

Is It Narrow Minded?

I don't know about you, but I get a little weary of hearing the word "narrow" used as a slur against preachers who adhere to the Bible in their preaching. Sure they are "narrow," but so are factory workers, surgeons, druggists, and teachers.

The factory worker is so "narrow" that he uses micrometers and measures to the thousandth of an inch the bores and pistons of engines, electronic components and balancing wheels in timepieces.

The surgeon is so "narrow" that he insists on ultra-technical laboratory analysis and meticulously sterilized instruments of special design. Why is he so "picky narrow" that he makes his assistants wear cloths over their faces?

The druggist is so "narrow" that he just has to have a prescription before he will let you have certain drugs. He says he has to be "narrow" because government regulations are narrow, and even thinks it is for your good!

As you think about it, it's a blessing that somebody is "narrow-minded." And however much we need to be narrow about vital material matters, we must be infinitely more careful and exact about spiritual laws. God will not be mocked!

- by Jere Frost

Before We Criticize . . .

There are times when mistakes are made, and things need to be pointed out. And, unfortunately, we all know that offering criticism can sometimes make a bad situation even worse. Serious thought needs to go into what we will say. Maybe it would help if we would ask the following questions before offering criticism:

Why am I doing this?

Do I really want to help this person, or am I just doing this to make myself feel better? Am I trying to improve the situation, or do I just want to say, "I told you so!"? What is my motive? "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others" (Philippians 2:3-4). Regardless of what the world believes, we don't have the right to let off some steam at the expense of another. Criticism that is only going to make us feel better needs to be kept to ourselves.

Do I have a right to criticize?

Was I available when this person could have used some help before? Can I sympathize with what they are going through? Can I offer some positive suggestions to go along with the criticism? Some people like to just sit on the sidelines and criticize the labors of others. Such people really have no right to criticize.

Have I examined myself?

It is not right for me to give criticism that I am not willing to take. Jesus says that I must make sure that the log is out of my eye first, then I can offer to help my brother get the speck out of his eye (Matthew 7:3-5). Criticism is respected when it comes from a respectable person, but no one appreciates a hypocrite.

What will I say, and how will I say it?

This is very important. I must choose my words very carefully. They have the power to build up or to destroy (Proverbs 12:18; 16:24). As Paul said, "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt" (Colossians 4:6). What we say, and the way we say it, will make all the difference in the world.

Will it glorify God?

"Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). Whose glory am I seeking? Am I saying something to help the cause of Christ or just to be heard? If it is just to be seen and heard by men, then truly I have my reward (Matthew 6:1-6).

- by **Heath Rogers**

Design and the Designer

The *Journal of the American Medical Association* give this interesting report: "The hummingbird is the smallest bird on earth - some species weigh no more than a dime. It has the highest rate of metabolism (at rest, about 50 times faster than man's) and thus must consume enormous amounts of nectar to avoid starvation. Not adapted for night feeding, it must stretch its food stores from dusk to dawn. To accomplish this, nature has equipped the hummingbird with a unique energy-saving design: the ability to hibernate overnight. During the night, the hummingbird's metabolic rate is only one-fifteenth as rapid as in the daytime, and its body temperature drops to that of the surrounding air. The bird becomes torpid, scarcely able to move. When it does stir, it moves as though congealed. By daybreak, the hummingbird's body spontaneously resumes its normal temperature and high metabolic rate, ready once again to dart off in search of food."

The physical world is literally full of amazing examples of design which the atheist and evolutionist cannot explain. The simple case of the hummingbird is a case in point. Just how did this incredible little creature develop its unique characteristics which allow it to function so well in this world? Could this have happened by chance? And if it came about by gradual evolution, how did the hummingbird survive over millions of years while this awesome metabolic regulator was evolving? This one simple example is sufficient to illustrate the overwhelming difficulties of the theory of evolution.

What we're saying here is that when we see obvious design in anything - a car, a house, or a hummingbird - that design necessarily implies that there is a designer. In the case of the hummingbird (and all the rest of physical nature) the designer is Almighty God. "For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God" (Heb. 3:4).

- by **Greg Gwin**