

## C3 LEADERS' QUESTIONS

F2022-WEEK 4

9/25/22

### Getting Started with a Warm-Up:

- According to a survey of U.S. adults conducted July 13-19, 2020:

About two-thirds of Americans (64%) say social media have a mostly negative effect on the way things are going in the country today, according to a Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults conducted July 13-19, 2020. Just one-in-ten Americans say social media sites have a mostly positive effect on the way things are going, and one-quarter say these platforms have a neither positive nor negative effect. (Auxier 2020, accessed 9/22/22,

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/10/15/64-of-americans-say-social-media-have-a-mostly-negative-effect-on-the-way-things-are-going-in-the-u-s-today/>, Pew Research Center)

How do you handle criticism on social media?

### Getting Down to Business:

The following questions are following this format: Scripture/Observation, Application, and Prayer (SOAP).

#### 1) Scripture/Observation:

- A. Read Matt. 7:3-4. Why do you suppose some individuals have harsh critical attitudes towards others?

3 “And why worry about a speck in your friend’s eye when you have a log in your own? 4 How can you think of saying to your friend, ‘Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,’ when you can’t see past the log in your own eye? (Matt. 7:3-4 NLT)

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V 1–5: ‘FIRST’ Before criticising or judging others, especially on relatively small things, we should ‘first’ examine ourselves to see and correct our own faults. Perhaps we are far more culpable than those we criticise or

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judge. (Bible Panorama commentary, accessed 9/22/22, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+7%3A3-4&version=NLT>)

- B. Read Matt. 26:6-13. How does this story illustrate how a harsh critical attitude presumes to know unknown motives? (Hint: The disciples implied that feeding the poor was more important than honoring Jesus.)

6 Meanwhile, Jesus was in Bethany at the home of Simon, a man who had previously had leprosy. 7 While he was eating, a woman came in with a beautiful alabaster jar of expensive perfume and poured it over his head.

8 The disciples were indignant when they saw this. "What a waste!" they said. 9 "It could have been sold for a high price and the money given to the poor."

10 But Jesus, aware of this, replied, "Why criticize this woman for doing such a good thing to me? 11 You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me. 12 She has poured this perfume on me to prepare my body for burial. 13 I tell you the truth, wherever the Good News is preached throughout the world, this woman's deed will be remembered and discussed." (Matt. 26:6-13 NLT)

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V 6–13: PREPARATION A woman (elsewhere identified as Mary) pours out fragrant oil on Jesus as He is at the table. Facing the disciples' criticism that the oil could have been sold and the money distributed to the poor, Jesus tells them that He will not be long with them, and that she has done this act in advance for His burial. The fulfillment of His prediction, that her act will be remembered wherever the gospel is preached, is evidenced by the very fact that this incident is contained in the Bible itself. (Bible Panorama commentary, accessed 9/22/22, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matt.+26%3A6-13&version=NLT>)

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C. Read Matt. 12:34-35. Why does a harsh critical attitude reflect a critical heart?

34 You brood of snakes! How could evil men like you speak what is good and right? For whatever is in your heart determines what you say. 35 A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. (Matt. 12:34-35 NLT)

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V 33–37: SPEECH Jesus points out that what we say reveals the true state of our hearts and that every word we speak will one day be subject to God's judgement. (Bible Panorama commentary, accessed 9/22/22, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=%28Matt.+12%3A34-35&version=NLT>)

**2) Application:**

A. Read Matt. 7:3-4 (see above for passage and commentary). What is the first step in defeating harsh criticism? (Hint: Who does it start with?)

B. Read Eph. 4:31-32. Secondly, why is it important for us to consider our new life in Christ Jesus? (Hint: We've been treated better than we deserve. What is this referring to?)

"31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted,

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forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you". (Eph. 4:32 NLT)

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In contrast to the badness and malice in verse 31, verse 32 calls for goodness, which applied to humans is understood as being "kind" (the same root is used for God's kindness in 2:7). Paul also calls for compassion and forgiveness. Goodwill toward other people is assumed for the new being. As elsewhere, treatment of others is grounded in God's treatment of us. Forgiveness (*charizomai*) is not Paul's usual language for salvation. The idea of forgiveness of others being grounded in God's forgiveness is reminiscent of Matthew 6:12, 14–15; 18:21–35; Luke 6:36. Note again the focus on salvation taking place in Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 5:19). (NIV Application Commentary, accessed 9/22/22, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Eph.+4%3A25-32&version=NLT>)

C. Read Gal. 5:14-15. Thirdly, what should be checked before we share?

14 For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you are always biting and devouring one another, watch out! Beware of destroying one another. (Gal. 5:14-15 NLT)

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V 13–15: CALLING The gospel has called the Galatians to liberty. That liberty should be used lovingly to be a blessing to others and not in destructive in-fighting that evidently characterises their lives, and flows from the false teaching, as Paul writes. (Bible Panorama commentary, accessed 9/22/22, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Gal.+5%3A14-15&version=NLT>)

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**3) Prayer:** Harsh criticism can be offensive and lead to responses of sinful anger. Ask the Lord to help you to recognize and defeat a harsh critical attitude that may spring up in you. Ask Him to help you to speak words of encouragement and life. Ask Him to help you extend grace, mercy, forgiveness to those who offend you. Also ask him to help you love others regardless of the situation.

*“Some people make cutting remarks, but the words of the wise bring healing”.*  
(Prov. 12:18 NLT)