind, reread the passage together. When you're finished, pause for a few minutes to silently note your own observations and questions. Utilize the Observation questions listed on the [COMA Overview sheet](#) to guide you. Remember, we believe every word is inspired by God and included for a reason.

When your group is ready, share both your initial observations and how those were impacted by the context of the story. Share anything particularly interesting, curious, confusing, or convicting. Notice if there are any themes for you and your group.

MEANING

DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TOGETHER AS A GROUP TO HELP DRAW OUT THE MEANING OF THE AUTHOR'S TEXT.

1. In verses 1-2, Jesus shares both a command and a consequence. How might you summarize his statements in your own words?
2. Judgment, retaliation, and revenge often don't get us what we want. In many cases, it's just a short-term solution. With Jesus' parable in mind, how should we respond when we disagree or want to judge someone?
3. Share a time when being corrected by someone was a positive experience for you. What about their approach was meaningful and beneficial to you? How does this experience connect with the story Jesus told?

Note: UTILIZE THE MEANING QUESTIONS ON THE [COMA OVERVIEW SHEET](#) FOR ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION, IF DESIRED.

APPLICATION

Jesus' direction to find the "plank" in our own lives implies we each fall short of his expectations in judging and interacting with those we disagree with. As a result, we need to take the time to slow down and examine ourselves before sharing correction with others.

1. What "specks" are typically most triggering for you? How can an awareness of these help you anticipate interactions with others?
2. What self-check questions could you ask yourself before you offer correction to someone?
3. While reflecting during this study, were you reminded of any plank/speck situations you handled poorly? Is there anyone you need to apologize to after identifying the "plank" in your life?

PRAYER

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING PRAYER PROMPTS TO GUIDE YOUR TIME WITH GOD AND YOUR GROUP:

- Thank God for his grace in each of our speck/plank situations.
- Ask him to reveal where we need reconciliation and where we can celebrate navigating disagreement and correction well.
- Ask him to grow a heart of humility knowing we each carry areas in our lives in need of correction and benefit from God's grace each day.

KEEP GOING

Each week, we're providing additional resources to help you continue to learn how to read, navigate, and study Scripture beyond the stories Jesus told. We hope these additional "tools in your toolbox" will help you engage in Scripture more clearly and consistently.

[COMA Bible Study Overview](#)

[COMA Bible Study Worksheet](#)

Download or bookmark the COMA PDFs to help you navigate your group time throughout the series and use during your own personal time reading the Bible.

[Understanding the Bible Isn't as Hard as You May Think](#)
from Life.Church

[How to Start Reading the Bible Every Day ... Without Guilt](#)
from Life.Church