

Dealing with Criticism God's Way

1. **Review** the life of Jesus, He more than any other person received unfair criticism and set forth our example. We must keep Christ in clear focus at all times.

Hebrews 12:1-2 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 **Looking unto Jesus** the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Matthew 10:24-25 The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. 25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

2. **Realize** who the criticism is coming from and that we are not above being called into question.

Proverbs 27:5-6 Open rebuke is better than secret love. 6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

“**Considerable weight** is to be given to the judgment (counsel) of men and women who live near to God, and in most instances their verdict will not be a mistaken one. Yet this appeal is neither final nor infallible, and is only to be estimated in proportion to the intelligence and piety of those consulted.” C.H. Spurgeon

John 10:31-33 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. 32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? 33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God

Acts 26:24-25 And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. 25 But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.

3. **Remember** in most cases (not all) the criticism that comes from a follower of Christ has some element of truth in it. It is easy to focus on the item (s) the critic has wrong and overlook the bigger picture or other issues that need to be addressed. Guard against reading into criticism more than you should.
4. **Repeatedly** ask for God to show you what He would want you to learn through this even is the criticism is completely inaccurate or unfair.

Psalms 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: 24 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

5. **Remind** yourself it is better to be the one who is ‘wrongly criticized’ than to be the one doing the criticizing.

1Peter 2:19-23 For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 20 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. 21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

6. **Refuse** to get even or become bitter. Being hurt is inevitable, bitterness is optional. **Romans 12:21**

7. **Rest** in the fact that God has abundant grace available for every trial we experience.

2Corinthians 12:7-9 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. 8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

8. **Respond** carefully, don't react. If need be take a few days to evaluate the situation and examine your own heart. You have been wounded; do not ignore that, work on recovery first. **1Timothy 4:16**

Psalms 41:9 Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

Ephesians 4:31-32 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

9. **Rectify** the situation if possible. Try to see their perspective, realize that hurting people – hurt people. You may have a great opportunity to minister to those who sinned against you.

Romans 12:18-21 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. 20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

10. **Repent** of any sin on your part; sinful words, thoughts or deeds.

Psalms 19:14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

Titus 3:2-3 To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men. 3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

“As Christians we must of course repent of all the anger, malice, and self-will which allowed the discussion to become a quarrel at all...There is another question, did you fight fair? Or did we not quite unknowingly falsify the whole issue? Did we pretend to be angry about one thing when we knew, or could have known, that our anger had a different and much less presentable cause? Did we pretend to be ‘hurt’ in our sensitive and tender feelings when envy, ungratified vanity, or self-will was our real trouble? Such tactics often succeed. The other parties give in...We win by cheating; how shall we deal with it in others I am not sure; but we should be **merciless** to its first appearances in ourselves.” C.S. Lewis

11. **Remain** faithful to Christ regardless of the offense or outcome. (Life of Joseph) **Hebrews 11:6**

2Timothy 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

12. **Rejoice** in suffering, this principle when practiced brings glory to God and freedom to your own heart.

Matthew 5:11-12 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. **1Peter 3:12-17, 4:14-16**