

**How to**



**Handle**

**CRITICISM**

*Rodney W. Francis*

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# HOW TO HANDLE CRITICISM

By Rodney W. Francis

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# INTRODUCTION

## Criticism!

We have all experienced getting it at some time or other. To some it is “par for the course” to use a golfing term.

This book is not so much looking at why we get criticized, but more on what do we do with it? How do we handle criticism? I guess if we are completely honest with one another, we would have to admit that, generally speaking, we do not handle criticism well. We don’t like it ... and at times it can really hurt. But it doesn’t have to destroy us!

One thing is for sure: Criticism is not going to go away. We are not going to enter into a stage of life where we will no longer be criticized! So, let’s be big enough and bold enough to recognize that it is going to continue and look at how we can improve the way we handle it . . . How do we re-act to personal criticism?

Criticism can either “make us or break us,” or, to put it another way, make us “better or bitter.” May this little book help each of us to be better as a result of our being made more aware of how to handle criticism.

God bless you.

~ Rodney W. Francis

# Chapter One

## **“Criticism” Comes . . .**

Criticism? Ugh!

It comes to us in all walks of life.

At Home: “Yuk! Who cooked this stuff? It tastes awful!”  
(knowing full well who did cook it!).

“Johnny, how many times have I told you to pick up your things? If I have to tell you again, I’ll let your friends know what an evil little beast you really are!”

At School: When we do well: “Aw, shucks, you are the teacher’s pet; that’s why you score higher marks than me!”

When we don’t do well: “You are just a lazy good for nothing; I don’t know why you are even in this class!”

At Work: “Ol’ Dave’s just a nerd! He hoons around in his car all night and then comes to work so tired he can’t do his work properly.”

“If you’d been watching what you’re doing I wouldn’t have cut my finger!”

“Don’t you feel guilty when you put your hand out for your wages on pay day? It’s not fair; I do twice the work you do and get less money for doing it!”

At Church: “This place is boring! Why don’t they liven it up a bit?” (teenager).

“What’s church coming to? The music is far too loud . . . and I can’t stand the banging of those drums!” (older generation).

“Did you see what she was wearing today? Didn’t like the design . . . or the colour for that matter.”

“I didn’t enjoy the message today. He rambled on about something I can’t remember. Then he didn’t know when to finish so the meal at home got burnt . . . Or, I was late to watch the start of the soccer on TV!” “I could do a better job of it than that pastor!”

“You can’t trust Christians! They’re worse than those who don’t even confess God in their lives!”

“I’ve been let down again! That’s the last time I’ll ask that person for anything . . . or to do a job for me.”

And so we could go on. The illustrations are endless. Unfortunately too many of us can identify as being guilty of such criticisms! We have our “moans” and “grumbles” far too often, and are not always wise about what company we are in when we

“spout forth.” We have become influenced by a society that has become quite cynical about many things in life and this has generated an environment where it has become easy to criticize. To be “cynical” means to be “1. distrustful or contemptuous of virtue, especially selflessness in others; believing the worst of others. 2. sarcastic; mocking. 3. showing contempt for accepted standards of behaviour, especially of honesty or morality” (Collins).

When we are cynical it is so easy to criticize everyone and everything in general. But what is it doing to us? Especially when we are on the receiving end?

In a sense we are like Simon Peter who hastily sliced off the right ear of a fellow by the name of Malchus. Malchus had quite a prominent position as he was “*a servant of the high priest.*” You can read the account in Matthew 26:47-52; Luke 22:50-51 and John 18:10-11. There was tension, conflict and uncertainty all around when Peter did what he did. He lashed out with his sword and off came the ear! (I wonder what part he was really aiming for?) The amazing thing was that Jesus picked that ear up out of the dust, wiped it clean ... and stuck it back on again! He healed the chap.

Criticism is much like Peter’s action. It is easy to lash out . . . to chop someone’s reputation or character off . . . to denigrate with our tongue (which can be much sharper than a steel sword) to the point we “cut off” something from the other person’s life.

Many who give criticism cannot receive criticism! Like Peter they can cut the ear off but have no ability to put it back on again. Only Jesus (and Jesus in us) can bring healing in troubled waters.

I have seen people with the most critical tongue toward others, who when they are likewise criticized have been reduced to tears. They can give it, but cannot take it. The kind of criticism we give will always show other people the condition of our heart, for **“out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks”** (Matthew 12:34).

In Proverbs 6:16-19 (TLB) there is a list of seven things God hates.

Let’s look at them for a moment:

**“For there are six things the Lord hates - no, seven:**

1. **“Haughtiness (“proud” – KJV; “haughty eyes” – NIV).**
2. **Lying.**
3. **Murdering (“hands that devise wicked imaginations – KJV & NIV).**
4. **Plotting evil (“a heart that devises wicked imaginations” – KJV; “a heart that devises wicked schemes” – NIV).**
5. **Eagerness to do wrong (“feet that be swift in running to mischief” – KJV).**
6. **A false witness (“a false witness who pours out lies” – NIV).**
7. **Sowing discord among brothers (“stirs up dissension among brothers” – NIV).”**

If we consider those seven evils, it is easy to see how criticism could feature in several of them. Concerning the first one –

haughtiness or pride – the AMP describes it as *“a proud look [the spirit that makes one overestimate himself and underestimate others]”* (Proverbs 6:17).

Most criticism is exactly that. We think we know better than the one we’re criticizing! But - - -

- Criticism undermines respect.
- Criticism against leaders undermines authority.

Quote: “A diet of minced preacher for Sunday lunch is sure to poison the kids” (David Littlewood, U.K.).

Our ability to handle criticism will determine the ultimate success of our Christian walk. ALL criticism comes from people, and the spiritual forces that motivate them. Christianity is first, and foremost, a ministry of people, to people. We need to realise that we can never expect to please everyone all the time, and that when we make decisions or do things that upset others, that it is the easiest thing out for those people to criticize.

Not all criticism is bad.

- **Constructive criticism can be, and is, a very helpful part of Christian growth.**

The big question is:

- **“ARE WE TEACHABLE?”**
- Are we willing to learn from the criticism that comes our way?
- Can we handle criticism?

- Criticism can hurt!
- When criticism does come, what should we do?

## **1. ASK OURSELVES – “IS IT TRUE?” (Not, “Is it fair?”)**

Do not re-act negatively if it is justified. Let’s be humble enough to receive justified criticism and be prepared to learn from it. If adjustment is needed, let us be gracious and humble enough to make that adjustment. Thank God for someone with enough courage to tell us! (Is there someone close enough to you to tell you when you are wrong?) Do not rush on reading at this point. Honestly ask yourself again: “Is there someone close enough to me to tell me when I am wrong?” . . . when I need to be told I am heading in the wrong direction? . . . Or, I am developing a wrong attitude towards others?” Bad attitudes will cause us to criticize quicker than anything!

If there WAS a justifiable cause for this criticism to be given – and we receive and learn from it – then this can turn into a real blessing for us.

## **2. IF THE CRITICISM IS NOT TRUE, THEN KNOW THAT GOD IS FOR YOU.**

*“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose”* Romans 8:28 (NIV).

*“And we know that all that happens to us is working for our good if we love God and are fitting into His plans”*

(Romans 8:28, TLB).

- Know for sure that:
- God upholds truth.
- God will vindicate truth.
- If you are right and know it, you can afford to WAIT and see your salvation.
- ***“If GOD be for you, who can be against you?”*** (Romans 8:31).

JESUS said: ***“BLESSED ARE YOU, when men shall revile (“to defame, i.e. rail at, chide, taunt, reproach, upbraid” – Strong’s) you, and persecute you, and shall SAY all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. REJOICE and be EXCEEDING GLAD: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets who were before you”*** (Matthew 5:11-12).

The Living Bible is very happy and positive about what to do when we are criticized:

***“When you are reviled and persecuted and lied about because you are My followers - wonderful! Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a tremendous reward awaits you up in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted too”*** (Matthew 5:11-12).

### 3. PRACTICE FORGIVENESS.

Do not allow resentment to get into your spirit. The result will be a stagnation of your spiritual growth.

Forgiveness neutralizes your critic, whereas resentment continues to cause resentment. Forgiveness gives God room to move:

*“And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him and let it drop – leave it, let it go – in order that your Father Who is in heaven may also forgive you your [own] failings and shortcomings and let them drop. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your failings and shortcomings”* (Mark 11:25-26, AMP).

In Genesis chapters 37 to 41:51, JOSEPH was criticized and cast out by his own brothers. He did not hold hatred against them. He forgave and forgot. While in Egypt, Joseph married and had two sons, whom he named Manasseh and Ephraim. Those two names represented two ministries (or ongoing experiences) in Joseph’s life.

“Manasseh” ministry meaning “God has made me forget” or “causing forgetfulness.”

“Ephraim” ministry meaning “doubly fruitful” (and follows the Manasseh ministry).

Things to guard against when we are criticized:

(a) A **“root of bitterness”** (read Hebrews 12:14-15). That was

Esau's problem – don't let it become yours.

- (b) ***“The putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity”*** (Isaiah 58:9), as these things can hinder revival.
- (c) Hatred. Psalm 34:21 says: ***“They that HATE the righteous shall be desolate.”***

Instruction against wrong associations can often bring hatred, but it can also save a soul from the error of his ways (see Proverbs 5:1-14, especially verses 12-14).

Let us not forget the seven things GOD HATES as stated in Proverbs 6:16-19 . . .

1. ***A proud look;***
2. ***A lying tongue;***
3. ***Hands that shed innocent blood;***
4. ***A heart that devises wicked imaginations;***
5. ***Feet that run swift to mischief;***
6. ***A false witness that speaks lies;***
7. ***He that sows discord among brethren.***

(These things could all start in our hearts as a result of not being able to handle criticism).

Henry Ford once said: “I shall never let anyone drag me down by making me hate him.”

***“To learn, you must want to be taught. To refuse reproof is stupid”*** (Proverbs 12:1, TLB).

How easy it is to criticize our pastor when he seeks to correct and

guide us for our own good. If we really do want to learn, we will receive instruction (see Hebrews 13:7,17 & 22).

#### **4. REFUSE TO STRIKE BACK.**

***“Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested Him. With that, one of Jesus’ companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. ‘Put your sword back in its place,’ Jesus said to him, ‘for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. Do you think I cannot call on My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?’”*** (Matthew 26:50-54, NIV).

A legion is approximately 6,000, making it a total of 72,000 angels (The AMP Bible says there were “more than 80,000”). Jesus had all those reinforcements to call on, yet He chose not to. He chose to yield to God and His written Word. He refused to strike back.

Those who live by force shall perish by force. To strike back at criticism is to meet force with force. It is the way of defeat and frustration – motivated by fear . . . fear of being put down . . . fear of being thought ill of.

Remember JESUS: ***“Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened***

*not; but committed Himself to Him (God) who judges righteously” (1 Peter 2:22-23).*

Or, putting it in simpler terms:

*“He (Jesus) never sinned, never told a lie, never answered back when insulted; when He suffered He did not threaten to get even; He left His case in the hands of God Who always judges fairly” (1 Peter 2:22-23, TLB).*

Jesus did not try and justify His course of action. He took the higher path, i.e. that of forgiving His enemies – and He **WON!**

Whenever we move forward in God and take on responsibility of any sort, we become more open for criticism because more people are watching us to see how we “perform.”

## **NUMBERS 12**

Numbers 12:1-15 gives us a good example of how leadership can come under pressure as a result of criticism levelled against it:

**Verse 1:** *“And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married . . .”*

Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses, saying that they did not approve of his marriage to an Ethiopian woman.

**Verse 2:** *“And they said, Has the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? has He not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it.”*

The real reason for the criticism now manifests itself:

- They are jealous of Moses' position of leadership;
- They thought they were just as good as Moses.

***“And THE LORD HEARD IT.”*** God hears all our criticisms!

**Verse 3:** *“(Now the man Moses was very meek, (“humble” – Young’s), above all the men who were upon the face of the earth.)”*

Moses, being very meek, never fought back or tried to justify himself. Moses knew his calling. **His maturity in God had taught him not to seek to justify self. You see, those who are disturbed and overwhelmed by words of slander prove themselves unfit to be in authority.**

**You cannot justify or vindicate yourself. Let God judge!** If a mistake is made, look to the Lord.

At leadership level, or anywhere else for that matter, you cannot establish your own authority. That is God's job and it becomes reality when the people recognise God's hand in our calling. Let us be meek about our position. Moses had tried to establish his own authority 40 years earlier and had failed miserably, committing murder in the process (Exodus 2:13-14). The result was that God could not make him a leader at that time.

**Verse 4:** *“And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out you three unto the*

*tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out.”*

God moved suddenly and separated those involved in the criticism.

**Verse 5:** *“And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.”*

God wanted to talk to Aaron and Miriam (the critical ones).

**Verse 6:** *“And He said, Hear now My words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.”*

God said: *“Hear now My words.”*

- Church criticism often loses sight of God’s will in the matter. God chose to speak to Moses the faithful one.

**Leadership is based on REVELATION. Only those who hear from God can truly lead.** God dealt with the problem. (Can you trust Him to deal with yours?)

**Verses 7-8:** *“My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all My house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently (“to see, look; to show oneself, appear; vision as granted to the prophets, and preeminently to Moses, the vision of God” – Wilson’s) and not in dark speeches; and the similitude (“form, likeness” – Young’s) of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?”*

Notice God called Moses: **“MY servant.”** To speak against God’s servant is foolishness.

The Scriptures declare in 1 Chronicles 16:22 and Psalm 105:15:  
***“Touch not My anointed, and do My prophets no harm.”***

***“Now I know that the LORD saves His anointed; He answers him from His holy heaven with the saving power of His right hand”*** (Psalm 20:6, NIV).

God sets one up. Moses never set himself up. Neither can we. Nor do we have to justify our position: either God does it or it won't be done. God did not say, “Why did you speak against Moses?” but ***“Why did you speak against My servant Moses?”***

To speak against God's servants is to challenge God Himself.

### **Examples:**

Jesus said in Matthew 25:40 (AMP): ***“Truly, I tell you, in as far as you did it to one of the least [in the estimation of men] of these My brethren, you did it to Me.”***

Jesus said to Saul on the Damascus Road: ***I AM JESUS whom you are persecuting***” (Acts 9:5, NIV). Saul was fighting the Christians, but Jesus told him he was fighting Him!

**Verses 9-13 (Numbers 12):** ***“And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and He departed. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous. And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech you, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned. Let her not be as***

*one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb. And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech You" (KJV).*

God was angry with Aaron and Miriam for their unjust criticism. It exposed a wrong attitude in their own hearts! They confessed their foolishness and sin to Moses. Miriam must have been the ring-leader, for she was punished by God for her actions and became leprous. Moses showed his forgiveness by praying for God to heal Miriam. That is all he did – **HE FORGAVE!** Forgiveness defused the criticism and allowed God to work in the situation.

**Korah's rebellion:**

Korah's rebellion (Numbers 16) is also a further example.

# Chapter Two

## Refuse to Become Discouraged

We have discovered that criticism DOES come our way, and it comes in many different forms. There is no way that we are going to avoid it.

One area of re-action we must closely watch and guard against is that of becoming discouraged. When we allow ourselves to get discouraged through criticism, we are permitting our critic to dictate our course.

Failure and success are often separated by only the distance of that one word - discouragement. No one knows how small the margin is between failure and success...faith and fear.

**We cannot allow our whole future to be marred because we re-act wrongly to criticism** – whether that criticism be right or wrong. Many people become discouraged to the point of quitting when they are adversely criticized.

What if Joseph or Moses had quit? Thank God they didn't!  
And thank God, we don't have to either! He has a great future

for everyone of us, and life is too precious for us to be robbed of it by not being able to handle criticism.

**Remember Jesus Christ lives within you – and He is the Conqueror!**

**NEHEMIAH.**

*“When Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies found out that we had almost completed the rebuilding of the wall – though we had not yet hung all the doors of the gates – they sent me a message asking me to meet them in one of the villages in the Plain of Ono. But I realized they were plotting to kill me, so I replied by sending back this message to them: ‘I am doing a great work! Why should I stop to come and visit with you?’*

*Four times they sent the same message, and each time I gave the same reply. The fifth time, Sanballat’s servant came with an open letter in his hand and this is what it said: ‘Geshem tells me that everywhere he goes he hears that the Jews are planning to rebel, and that is why you are building the wall. He claims you plan to be their king - and that is what is being said. He also reports that you have appointed prophets to campaign for you at Jerusalem by saying, ‘Look Nehemiah is just the man we need!’ ‘You can be very sure that I am going to pass these interesting comments on to King Artaxerxes! I suggest that you come and talk it over with me – for that is the only way you can save*

*yourself!'*

*My reply was, 'You know you are lying. There is not one bit of truth to the whole story. You're just trying to scare us into stopping our work' (O Lord God, please strengthen me!) A few days later I went to visit Shemaiah (son of Delaiah, who was the son of Mehetabel), for he said he was receiving a message from God. 'Let us hide in the Temple and bolt the door,' he exclaimed, 'for they are coming tonight to kill you.' But I replied, 'Should I, the governor, run away from danger? And if I go into the Temple, not being a priest, I would forfeit my life. No, I won't do it!'*

*Then I realized that God had not spoken to him, but Tobiah, and Sanballat had hired him to scare me and make me sin by fleeing to the Temple; and then they would be able to accuse me. 'O my God,' I prayed, 'don't forget all the evil of Tobiah, Sanballat, Noadiah the prophetess, and all the other prophets who have tried to discourage me.' When our enemies and the surrounding nations heard about it, they were frightened and humiliated, and they realized that the work had been done with the help of God.*

*During those fifty-two days many letters went back and forth between Tobiah and the wealthy politicians of Judah. For many in Judah had sworn allegiance to him because his father-in-law was Shecaniah (son of Arah) and because his son Jehohanan was married to the daughter of Meshullam (son of Berechiah). They all told me what a wonderful man Tobiah was, and then*

*they told him everything I had said; and Tobiah sent many threatening letters to frighten me”* (Nehemiah 6, TLB).

When Nehemiah was rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, he had times of real discouragement. Instead of it taking him away from God and His call, it pushed him closer to God through prayer. Sanballat tried five times to stop Nehemiah from completing the work of God, and then accused him of being a rebel and a “kingdom builder” for himself. They even accused Nehemiah of appointing prophets to hail him as a king! It was a criticism to stop them from finishing the job.

Nehemiah PRAYED: ***“O Lord God, please strengthen me!”*** Nehemiah conquered because he refused to be discouraged in His divine call and God-given task. He would not be put off by the false accusations and criticisms levelled against him.

It is interesting how Nehemiah was deluged with letters from that “wonderful man” Tobiah. Most leaders have to contend with letters being sent to them from people who believe they have heard “from God” and have been instructed to write and “warn you.” I find it interesting the numbers of people who try and “lovingly” persuade or manipulate the way the church “should” be run. It is a cunning (and often hurtful) type of criticism that can bring great discouragement to young leaders, especially if the letters come from “wonderful Tobiah’s.” (Honest, practical and caring criticism is usually welcomed by leadership and so not all letters to leaders should be seen as negative and wrong).

A lot of criticism comes because it is a way of trying to persuade leaders “to keep in good” with certain influential members who may be good tithers or church workers. Churches that have been in existence for many years are often “controlled” by certain families or influential members. I have personally seen this in operation: one man or family holding control over a whole church, and nobody will dare challenge it. Church is not about control, folks; it’s all about loving and worshipping Jesus out of a free spirit, and doing His will – not some man or family’s will.

Nehemiah stood up to that kind of manipulation, accusations and criticism. He knew what God had called him to do – and he did it. He didn’t try and defend himself. He just would not allow them to turn him off the course God had put him on. And God came through for him in such a way that his accusers were humiliated.

Likewise, we should know what God wants us to do - and get on with doing it! Not allowing petty or malicious criticism to stop us either!

**DAVID.**

*“Now when David and his men came home to Ziklag on the third day, they found that the Amalekites had made a raid on the South and on Ziklag, and had struck Ziklag, and burned it with fire, And had taken the women and all who were there, both great and small, captive. They killed no one, but carried them off, and went on their way.*

*So David and his men came to the town, and behold it*

*was burned; and their wives and sons and daughters were taken captive. Then David and the men with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more strength to weep. David was greatly distressed; for the men spoke of stoning him, because the soul of them was bitterly grieved, each man for his sons and daughters; but David encouraged and strengthened himself in the Lord his God . . .*

*David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken, and rescued his two wives. Nothing was missing, small or great, sons or daughters, spoil, or anything that had been taken; David recovered all” (1 Samuel 30:1-6, 18-19, AMP).*

The Amalekites had smitten Ziklag and burned it with fire, also taking the wives and children of David and his men. When the people saw what had happened they criticized David, even speaking of stoning him (they were discouraged). This greatly distressed David, but he refused to be conquered. The Bible says: **“BUT DAVID ENCOURAGED HIMSELF IN THE LORD HIS GOD”** (1 Samuel 30:6). He had some ‘fight’ in him! The result was David recovered ALL. He refused to be defeated or to accept loss. God honoured that and caused him to recover all.

- Criticism can cost us a lot if we do not handle it properly.

How important it is that we learn from David’s experience. He was attacked verbally by his own men when it was discovered

they had all lost their dearest possessions: wives and children. David was hurting as much as they were, but the criticism still came, vented at David.

Why David? **Because he was the leader.**

Leaders always get criticism levelled against them when the people are grieving the loss of things dear to the heart. I remember a time when I was called to go and visit a young child dying in the hospital. Just as I arrived the child died. When the parents were informed I was there, in their grief they sent a message: “We don’t want to see him unless he can raise the dead!” Fortunately I was mature enough to realise that the statement came out of hearts that were stunned, grieved and feeling totally helpless as their loved one slipped out into eternity. The fact that I had put myself out to visit and to share with them in their time of great need did not even come into the reckoning (and I did not expect it too, either, at such a time). I understood their position and so was able to place it onto God’s altar. This allowed me to have no restrictions on my dealings with them afterwards.

It is at these times of “attack” from our own “flock” or close friends that we have to “dig deep” into our Godly character and **“encourage ourself in the Lord.”** There are times in life that if we do not rise to the need to “*encourage ourself in the Lord*” then we will fall into the trap of discouragement and self-pity.

When David was under the attack of criticism from his grieving friends, he had to make a choice: either he could re-act and

become bitter, **or he could use the situation to become better.** David decided not to re-act, but to cry out to God. **He pressed into God! And, right there in the time of his greatest need, God answered him and instructed him what to do.** God even promised David that he would *“without fail recover all”* (1 Samuel 30:8, KJV).

And that’s exactly what happened!

Instead of it becoming a day of disaster and broken friendships for life, it became a day where they saw the amazing promise of God fulfilled.

It all happened because David made the right decision in a time of hurtful criticism.

- **How do you handle criticism?**
- **What do you allow it to do to you?**
- **Is it destroying you (making you bitter)? . . . or . . .**
- **Is it being used to develop your character (making you better)?**
- **Is there someone you need to release through forgiveness? . . .**

They have criticized you; it has really hurt you, and your relationship is no longer the same. Don’t wait for them to make the first move. **Forgive them! Release them in your own heart and mind! Let the criticism go!** Learn from it and live, rather than let it “eat away” at you and finally ruin you from every chance of serving God out of a free and loving spirit. Learn how to handle criticism in such a way that your life will blossom even

more for God!

- **You can handle criticism!**
- **You can be a winner!**
- **You can, like David, recover all!**
- **Do it for your own good, and for God's glory.**

# Chapter Three

## Summing Up

When criticism comes – **PRAY**. Do not talk it over with men – talk it over with God.

- (a) Review the matter before God. Tell it like it is.
- (b) Acknowledge your hurt. Do not justify yourself.
- (c) Confess your weakness and inability to overcome.
- (d) Ask God to intervene – for the good of ALL concerned.

Place it in God`s hands.

Believe!

Expect a miracle! (Mark 11:24 -26).

### **FINALLY:**

BEFORE you criticize someone else, ask yourself:

- (1) Is it true?

(2) Is it kind?

(3) Is it necessary?

**Bless them in the Name of Jesus!**

**God bless you.**

~ Rodney W. Francis



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