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THE ATTITUDE AND CHARACTER SERIES

CRITICAL SPIRIT

Confronting the Heart of a Critic

What Is God's Heart on a Critical Spirit?

Throughout the book of Job, God is mostly silent, speaking only at the beginning and at the end. But make no mistake about it—He doesn't miss a single word of conversation between Job and his three so-called friends.

Never assume that just because God is silent, He is absent. In the end, He speaks up and reveals His heart in response to a critical spirit.

*"One who loves a pure heart
and who speaks with grace
will have the king for a friend."*

(PROVERBS 22:11)

Jesus came to earth clothed in humanity to die for us, but He also came to show us the Father—in human flesh. He did that both by His actions and by His words. Therefore, if we want to know the Father's heart on the subject of a critical spirit, we need only examine the life of Jesus, or the way He behaved toward people and what He said to them. Clearly, He confronted sin in people's lives, but He did it compassionately—not with a critical or condemning spirit. He did it as the Father did then and as He still does now.

God's Heart on a Critical Spirit Through the Words of Jesus

When it comes to interacting with others, Jesus wants us to examine our own conduct and motives. In **Matthew 7:1-5**, Jesus spoke unforgettable words with unforgettable imagery. . . .

Don't be judgmental or you too will be judged. (v. 1)

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged."

Don't judge or you will be judged in the same way and measured by the same standard. (v. 2)

"For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

Don't focus on the small faults of others before focusing on your own big faults. (v. 3)

"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?"

Don't talk to others about their faults while ignoring your own. (v. 4)

"How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye?"

Don't be hypocritical—correct your own faults first! Then you can correct someone else's faults! (v. 5)

"You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

Luke, one of the Gospel writers, records Jesus saying very similar words:

*"Do not judge, and you will not be judged.
Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned.
Forgive, and you will be forgiven."
(LUKE 6:37)*

Go Deeper

Want to learn more about this topic? Check out the *Keys for Living Library* to discover biblical hope and practical help on this topic and many more. The *Keys for Living* are designed to help you—and help you help others—overcome difficulties, grow in maturity, and move forward in life.

Thank you for your interest in Hope for the Heart. We pray God will encourage, equip, and empower you with His life-changing truth.

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P.O. Box 7, Dallas, TX 75221
hopefortheheart.org