

Criticism as a Spiritual Gift (?)

August 23, 2009

The web of criticism produces jealousy, pride, hypocrisy, slander, division, fault-finding, judging, and discouragement. None of these should be part of a spirit-filled life.

When you're talking about others how much of your conversation brings healing, blessing and is helpful for those who hear? How often do we encourage others to join us in our criticism?

Why is criticism so destructive in the church, Christ's body?

1. It is a destroyer of everything Christ is trying to do in His church and each of us individually.
2. When we criticize others we judge ourselves. It is self-debilitating.
3. Criticism often allows us to keep sin in our life without looking like a hypocrite.

Why is a critical spirit out of place for a believer?

- 1. A critical spirit is not consistent with the person of Christ.**
 - A. Jesus is our defender/savior not our accuser. 1 John 2:1-2
 - B. The Devil is called Satan = Accuser Job 1:8-9
 - C. If you are only nice to nice people you are not following Christ. Matthew 5:46-48
- 2. A critical spirit grieves the heart of God.**
 - A. Criticism is listed with the worst of sins.
1 Corinthians 10:6-12 Numbers 12:1-2; 16:3, 12-13
 - B. A positive view of God and others will be rewarded.
Malachi 3:16-18
- 3. A critical spirit opposes the work of the Spirit in our life.**
 - A. Galatians 5:13 Serve one another in love
 - B. Ephesians 4:2 Be completely humble and gentle
 - C. Ephesians 4:9 Do not let any unwholesome talk ...
 - D. 1 Peter 5:5 clothe yourselves with humility
 - E. Philippians 2:14 Do everything without complaining.
 - F. Hebrew 10:25; 3:13 Let us encourage one another
 - G. James 3:9-10 With the tongue we praise our Lord ...

Criticism Test

This test is designed to test your level of criticism.

Philippians 2:3 Think of others as better than yourself

Carefully observe all your conversations and thoughts this week. Do they reflect positively or negatively on people? Do they fit the pattern of Ephesians 4:9? What is the source of your criticism?

- 1. Pride – bringing others down to my level
- 2. Jealousy – I do not want to be second
- 3. Irritation – personality clash or clash of ideas
- 4. Hurts or disappointments with people
- 5. Habitual
 - An inherited part of our old nature
 - A learned response from parents & otherscriticism is contagious
- 6. Other - _____

The Lord is recording your responses.

Malachi 3:16 “Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honored his name.”