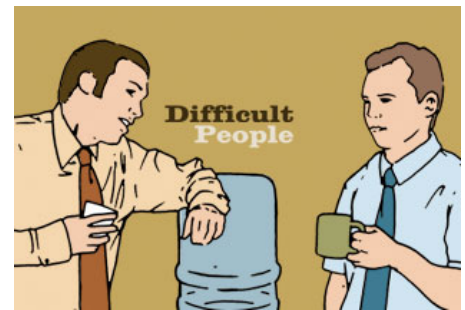


Critical people

Mark 4:3-8 sowing and reaping

Sowing criticism you reap loneliness and isolation - nobody wants to be around you

Not all criticism is bad



So how should we respond to criticism?

Proverbs 15:31-32 if you listen to constructive criticism you will be at home among the wise. If you reject criticism, you only harm yourself

1. LISTEN to it objectively to see if there is any truth to what is being said.

- Is there motive to HELP or HURT YOU!

- are they in a position to HELP YOU

2. ANSWER only if

- The person is missing information that would change their perception

- Only if the person is open to change

Judge 8:1-2 why have you treated us like this? And they criticized him sharply. But he answered them.....

3. DISMISS let it go like water of a ducks back

- When the person had a reputation for being overly critical - Eph 6 put on the armour of God. Now of course the really critical person will try and pass it off as a spiritual fervor, religious duty, maybe even a call if God saying that there are sent of the Lord to be a watchman & gatekeeper,

- When the person is emotionally unhealthy it wounded

So how do you deal with the overtly critical person?

Two things you NEVER DO

1. FIGHT - never react and go to war as it is only attention that they are after.

2. FLIGHT - do not allow them to intimidate you into withdrawing your position, this is a power trip for them and when you back down it gives them a sense of victory because you have complied with their demands.

Ps Craig

Praise and criticism tell us a lot about what people value, have insecurities with, are windows to the heart
Ecclesiastes 7:5

Praise - reveals what you value most

Criticism - reveals your deepest insecurities

Highly critical people are usually wounded people who refuse to give up their offenses

This is a real issue today because people move around from church to church carrying offenses and wounds
Do we ever avoid people who are critical around us?

So how do you help them?

1. Speak the TRUTH in love - call them on their behavior and how they are sabotaging the relationships around them

Proverbs 27:6 faithful are the wounds of a friend but the kisses of an enemy are profuse

John 8:32 if you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples, then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.'

Galatians 6:8 the one who sows to please his sinful nature from that nature will reap destruction, the one who sows to please the spirit, from the spirit will reap eternal life.

- Snared by the world if their own mouth

- He who would have friends must show himself friendly

2. Call GREATNESS out of them - in everyone is some gold, divine spark, everyone is a 10 somewhere

- Speak faith into them and inspire them to let hurts and offenses go and become all that God has created them to be

- Pray by faith all things that be not and though they are

3. Change their CONFESSION - challenge and hold them accountable - to not think bad or negatively about anyone or anything. No speaking any negative words about anybody or anything.

- Only speak words of blessing, life, faith. Goodness, love, life and encouragement

What about when they refuse to change and you're trapped around them? How do I stay free

1. Forgive - don't react simply turn the other cheek

John 23:34 Jesus on the cross father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing

2. Love your enemy - bless those that persecute you

Rom 12:20-21 on the contrary - 'if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

- Do good, speak kindly, Speak faith, encourage

3. Pray - for them and release them unto God

Luke 6:27-28 I say love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who mistreat you.

Critical people are often trapped by the pain of the past, held hostage to a wound that had never healed because they refuse to forgive.