

The Critical Spirit of a Dead Dog

March 13, 2022

2 Samuel 16:5-14, “When King David came to Bahurim, behold, there came out from there a man of the family of the house of Saul whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera; he came out cursing continually as he came. ⁶ He threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David; and all the people and all the mighty men were at his right hand and at his left. ⁷ Thus Shimei said when he cursed, “Get out, get out, you man of bloodshed, and worthless fellow! ⁸ The Lord has returned upon you all the bloodshed of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the Lord has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. And behold, you are taken in your own evil, for you are a man of bloodshed!”

⁹ Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, “Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over now and cut off his head.” ¹⁰ But the king said, “What have I to do with you, O sons of Zeruiah? If he curses, and if the Lord has told him, ‘Curse David,’ then who shall say, ‘Why have you done so?’” ¹¹ Then David said to Abishai and to all his servants, “Behold, my son who came out from me seeks my life; how much more now this Benjamite? Let him alone and let him curse, for the Lord has told him. ¹² Perhaps the Lord will look on my affliction and return good to me instead of his cursing this day.” ¹³ So David and his men went on the way; and Shimei went along on the hillside parallel with him and as he went he cursed and cast stones and threw dust at him. ¹⁴ The king and all the people who were with him arrived weary and he refreshed himself there.”

2 Questions:

- 1. Do you have a critical spirit?**
- 2. How do you defend against developing a critical spirit?**

1. David listened to the criticism and examined himself honestly

1 Peter 3:8-9, “To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; ⁹ not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.”

Ecclesiastes 7:20, “Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins.”

2. David remembered God's promises and faithfulness

Psalm 3:1-8, *"O Lord, how my enemies have increased!*

Many are rising up against me.

² *Many are saying of my soul,*

"There is no deliverance for him in God."

³ *But You, O Lord, are a shield about me,*

My glory, and the One who lifts my head.

⁴ *I was crying to the Lord with my voice,*

And He answered me from His holy mountain.

⁵ *I lay down and slept;*

I awoke, for the Lord sustains me.

⁶ *I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people*

Who have set themselves against me.

⁷ *Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God!*

For You have smitten all my enemies on the cheek;

You have shattered the teeth of the wicked.

⁸ *Salvation belongs to the Lord;*

Your blessing be upon Your people!"

3. Prepare beforehand

Leviticus 19:16-17, *"You shall not go about as a slanderer...I am the Lord."¹⁷ 'You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart; you may surely reprove your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him."*

You can easily determine godly criticism from ungodly criticism, by asking these three questions:

1. What will have to change in me, before I can approach someone whom I think needs correcting, without incurring sin?
2. What's my plan to face them honestly yet gently, with godly love and humility?
3. Do I find the task thoroughly unpleasant, or am I secretly getting some pleasure out of it?

Matthew 5:11-12, *"Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."*