

# 3 Biblical Reasons to Let Go of a Critical Spirit

I've been reading through the gospel of Matthew in the Passion Translation in my time with Jesus each morning. It's been so life-giving to once again return to the life of Christ.

One of the most profound statements Jesus made was, "Refuse to be a critic" (Matt. 7:1, The Passion Translation). Wow! If ever there was a time in history where we need that statement, it's now. Don't believe me? Watch the news. Check out social media. People seem to be screaming their opinions and criticizing those who hold different views more than ever.

Unfortunately, I fear this critical spirit has crept into us as believers. Jesus was clear and concise: Don't judge. What does that mean? Jesus was not saying don't discern between right and wrong. He gives us the Holy Spirit so that we can discern between right and wrong. What He is saying is don't write people off and don't be constantly looking for faults in others. Why? Why is it so important that we let go of a critical spirit?

## 3 Biblical Reasons to Refuse to Be a Critic

**You have enough of your own faults.** Look, we can't waste our energy judging others when we have enough of our own shortcomings to worry about. Jesus put it this way, "Why would you focus on the flaw in someone else's life and yet fail to notice the glaring flaws of your own?" (Matt. 7:3, TPT). Boom! Jesus cuts right through our excuses with this one powerful question. Next time you're tempted to criticize your spouse, stop and consider your own faults. Next time you're tempted to criticize another's parenting philosophy, stop and consider the problems you're having with your own kid. Acknowledge your own blind spots and deal with those. Instead of acting as the

critic, choose to act as the encourager! Seek to encourage others even if you disagree with them.

**You will forfeit happiness if you're constantly criticizing others.** You will always be able to find fault with what others are doing, but when that becomes your focus, you forfeit happiness. Think about it. Do you know any truly happy, joy-filled people who are constantly criticizing others? The happiest people I know are those who focus on the goodness of God rather than the faults of others. The psalmist writes, "The people who love and serve God will be happy indeed" (Ps. 144:15b). Seek to live a simple life. Ask the Holy Spirit each morning, "How can I best serve Jesus today?"

**You are never more like Satan than when you're criticizing others.** Revelation 12:10 describes Satan as accomplishing only one thing: He lives to accuse the followers of Jesus. Day and night, that's all he does. He criticizes and condemns. I don't want to be like Satan. I want to be like Jesus, and that means I need to be ruthless with myself when it comes to criticizing others. And so do you! Next time you're tempted to criticize someone, stop and ask the Holy Spirit to give you the love of Christ for that individual.

Friend, this was a hard blog post to write. But I fear within Christian circles we've become far too lenient with our critical spirit. It's wrong. We need to stop. Why don't you take a minute and pray this prayer with me:

*Lord Jesus, I confess that too often I have been quick to criticize others and write them off. Lord, forgive me. Teach me to love others as You do. Even those who have completely different views than I do. Today, lift my focus to Your goodness rather than the faults and shortcomings of others. May my life be a sweet offering to You! {eo}*

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*This article originally appeared at .*