

**Dr. Ron Armstrong • June 28, 2020**  
**Letters from Prison: I Hate Criticism And So Do You**

**Proverbs 13:18** He who ignores discipline comes to poverty and shame, but whoever heeds correction is honored.

**1 Cor. 4:15** Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.

**Matthew 7:1** "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. [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.

[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? [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? [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.

**Romans 15:7** Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.



**A. Everybody hates criticism.**

1. When done poorly, it can damage relationships, but even when done well, it can make us feel rejected. Either way, you should expect an emotional response.
2. Criticism and correction aren't the only tools in the box. Questions, encouragement, or

suggestions are often better tools. Everything isn't a nail that needs to be hammered.

3. Correction is necessary because something can feel very right and still be wrong. We have to be able to gently give it and calmly hear it.

4. Jesus warns us about judging. He is opposing a censorious attitude. (Highly critical, faultfinding, moral superiority)

a. In the NT, this often involved wrongfully deciding who was a Christ-follower and who wasn't.

b. Parents who are correcting are often accused of judging, but they usually aren't.

c. Be especially careful of hypocritical judging or correcting.

**B. Let's start with the "slow down" questions:**

1. Is this something to correct or accept?
2. What kind of issue is this? Is this a:
  - a. Moral issue?
  - b. Taste/preference/ or want issue? Be careful of moral words like "ought" and "should" when dealing with a taste issue.
  - c. Wisdom issue?
3. Some questions to ask before I correct:
  - a. Am I the right person to do this?
  - b. Am I ready to be transparent about my own struggles?
  - c. Have I earned the opportunity to correct?
  - d. Have I affirmed first?