



# ***A Critical Look at Criticism***

Sermon by Ray Reynolds (3/21/10 - AM)

Text: **Philippians 2:14-16**

Introduction: Jesus says, “*Blessed are the peacemakers*” (**Matthew 5:9**). That is a revolutionary concept for people today. Christians are supposed to be makers of peace. When people think about Christians, do they think of us as peace makers? The apostle Paul was not always a peace maker, but a “havoc” creator. Later, after his conversion, he offered some advice to the Christians in Rome saying that there are certain “*things*” that “*make for peace*” (**Romans 14:19**) and that we should pursue those “*things*.” What are those things? Well, in **Philippians 2:14-16** he may be offering insight into those “*things*” that make peace. It might surprise you that they have to do with being less critical and less judgmental in our Christian walk. Let’s study them together . . . .

Discussion:

***I. Before You Criticize Look at the Instructions in Your Bible***

*Do everything without complaining or arguing (v.14)*

**Matthew 7:12, Matthew 7:1, Luke 6:36, Matthew 6:14-15**

***II. Before You Criticize Look at the Intent of Your Heart***

*Then you will be innocent and without any wrong. (v.15)*

**Proverbs 12:15, Proverbs 13:1, Hebrews 12:12-14, Philippians 2:15**

***III. Before You Criticize Look at the Identity of Your Soul***

*You will be God's children without fault. (v.15)*

**Romans 12:9-10, Hebrews 12:14, II Corinthians 13:11.**

***IV. Before You Criticize Look at the Influence of Your Life***

*But you are living with crooked and mean people all around you, among whom you shine like stars in the dark world. (v.15)*

**John 17:20-21, John 13:35, John 15:8**

***V. Before You Criticize Look at the Investment of Your Gift***

*You offer the teaching that gives life. (V.16)*

**John 8:32, II Timothy 3:16-17, Matthew 5:14-16**

Conclusion: Paul was worried that all this advice would fall on deaf ears to those who love to be critical. Look at the later part of v.16, “*So when Christ comes again, I can be happy because my work was not wasted. I ran the race and won.*” Are Paul’s words wasted on you? Or will you accept them? Turn your eyes upon Jesus and think about how He handled critics and criticism. There is only one critic and judge that you should think about, Your God. Turn your criticism over to Him! Turn your whole life over to Him! One day He will return. Are you practicing anything that could keep you from getting to heaven? Repent before it’s too late. Our God is loving, gracious, merciful, and forgiving!

**WORD OF THE DAY = “CRITICIZE”**