

Reflection Tuesday Week 5 2023

Ronald Rolheiser:

Nobody goes through life without facing criticism, opposition, misunderstanding, suspicion, and experiencing hatred and being accused of hypocrisy. None are easy to deal with. How do we not question our own essential goodness in the face of criticism and judgement? How do we not put our own truth up for grabs when it's bitterly questioned? And how do we sustain ourselves in community and resist the urge to walk away in the face of criticism?

As Jesus moved about, he met every kind of reaction: Sometimes the crowds loved him and tried to make him king, other times the same people hollered for his head, "Crucify him!" He was both loved and hated and there were always some who stood, sincerely no doubt, in bitter opposition and accused him of being the ultimate egoist and blasphemer.

Jesus responded: *"I do the will of my father."*

His identity, his truth, his courage to act, and his joy were all rooted in something beyond the affirmations or criticisms of the moment, beyond public opinion, beyond the judgement of those who hated him.

In the face of criticism and hatred Jesus' key questions weren't: *"Can I live with this criticism? Do I let another's negative judgement intimidate me from the truth and mission I feel called to? Do I let someone's hatred of me destroy my energy and joy?"*

The key questions for Jesus were: *"Can I live with myself? Can I be centred and patient enough to let God, history, and truth be my judge? Can I be sensitive to how I'm seen and judged by others, even as I take my identity from a reality deeper than public opinion and the view of those who dislike me? Can I, by casting my eyes more towards heaven, continue to sustain myself in energy and joy, even in the face of bitterness and hatred?"*

Know and accept that there will always be criticism, anger and even hatred. Jesus experienced this and, in the end, it killed him. He made it clear that it will be no different for us.

My dog is vegan but he is really a hypocrite. Why? Because he always wears a fur coat!!!

My school is so hypocritical. They promote recycled paper ...

But when I recycle papers, suddenly it's *"plagiarism"*.