Are You Hyper-Critical?

by Wayne Goff

I've noticed in the last several years in this country the **hyper-critical attitude** that seems too have invaded our national conscience. I believe it stems from media — social, news, internet, etc. — and I think *Christians* need to stop and take a careful look at ourselves to be sure that we have not adopted this worldly, sinful disposition.

Constructive Criticism

None of us are immune from *constructive criticism*. People are always correcting my mistakes and offering suggestions for improvement, and I appreciate it. Whether it's just a misspelled word in the bulletin or powerpoint, or a wrong biblical reference, or a less-than-sensitive comment made during a class or sermon, it is *constructive* and *appreciated*. Some people do not handle this very well, and become offended when someone offers them constructive criticism. As a child of God, all of us need to have the Lord's disposition of humility — great humility — so that we can improve, the church can maintain peace, and all of us can remember that the greater cause (Christ & His church) is preferred over the lesser cause (self).

Hyper-Critical

Hyper-critical is where a person stands back and **CONSTANTLY** "judges" that which they are viewing — sports, politics, or sadly, worship in the Lord's church. Do not get me wrong. My personal theme for 2019 for both me and this congregation is "We Can Do Better!" Song leaders, Bible class teachers, participants in the other acts of public worship, etc. can *always* do better. None of us are perfect, and there are more than enough things to observe and criticize. But some plainly take it too far. They criticize almost *everything* and think it is their "right" to do so. And those who are the worst have never done the thing they criticize so much. For example, listen to sports talk radio and you will hear "experts"(?) who criticize everything a team's owner and manager does, even though they have never owned or managed a team themselves! It's not as easy as it looks. And if those who criticized the worst tried it themselves, they might be a bit more compassionate! The same thing goes for the political arena, social media, etc. But we live in a time where people are more **personally disconnected than ever**, and it's hard to get them to feel empathetic. Just the same, Christians should be the ones in our country leading the way and encouraging others to be more positive-minded. Negativity is draining!

Be A Barnabas

*"And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated **Son of Encouragement**), a Levite of the country of Cyprus"* (Acts 4:36). Every disciple has a different talent, but the church is ever in need of the **"Barnabas"** personality — encouragement is positive, contagious and energizing. If we focus on the positives, then we will find more things to encourage others about.

*"When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and **encouraged** them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord"* (Acts 11:23).

*"And sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and **encourage** you concerning your faith,"* (1 Thess. 3:2).

Be Aware!

Basically, this article stirs all of us to pay attention to our words of **criticism** and **encouragement**. Use wisdom in the selection of words and in the tone in which they are spoken. Our words have great power to encourage or discourage.

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