

We make a choice to let the light of Jesus, in us, shine through us and we choose not to Throw Shade. We will bless rather than speak maledictions, we will learn how to deal with offenses, and we are going to stop complaining- because using our words in these ways is like opening an umbrella and blocking the light of Jesus.

**James 1:26 Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.**

There are a lot of ways people deceive themselves. But we don't always think about deceiving ourselves with our choice of words and how we use them.

Today, let's talk about criticism. We are deceiving ourselves if we think our critical words are not damaging and hurting people?

**People who constantly criticize others do not realize the damage they are doing.**

They are deceiving themselves!

We don't want to be deceived, so today, we are going to look at three root causes of criticism.

We want to identify these causes of criticism. We don't want our words to nullify every word of life and light we speak by throwing the shade of criticism.

## **Three Root Causes of Destructive Criticism**

### **1. Jealousy and Envy**

**EX:** Your friend finally gets a nice car. You say, “*Wow nice car. But I wouldn't have picked that color, but that's a good car.*” Just a little dig. You just threw a little shade of criticism and now your friend who was super happy is now thinking, “*Maybe I don't like that color after all.*”

Pilate recognized that the criticism against Jesus was motivated by jealousy and envy.

**Mark 15:10 (For he realized by now that the leading priests had arrested Jesus out of envy.)**

The Apostles were arrested because of jealousies towards them.

**Acts 5:17 The high priest and his officials, who were Sadducees, were filled with jealousy.**

Jealousy and Envy can hurt others but also hurt the one who is jealous.

**Proverbs 14:30 (NLT) A peaceful heart leads to a healthy body; jealousy is like cancer in the bones.**

Envy and jealousy rots away at the inside of us. It rots away at our spirit and our soul.

It turns us into bitter, negative, and critical people.

### **Rejoice with the Blessed.**

Paul writes in **Romans 12:15**, ...**Rejoice with those who rejoice...** This is what we are supposed to do.

When something good is happening to somebody, you need to be excited for them.

So, when your friend pulls up in a new car, don't criticize the color. Don't look for something wrong with it. Instead say, “*You deserve this. You've been saving, you've been working hard. I'm so happy for you.*” Rejoice with your friends when they rejoice.

**Next Step: This week I will ask myself, “Am I truly happy for the good things other people experience?” If not, I will allow Jesus to deal with my jealousy and envy.**

## 2. Negativity

Criticism flows from negativity. And it's a problem when all you see in the entire world, everything around you, is what's wrong with it.

We've talked before about our mouths reflecting what's in our hearts. **Luke 6:45 For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.** If negativity is coming out of you, you are full of it on the inside. If you find yourself being critical and full of negativity, it's probably time to reframe your situation.

- **Reframing- Creating a different way of looking at a situation, person, or relationship in a context that allows us to recognize and appreciate positive aspects of our situation.** (Changing or taking off the filter that you are filtering everything through.)

One of Paul's life goals was to go to Rome and preach the good news of Christ Jesus. But in a strange twist Paul makes it to Rome, not as a preacher, but as a prisoner.

- Paul could have taken to social media and posted: Pray for me! Struggling! The food is horrible here. Rats are everywhere, the Guards don't bathe, and they want to execute me! #hate my life right now! # ministry stinks. (BUT That's not what he said!) He said...

**Philippians 1:12-13 Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. 13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ.**

**EX:** Maybe you've had a rough day at work. And your wife, who has worked so hard getting ready to have you come home, and you walk in full of negativity and criticize her. Stop and reframe.

*...whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable-if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-think about such things. Philippians 4:8*

Maybe the reason the house is a little messy and your kids are sitting at the tables so happy is because your wife values your children more than she values keeping a spotless home. They come first. You realize that what she needs isn't your criticism but praise!

Negativity! We've got to get rid of it!

- **Start cheering people on.** Be excited for them.  
...(we) sent Timothy to get you up and about, **cheering you on** so you wouldn't be discouraged by these hard times. **1 Thessalonians 3:2-3 (The Message)**

**Next Step: This week when I feel negativity, I will ask the Holy Spirit to help me see things "in a new light". Reframing the situation.**

## 3. Sarcastic Cut Downs The cut down is the most deceiving of all types of bad criticism.

We think we are being funny. *"Oh, that doesn't really hurt anybody. Nobody really believes that stuff. They don't really feel it."* And all along, those little digs, those little jabs are hurting people.

**Ephesians 5:3-4 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.**

**4 Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.** Don't waste your breath cutting others down when that could be used for giving thanks!

Start encouraging people. We should start building people up, instead of chipping away at them.

**Ephesians 4:29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.**

## Why Is It So Important for Us to Stop Throwing Shade With Criticism?

*Believers Church Mission Statement - To teach, **encourage**, and inspire Authentic Christianity to the people of Statesboro, Bulloch County, and Surrounding Areas*

**Bottom Line – Our mission is too important and our words too powerful to speak carelessly and risk damaging people.**

### The Umbrella of Criticism Must Come Down

Our critical and negative words are throwing too much shade. The light of Jesus is being blocked to the ones that need it most.

We have to surrender our thoughts and words to Jesus. He is the one that changes and transform us. He is the one who can help us get control over our words and start speaking light again.

### What Are Our Words Costing Us?

#### Could Cost You Your Kids.

- Keep criticizing away and five or ten years down the road, they are going to turn away and they are going to wish they had never known you and want nothing to do with you.
- But you can change that today. Allow Jesus to begin to change you and transform you, and you will have a great relationship with your children.

#### Could Cost You Your Spouse.

- He or She might be about ready to walk out the door because everything that comes out of your mouth is criticizing, complaining, negative, and they've had enough.
- You are about to lose something incredibly important and priceless!
- But today is your day to let Jesus change you. Jesus can teach you to speak life!

#### Could Cost You Your Friendships.

- Your negativity, hatefulness, and criticism are just more than they can continue to put up with.
- Maybe even due to this sermon series they are concluding, "I don't need to endure this."
- Today that can all change and your friendships can be made strong. Bond together with cords of the love of Christ Jesus.

#### Could Cost You Your Church.

- Our mouth can cause disunity and divisions within the church like a cancer in the body.
- The church may still exist as an organization, but be powerless with no life flowing.
- We don't have to go there. We can surrender to the leadership of Christ Jesus today. And love and unity will flow freely.

**Ephesians 4:30-31 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.**

**31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.**

**32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.**

We also have the power of agreeing prayer. We can confess our faults to one another and pray for each other and today at the altar we can be free of the shade.

Let's take it to the Lord in prayer today.