

Advice Given Before Requested Feels Like Criticism. (January 22, 2026)

“Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, ‘Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!’...So Jesus answered and said to him, ‘What do you want Me to do for you?’ The blind man said to him, ‘Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Go your way; your faith has made you well.’ And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.” (Mark 10:46-52)

Rosemarie Gallatin (wife of Pastor Bil Gallatin) was known to say, “Advice given before it is requested often feels like criticism.” I have found it to be true in my experience whether on the giving or receiving end of that advice. If someone is trying to offer me counsel without me requesting it, I feel like they are taking authority over me and telling me what to do. If I offer advice to another person before they have asked for it, I often find my advice falling on deaf ears. Either way, it is an unpleasant experience.

If people are not asking for your advice, it is most likely the result of one of two reasons: either they do not think you have any advice to give them, or they don’t feel like you understand them enough to give them accurate counsel. In either case, it is best to simply gather more information until they make a request.

The opportunity to offer counsel is earned through empathy. Learn to ask more curious questions before offering quick solutions. Learn to diagnose before making a prescription. Increased understanding and empathetic connection are always beneficial, even if the other person never asks for your advice. Sometimes you can show people love simply by listening to them.

Remember, Jesus understood us before He helped us. God in human flesh had all the answers and yet still asked, “What do you want Me to do for you?” He didn’t want His care to be received as criticism...and I assume you don’t either.