

“Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?”

How do we know which is which? That’s where the promise of the Spirit is so comforting. He will lead us to remember the words of Jesus and learn the truth we must follow. How do we know we’re listening to the Spirit of God and not to our own desires? That’s where the witness of the brothers and sisters in the church can help. They can point out things we’re overlooking and ask us questions we might have forgotten to ask.

As Jesus promised, in John 15, when we abide together in him, the true vine, we can grow together in the love and power of God and see wonderful things happen. It’s not something we can do on our own. As Jesus said in John 15:5, “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” It all begins with, continues in, and ends at Jesus Christ. Let’s abide together in him and grow in his promises.



Rev. Carey Jo Johnston

CRITICAL THINKING

What happens when believers in Christ are involved with critical thinking?

If we focus on critical thinking as meaning “involving skillful judgment as to truth, merit, etc.” then we as believers want to be involved with critical thinking. We want to be discerning about what the world presents before us. We want to be discerning about our own thoughts to make sure they are in line with God’s thoughts. Paul reminds the church at Corinth “*5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ*” (2 Cor 10:5). We use Scripture to help us discern God’s way and God’s truth. “*For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow;*

it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). We are to be thinking critically about our faith.

However, if we focus on critical thinking as meaning “inclined to find fault or to judge with severity, often too readily,” then as Christians we need to be very careful. How easy it is to criticize what someone else is doing (or not doing). How easy to harbour a critical spirit which leads to critical words that can tear down, rather than build up. We often think and feel that our way is the only way to do something. A critical spirit in this mode can quickly tear down and wound others who do things differently. The Apostle Paul exhorts the church at Philippi, particularly two women in the church who assisted him in spreading the message of Jesus Christ,

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