

Matthew 7:1-12

How do you overcome a critical spirit?

- I. The origin of a critical spirit
 - A. Defining the critical spirit (v. 1-2, 6; Rom. 14:10)
 - B. Identifying the cause of the critical spirit (v. 3-5; 2 Sam. 12:1-7)
- II. The remedy for a critical spirit
 - A. Persistent prayer (v. 7-8)
 - B. The generosity of God (v. 9-11; Gen. 32:22-32)
- III. The evidence of an uncritical spirit
 - A. The call to love (v. 12; Matt. 22:37-40)
 - B. Love that believes all things (1 Cor. 13:7b)

Application Guide:

1. Are you quick to criticize people? To find fault in people? To point out the worst in people? How might this arise from your own suppressed guilt?
2. Do you persistently ask God for love, purity, humility, sincerity, contentment, and the strength to forgive? How have you seen him graciously and abundantly answer this prayer through hardship and suffering?
3. To love others well, you need two lenses: the lens of justice and the lens of mercy. Why are both necessary to overcoming a critical spirit? Which lens do you tend to neglect?