



Tri-Village Sermon Discussion Questions

Topic: *Answering the Critic*

Text: John 12:1-8

Service Date: February 2, 2025

Note: The questions are only a starting point for discussion. Don't hesitate to modify, adapt, or highlight only specific ones to fit your group and/or personal study.

Getting Started

- What is one way you've seen God speak in your life or someone else's since the last time your group met? Any notes from your Formation Journal?
- Read John 12:1-8. From either the text or Sunday's sermon, what things stuck out to you?
- How do you react when criticized?

Sermon Discussion

- "Criticism is inevitable" was a point from the sermon. Where have you recently experienced criticism or found yourself being critical? Did the criticism provide any positive outcome or just make your perspective and attitude more negative?
- What is a way to balance giving constructive/needed criticism and just being critical?
- Mary poured perfume on Jesus' feet. The disciples questioned her motive, but Jesus taught them about what a pure heart entails. Have you had any of the "Mary moments" in your life - you've poured out kindness, love or gratitude for someone only to be chastised for action by someone? What was your feeling in the moment, and did you respond in any specific way?
- There will be times in our lives when constructive criticism must be shared. As Christians, how do you envision our criticism should be delivered? How should we receive criticism as Christians?
- No matter how graceful (and needed) feedback is given, sometimes the recipient will only become upset or disagree. In a few times, an individual

may even wear their feelings on their “sleeve” so it’s hard to ever give any honest feedback, even though it would strengthen the relationship or correct the problem. Has this ever happened to you? How do you see the role of outside counsel playing in such situations?

- Many issues that churches struggle with have nothing to do with their mission but are minor things that satan uses in disrupting God’s people and cause disunity (i.e. color of carpet in a building). In essence, individuals start “majoring in minors”. What are some things you’ve seen where individuals became critical about that, in the end, were minor?
- How should we react to those that seem to enjoy tearing us down?
- Below are the five points Brian highlighted in dealing with criticism. When you look at them, which one would you put at the top of your list to focus on at this point in your life?
 - >Criticism is inevitable.
 - >Be discerning. Understand the motives of the criticism.
 - >Be cautious. Not all criticism should be answered.
 - >Be kind. Answer the criticism, but don’t attack the critic.
 - >Be focused. Don’t allow criticism to distort the big picture.
- What lessons can we learn from Jesus’ life about how to both receive and give criticism?

Have you or someone in your group experienced a Story of Life Change?

We’d love to hear about it! In fact, one of Tri-Village’s values is “Stories of Life Change”. Visit tri-village.org/yourstory and share how God worked.