

Love Your Neighbor

3. Dealing with those who are critical and needy

July 14, 2019

How do we respond to critical people

1. Don't Respond.

1 Peter 2: 23 - When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

2. Respond Cautiously.

Judges 8: 1-3 (NLT) - Then the people of Ephraim asked Gideon, "Why have you treated us this way? Why didn't you send for us when you first went out to fight the Midianites?" And they argued heatedly with Gideon. ² But Gideon replied, "What have I accomplished compared to you? Aren't even the leftover grapes of Ephraim's harvest better than the entire crop of my little clan of Abiezer? ³ God gave you victory over Oreb and Zeeb, the commanders of the Midianite army. What have I accomplished compared to that?" When the men of Ephraim heard Gideon's answer, their anger subsided.

3. Listen and make changes.

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

³² If you reject discipline, you only harm yourself; but if you listen to correction, you grow in understanding.

4. Guard our hearts.

Proverbs 4: 23 - Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

Philippians 4: 7 - And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

How do we respond to needy people?

1. Respond strategically not emotionally.

Acts 3: 3-7 - When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money.⁴ Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!"⁵ So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. ⁶ Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." ⁷ Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong.

2. Can't say "yes" to the important if you don't say "no" to the unnecessary.

Mark 1: 36, 37 - Simon and his companions went to look for him,³⁷ and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!"

3. Recognize rescuing isn't always helping.

Galatians 6: 7-8 - Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸ Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.