

“The White Feather”

(Luke 6:37-42)

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I. Introduction

A. The story of the “White Feather”

1. How it came to be
 - a. First world war England
 - b. Young men that didn't go off to war
 - c. Came to be considered cowards
 - d. In August 1914 Admiral Charles Fitzgerald founded “*The Order of the White Feather.*” The organization encouraged women to give out white feathers to young men who had not joined the British Army
2. Things quickly got out of hand
 - a. Crowds of young women taunting men on the streets
 - b. A British Victoria Cross winner at Gallipoli, who was wounded at least 24 times, and who was attending a celebration in his honor in his home town was “awarded” a white feather by the young women of the town because he was in civilian clothing.
 - c. Collie Knox tells of what happened to himself and a friend. He himself had been badly smashed up in a flying accident while serving in the Royal Flying Corps. The friend had that very day been decorated for gallantry at Buckingham Palace. They had changed from service dress into civilian clothes and were lunching together at a famous London restaurant, when a girl came up and handed to each of them a white feather—the badge of cowardice.

B. What you don't know about other people

1. Judging them

2. If you only knew what they've been through
3. People from this church....tragedies

C. Today, everybody is a critic

1. TV and radio talk shows
2. The internet
 - a. "Post a comment"
 - b. Sample of mean-spirited criticism
3. The hurt from anonymous critics
 - a. Teen suicides
 - b. Reputations ruined with one click of a mouse

D. Jesus had some comments on "criticism"

II. Review

A. "The Jesus Manifesto"

1. Last time....Revolutionary Love
2. The kind that loves its enemies

B. Now.... Jesus talks about "criticism"

1. Why you should be careful in judging others
2. Jesus shares some powerful lessons for us today

III. Text...Luke 6:37-42

A. What goes around, comes around (Luke 6:37-38)

*Overview of verses

1. Likely referring to our behavior with unbelievers

- a. The previous comments about loving our enemies
 - b. Don't make enemies out of the mission field
2. Applies to our treatment of all people
 3. The principle of proportionate return

1. Judging

Do not judge, and you will not be judged. (Luke 6:37)

- a. Don't assume guilt
 1. You are ignorant of their background
 2. Don't know what that person has been through
 3. May be making great strides
- b. Who knows how you would have responded given the same situation

1. Galatians 6:1

“Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.”

- c. People will return to you the same
 1. ***“and you will not be judged”***
 2. The same measuring stick will be used on you

2. Condemning

Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. (Luke 6:37)

- a. Don't condemn the sinner
 1. Or you'll get condemnation in return
- b. And it's not your job to condemn them or anyone else
- c. This doesn't mean we are to wink at sin

3. *Forgiving*

Forgive, and you will be forgiven. (Luke 6:37)

- a. Forgive and you will be forgiven
- b. The power of forgiveness

4. *Giving*

(38) Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. (Luke 6:38)

- a. The command to give to others
 1. To your enemies
 2. To those in need
 3. Through the local church
- b. The promise of proportional blessing
 1. *Give, and it will be given to you....For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you*
- c. The “full measure”
 1. *A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap.*
 2. Jeremias writing on this passage said:

“The measuring of corn is a process which is carried out according to an established pattern in Israel. The seller crouches on the ground, puts his legs around a large basket, called a measure. First of all, he fills it three quarters full and then gives the basket a rotating shake to make the grain settle. Once the rotary motion is done with the three-quarter filled basket, it all settles and all the little grains find all the space and fill it up. Then he presses the corn together strongly with both hands, pushing and pushing and pushing it down. Finally he piles it into a cone with a point in the middle tapping it carefully to press the grains together, from time to time boring a hole in the cone and pouring more in. He pours more and more in till the cone gets to the very place where it doesn't run down any more. That's a full measure.

3. Love and people will return the love in full...and overflowing

d. ***“poured into your lap”***

1. The folds in their robes
2. Too much to carry
3. Overflowing with blessing

e. Who gives this blessing to you?

1. ***“will be poured into your lap”***

a. *“dosousin” from root “did o mee”*

1. Third person plural
2. Future tense
3. Active voice

b. ***“shall they give into your bosom”***

2. Who is the “they”

- a. The people you’ve been kind to
- b. Other people

f. The blessing of giving to God

1. Blessed now....and later
2. In proportion to the sacrifice
3. Are you giving sacrificially?

g. If you’re seeking the full measure of God’s blessing...

h. Discussion yesterday regarding tithing

1. How God is able to bless
2. He blesses in proportion to your sacrifice

3. Doesn't always mean wealth...but often does
4. 10 % is his standard
5. Test God with some level of commitment
 - a. And watch it grow!
6. Start now

B. Be careful who you follow (Luke 6:39-40)

(39) He also told them this parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? (40) A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.

- a. Lots of blind people back then
- b. The problem of dry wells....pits
 1. Didn't always bother to fill them
 2. Problem with blind falling into them
- c. The blind leading the blind
- d. Refers to teachers
- e. The importance of teachers (James 3:1)

"Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly"

- f. I'll have to give an account for you (Hebrews 13:17)

"Obey your leader and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account."

- g. False teachers can be very clever...and dangerous
 1. 90 % truth with 10 % error
 2. Hebrews 13:9

"Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teaching"

- h. Be careful
 - 1. Books you read
 - a. Books I'll read...but not recommend
 - 2. Talk shows
 - 3. Movies

C. Examine your own life first (Luke 6:41-42)

(41) 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? (42) How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

- a. Likely talking about Pharisees
 - 1. Self-righteousness
- b. But applies to our lives
- c. The speck and the plank
 - 1. The "speck"
 - a. A tiny woodchip
 - 2. The "plank"
 - b. A 2 x 4
 - 3. Standing there with a 2 x 4 hanging out of your eye and pointing to my sliver!
- d. What a bunch of phonies!
 - 1. Who do they think they are?
 - 2. Get your life straight first!
- e. Worry about your own problems

1. What are you wrestling with?
2. Be careful with criticism

IV. Summary

A. Critics in the local church

1. Search for the negative in every situation

- a. Critical of church or minister
 1. Especially their own
 2. David..... “Tell it not in Gath”
- b. Assume bad motive from somebody
 1. “I wonder what he’s trying to do”
- c. I love people who assume the best
 1. Always give the benefit of the doubt
 2. Innocent till proven guilty
- d. The Preacher’s Complaint Book (#950)

A preacher had on his desk a special book labeled “Complaints of members against one another.” When one of his people called to tell him the faults of another he would say, “Well, here’s my complaint book. I’ll write down what you say, and you can sign it. Then when I have to take up the matter officially I shall know what I may expect you to testify to.” The sight of the open book and the ready pen had its effect. “Oh, no, I couldn’t sign anything like that!” and no entry was made. The preacher kept the book for forty years, opened it probably a thousand times, and never wrote a line in it.

2. Their goal is to hurt rather than to help

- a. Some would say—“I’m telling you this for your own good”
 1. Wrong!
 2. Goal is to hurt!

b. William Penn— *“They have a right to censure who have a heart to help”*

c. *“If criticizing gives you pain, then do it. If it gives you the slightest pleasure, keep your mouth shut.”*

1. The lower your friend is, the taller you feel

2. Critical of those closest

d. It is a question of your heart

3. *One of Satan’s most effective weapons*

a. He takes great joy in seeing a “Christian” destroy a godly reputation

b. He takes great delight in hearing church members criticizing the body of Jesus Christ

c. Example when youth pastor

d. Never in front of unbelievers

1. “Tell it not in Gath”

e. The impact on church growth

1. When the Spirit is quenched

2. Discouraging!

f. Examples at speaking engagements

B. How to Handle Criticism

1. *Expect some degree of criticism*

a. Some people can’t tolerate any criticism

b. Yet the greater your impact, the greater the criticism

1. The only thing that doesn’t create friction is standing still

c. “When you make your mark in the world, watch out for the guys with the big erasers”

- d. Great men – great criticism
- e. Lincoln “Team of Rivals”

Abraham Lincoln once said, “If I tried to read, much less answer, all the criticisms made of me, and all the attacks leveled against me, this office would have to be closed for all other business. I do the best I know how, the very best I can. And I mean to keep on doing this, down to the very end. If the end brings me out all wrong, then angels swearing I had been right would make no difference. If the end brings me out all right, then what is said against me now will not amount to anything.”

2. Turn it over to God

- a. Ask God to remove bitterness and the urge to counter-criticize

3. Try to walk in your critic’s shoes

- a. Their background
- b. Ingrained bias
- c. Fear of change

4. Search for the kernel of truth

- a. In nearly every criticism
- b. My job is not to get even but to search
- c. Anthony Compolo—“*We have met the enemy—and they are partly right!*”
- d. “*The trouble with most of us is that we would rather be ruined by praise than saved by criticism*” “Norman Vincent Peale”

5. Focus on the task, not the criticism

- a. Panama Canal (#939)

While contending with the manifold problems of geography and climate in the building of the Panama Canal, Colonel George Washington Goethals had to endure the carping criticism of countless busybodies back home who freely predicted that he would never complete his great task. But the resolute builder pressed steadily forward in his work and said nothing.

“Aren’t you going to answer your critics?” a subordinate inquired.
 “In time,” Goethals replied.

“How?”
“The great engineer smiled.
“With the canal,” he replied.

—Adrian Anderson

C. My vision for Chapel Pointe

1. Molding into a special kind of people
 - a. Non-judgmental.....Non-condemning
 - b. Forgiving and giving
2. People who act like Jesus