



Critical People

Introduction

The negative neighbor. The critical co-worker. The manipulative family member. You haven't seen these people in a year and now you're working next to them and seeing them at thanksgiving. We all have difficult people in our lives. Let's learn how we can live with—and show love to people that are hard to love.

Pray

Don't forget that if anything significant happens, it's because God moved. Start by asking God to bless this time.

Practice Truth

1. Talk about a strange criticism you've received.
2. Think about some critical people you know. Where do you think their criticism comes from?
3. What are some things you find yourself being critical of?
4. Which do you struggle with more? Being overly critical or being overly sensitive to criticism? How do you think this came about?
5. Pastor Joe said: Criticism is a coping mechanism rooted in pain or insecurity to deflect attention off our personal shame. It is armor to mask feelings of fear, inadequacy and despair, shifting the spotlight away from me and onto something else, generating feelings of safety and superiority.
6. Read proverbs 19:11 and 1 Peter 2:23: Do you think rising above criticism is always possible?
7. How has criticism stood in the way of God's love and healing in your life? What is God's truth about you that can replace these critical words?

Leader's Tip

Do things outside of group time.
When you take the group outside of your meeting night and outside of your living room relationships will grow deeper, faster.

Do Life Together

Our two key prayers this week are: "God, help me to confront with a heart to restore" and "God, help me to see when I am being critical". When have you seen criticism in your own life? What did or will you do about it?