

# **Relational Vampires**

## **Week 4 - Critical People**

### **Week Three:**

#### **Key Scripture: 1 Peter 2:23**

*When they hurled their insults at him [Jesus], he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.*

*"If you listen to constructive criticism, you will be at home among the wise. If you reject discipline, you only arm yourself; but if you listen to correction, you grow in understanding."*  
Proverbs 15:31-32

#### **Other Scriptures:**

*Proverbs 19:11; John 8:3-11; Proverbs 12:18; Romans 14:10-13*

#### **Key Thought:**

If we are alive and especially if we are Christians... we will be criticized! Ask God for wisdom in the appropriate way to respond to people.

#### **How do we Respond to Critical People?**

1. Often, we **DON'T** respond.
2. Sometimes, we should **RESPOND** carefully.
3. Occasionally, we **LISTEN** and make a **CHANGE**.
4. We always work to **GUARD** our **HEARTS**.

**End with Prayer:** Ask the Lord to help you replace your vocabulary from cutting words to words of life.

**Start talking.** Find a conversation starter for your group.

- What is the most ridiculous criticism you've received?
- How long has it been since you were last criticized?

**Start thinking.** Ask questions to get your group thinking.

- Think about some of the most critical people you know. What do you think causes all their criticism?
- Read 1 Peter 2:23. What is your take-away from this?

**Start sharing.** Choose questions that create openness.

- Pastor Troy said often you don't respond, sometimes you respond carefully and occasionally you make a change after criticism? What's your typical response?
- Which do you struggle with more? Being overly critical or being overly sensitive to criticism? How do you think this came about?
- 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?
- Read Proverbs 12:18. What are the most common reasons you look down on others or cut them down? What will you do to start bringing healing instead?

**Start doing.** Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Identify any criticism you've accepted that stands against God's work in your life.
- Apologize to anyone you've been overly critical of. Consider asking them to help you know when you're being too critical.

**Final Thought:** It's a fact, we will be criticized in this life. Let us seek the Heavenly Father to know who we are in Christ, pray for wisdom to respond carefully and give us knowledge to know when to change and grow.