

## DAY 5: FRIDAY, JANUARY 10

### LET ME BE PRAISED FOR YOU OR CRITICIZED FOR YOU

Everyone wants to be praised, and probably no one wants to be criticized. Yet, there are times and seasons that we go through both. Each one carries its own positives and negatives.

Praise, in its most positive form, is encouragement that we are doing the right things, that we are on the right track. Its very fulfilling when people notice that what we have done is helpful or meaningful. Everybody loves seasons of praise when it feels like we are making a difference.

Receiving praise is an opportunity to recognize the work of God in our lives. James 4:10 (NIV) tells us to “Humble yourselves before the Lord and He will lift you up.” It is not for us to seek praise, but to humble ourselves. When we do receive praise, we should take it as encouragement and give God the glory for what He has done in us.

The part that we often dread are the times of criticism. Criticism hurts and stings when people are mean to us. When criticized, it seems as if nothing is going right. Unfortunately, most of us miss the great value of criticism. These are opportunities for our spiritual growth. Regardless of the source, well-meaning or vindictive, we can use what is said to evaluate for improvement.

Most of all, we must put on the armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18) To not get discouraged and defeated, we fight this spiritual battle with spiritual means. We claim all the Scriptures about who we are in Christ. I am not what others say I am. I am not who I think I am. I am who God says I am!

Today, as we fast and pray, let us do so knowing that whether I am praised for you or criticized for you, Lord, I am Yours!

*Written by Rurel Ausley,  
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## ***PAUSE***

What are your thoughts about praise vs. criticism? What does James 4:10 and Ephesians 6:10-18 say to you about praise? About criticism? Which season are you in right now?

## ***REJOICE***

What can you give thanks for in the two areas of praise and criticism in your life? What are you learning that is helping you?

## ***ASK***

Could you be struggling with pride from too much praise? Could you be discouraged and depressed because of too much criticism? Is there something in these two areas that you might need to commit to prayer and fasting?

## ***YIELD***

What do you need to surrender to the Lord? Can you surrender your reputation to the Lord? Can you humble yourself and wait for God to lift you up? What is God asking you to yield to Him today?