



Jeff Sweeten

Thus Saith the Lord

THE CRITIC

By Jeff Sweeten

I don't know who said it, but the statement is certainly correct: "You can't please everyone." Even the scriptures teach us to be at peace with everyone, "*as much as lieth in you*" (Romans 12:18), implying that some folks just don't want to get along. There is always a critic. They are the first to find fault and they always know why "it" (whatever "it" is) won't work. You could baptize half the town and the critic would complain about the poor use of water in our current drought. Jesus was no stranger to this kind of critic.

During a period of intense scrutiny, He answered His antagonists with the following in Matthew 11:16-19. "*But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.*"

His point was this: God sent John the Immerser in his austerity and desert isolation and they accused him of having a demon; God sent His Son whose life and associations reflected the normal culture of that time and they accused him of excesses and improprieties. In doing this they were like unsatisfiable children who cannot be pleased, who will never be happy in any circumstance of joy or sorrow. And then, Jesus rebuked them!

It is a sad fact that in the Lord's church today, constant complainers exist. There is always a critic. These kinds of people stunt church growth, cause strife, and hinder fellowship. They suppress Christian enthusiasm for public service for fear of constant nit-picking. They stir up resentment for church leaders, never satisfied with the efforts of elders attempting to foster increase in the Kingdom. They cause hard feelings to fester beneath a surface of feigned civility, driving wedges between brethren. And Jesus will rebuke them!

The only legitimate "complaint" a Christian ever has is involves a person who claims to follow God when he/she refuses to use God's Revelation as his/her guide. Of course, this is not the complaint of a complainer, but is the necessary call for those lost to come to Christ and a faith-based activity to back it up. "*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them*" (Ephesians 5:11). It is not a complaint to point out departures from God's Word; it is just being a Christian (1 Peter 3:15). In fact, "good" works are not "good" if God does not authorize them (Colossians 3:17).

Therefore, a Christian should not be numbered among those who practice discontentment. Instead, "*Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another*" (Romans 14:19).

Thus Saith the Lord
is presented by the

Park Heights Church of Christ

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Hamilton
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Schedule of Services

SUNDAY

9:30 a.m. Bible Class
10:25 a.m. Morning Worship
1:30 p.m. Afternoon Worship

WEDNESDAY

7:00 p.m. Bible Study

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