

“Giving thanks always and for everything...” (Eph 5:20)

If you woke up today with nothing but the things you thanked God for yesterday, what would you have?

By David Maxson

• For his fellowship with the saints in Philippi (**Philippians 1:3-7**).

It makes you stop and think, doesn't it?

• For the faith, hope, and love of the faithful brothers in Colosse and Thessalonica (**Colossians 1:3-5; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3**).

I decided to go through the prayers of Paul to see the things for which he gave thanks. What did Paul's prayers sound like each day? Here's a sample. Paul gave thanks...

• For Timothy, his beloved child (**2 Timothy 1:2-3**).

- For the faith of the Roman saints (**Romans 1:8**).
- For the grace of God given to the church at Corinth (**1 Corinthians 1:4**).

• For Philemon's love and faith toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints (**Philemon 4-5**).

• For the comfort God gives us in every affliction that we may use to comfort others in their affliction (**2 Corinthians 1:3-4**).

And if Paul had all of that from day to day, he would be a very rich man indeed!

• For every spiritual blessing in Christ... our adoption... our redemption... our inheritance (**Ephesians 1:3-14**).

Father, we thank you for all of these special people you have put into our lives who demonstrate for us what true faith is and what genuine love is all about. Most of all, we thank you for Jesus who has made us of such a beautiful family.



Sick			
Sam Cox (Friend of Anna Stallings)	Owen Mauldin (Seth and Summer Mauldin's Son)	Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad)	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Joan Parker (Aurie Adams Grandmother)
Emma Hettinger (William Herd's Mother)	Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother)	Roger Whatley (Daphne Whatley's son)	Andrew Hagewood (Friend of Sarah Norman)
Betty Bradford	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	Sandra Qadeer (Rafia Qadeer's mother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Meredith NeSmith (Jessica Anderson's Cousin)	Emily Stallings (Anna's sister)	Madi Wise (Friend of the Robert's)
Marty Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Peggy Theis (Timothy Jones' grandmother)	Toni and William Herd	Kate Miller (Daughter of Brandon and Erin Miller)

- May Birthdays
- 2 - Emily-Anne Rouse
 - 3 - Paula Davis
 - 4 - Cadence Pittman
 - 10 - Ian Norman
 - 11 - Caleb George
 - 11 - Scott Perkins
 - 12 - Daphene Whatley
 - 13 - Jana Hall
 - 13 - Anna Grace Long
 - 15 - Bryce Daniels
 - 16 - Shawna Harris
 - 19 - Madison Seals
 - 22 - Sarah Holliday
 - 24 - Andy Roberts
 - 25 - Chuck Hahn
 - 26 - Fallon Hartsell
 - 28 - Candy Long
 - 31 - Rachel Tolliver

- News and Notes
- ☒ - Let us remember our upcoming VBS (June 24-27). Cards are in the foyer to be distributed.
 - ☒ - Ryan Hasty will be teaching at night during our VBS. We encourage all to attend!
 - ☒ - Please register your children and guests for the VBS with the forms in the foyer. Give these to Windy Dembowski.
 - ☒ - Debbi Coleman will have knee replacement surgery on Wed.
 - ☒ - Michael Bassie has identified with the University Church!
 - ☒ - We will have our group meetings tonight.

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The Auburn Beacon

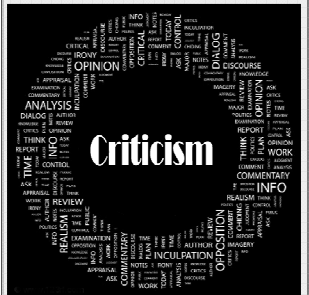
Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (**Matthew 5:16**)



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Criticism

By Dee Bowman



Thoughts to Ponder

The intensity of pressure doesn't matter as much as its location. Does it come between you and God, or does it press you closer to him?

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES
Sunday
Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM
Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM
E-Mail:
larryrouse@aubeacon.com

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

What is criticism anyhow? The dictionary will give some meaning akin to this: to make judgments as to the merits or faults of a thing, or maybe to find fault. Certainly we understand a critic to be one who is qualified to make such judgments or point out such faults. Sometimes the word "critic" is used pejoratively to describe a continual fault-finder, one who judges severely or harshly.

Criticism is part of life. It's everywhere, both in its formal and pejorative senses. Teachers, qualified educators, criticize the work of their students. Parents, by right of who they are, criticize their children, hopefully for their good. Supervisors criticize their subordinates in the interest of more or better production. In the arts, media, and almost every other area of life, those qualified to do so criticize: music, movies, paintings, literary works, and a host of other kinds of artistic performances.

One of the purposes of the Bible is to criticize. It criticizes man's thoughts (**Matt. 15:9; Col. 3:1-2**). It criticizes his actions (**Ezk.**

What is Bible criticism? Well, first of all, all biblically approved criticism is constructive or it is not biblical. Even when it is disciplinary it is intended for the good of the recipient, not just to vent displeasure or display disgust (**1 Cor. 5:4**). That implies proper motivation.

18:20), and brings him under the condemnation of his own transgressions (**Isa. 59:1-2**). Positively ('scuse the word, please), it serves to identify pure religion (**Jas. 1:27**) and, in doing so, is critical of the institutional or poorly motivated variety. Preaching has as one of its purposes to criticize (**2 Tim. 4:1-2**). The Bible points out man's weaknesses, identifies the pitfalls of life, continually calls him to greater service and spiritual maturity. Criticism is a vital part of that.

But not all criticism is approved, either by God or man. It does not stand alone— even by definition,

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certainly not by connotation. It must be properly administered. First, it must be administered by one who is qualified. Criticism of anything by a novice, or one only vaguely familiar with what he is criticizing, is not just out of order, it is ludicrous. Such criticism is easily identifiable and makes the "critic" look foolish indeed. Criticism that is poorly motivated and has slanderous or malevolent overtones often ends up destroying him who did it; and it certainly works no good for the once who is its object. Criticism has to be legitimate or it ends up not being criticism at all. It becomes loud, vitriolic complaining, little else. And criticism just for the sake of doing it is the plaything of a fool.

What is Bible criticism? Well, first of all, all biblically approved criticism is constructive or it is not biblical. Even when it is disciplinary it is intended for the good of the recipient, not just to vent displeasure or display disgust (**I Cor. 5:4**). That implies proper motivation. Criticism intended to inflict damage for damage's sake is not only ineffective, it is sinful. God hates those who "sow discord among the brethren" (**Prov. 6:19**). You had best not criticize another until you have first determined that you love him whom you criticize and that what you are doing is for his betterment. "Ye which are spiritual, restore such a one, in the spirit of meekness" (**Gal. 6:1**); that is, with moderation. Even when you have made certain of a high motive for the rebuke, it is yet necessary that each consider "thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

Criticism is not a knee-jerk reaction, either. It is done only after careful thought and considerable prayer. "Ye that are spiritual, restore such a one" (**Gal. 6:1**) means that you are one who is spiritually inclined, one looking to "bear...one another's burdens." You have to load yourself up with his burden before you decide to slay him for his fault. Matthew 18

sets forth a process (a series of actions) before a person is delivered up to Satan. Even Jesus' rebukes of the Pharisees and their hypocrisy was reserved until He had tried most everything else to cause them to see the errors they fomented.

Certainly, we must be ready to answer those who question our hope. But even that issues out of a sanctified heart and must be done "with meekness and fear" (**I Pet. 3:15-18**). A quick answer very often represents an effort to "get even," and, in many cases, that is precisely what happens: you get right down in the mud where your opponent is.

Here are four suggestions about offering criticisms:

- 1. Examine your motive for the criticism.** "Why am I doing this?" Is a good question to ask yourself. If there is any doubt, wait. (**See I Jn. 4:19-21**)
- 2. Make sure you have all the facts.** Not what someone said someone said, but what he said. And that no matter how much confidence you may have in the one telling it. He may be wrong. In this age of communication there is little reason not to get the facts, and most likely the facts can come only from him who said it. (**See Prov. 18:21**)
- 3. Be careful how you say it.** I have a little card on my desk. I wrote it several years ago. It has served me well. It says, "God, help me not to say more than need be said, and help me to say it softly." A seasoned tongue can accomplish great good with criticism; one not seasoned can produce great evil. (**See Col. 4:6**)
- 4. Pray diligently (out loud) for the one you are criticizing.** It is just reasonable that you will be more gentle, less caustic and abrasive, after you have prayed for the one you plan to criticize against. (**See Jas. 5:16**)

Criticism is serious business.



Show Him Your Hands

By Cloyce Sutton II

Once He and Mom were talking about spiritual matters (probably when all of us children were still young). They turned their attention to heaven, and, in a moment of self-doubt, she asked Dad, "When I meet Jesus, what will I give to him?" Dad's gentle reply was, "Show him your hands."

My mother was not a theologian. Nor would anyone confuse her for an intellectual. I never remember her reading much. She would read her Bible, and she always worked her Bible class lessons. She looked at various housekeeping and craft magazines. She worked her nightly word search puzzles. But, she was not bookish.

Mom was a resourceful, talented, and meticulous woman. She took pride in her home, in maintaining and decorating it. She enjoyed gardening, and gave special attention to her rose bushes. She canned vegetables every summer for years. She was an accomplished seamstress and quilter who taught all her daughters (and one son) how to sew. She enjoyed entertaining people, and frequently had large groups of people into her home for meals.

Mom was always neat and well dressed. She kept the house in meticulous order. She had cabinets, closets and shelves in abundance. Every item in the house had its own place. The house was filled with knick-knacks, but there was a neatness and orderliness that was unmistakable. The woman even kept the original box for every small appliance she owned!

One thing I remember about both Mom and her mother, Grandma Carman, was that they were always busy. Neither of them was idle. Both worked hard and long each day of their

lives. Even when they sat down, they were often busy with their hands — shelling peas, sewing a hem, or making a shopping list. I don't know of any women who worked as hard, and who never complained about their work. Their work was part of their identity.

Shortly after Mom died, Dad related a story to me that greatly resonated with me. Once He and Mom were talking about spiritual matters (probably when all of us children were still young). They turned their attention to heaven, and, in a moment of self-doubt, she asked Dad, "When I meet Jesus, what will I give to him?" Dad's gentle reply was, "Show him your hands."

The sage said of the virtuous woman, "She looks for wool and flax, and works with her hands in delight... She girds herself with strength, and makes her arms strong... She stretches out her hands to the distaff, and her hands grasp the spindle... She extends her hand to the poor, and she stretches out her hands to the needy... She looks well to the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness... Give her the product of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates" (**Proverbs 31:13, 17, 19, 20, 27, 31**).

The Lord has seen my mother's hands.

