

ZIP IT
Criticizing • May 15/16, 2010

ICEBREAKER:

Take some time to get to know each other with some open sharing:

- Describe a time when you were criticized. How did it make you feel? What was the outcome?

INTRODUCTION:

- Discuss the meaning and significance of this verse:

If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless. James 1:26 (NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What's the difference between complaining and criticizing?
2. Describe the difference between constructive and destructive criticism?
3. Why is jealousy one of the most common fuels for criticism? How have you seen this play out in some of your "critical" encounters with others?
4. Discuss the four questions Roger suggested we use before choosing to criticize someone.
 - Q1. Are my comments against the person or against what the person is doing or saying?
 - Q2. Does my criticism mask the real reason for my verbal attack?
 - Q3. Am I willing to pay the consequences for criticism?
 - Q4. Have I cleared my criticism with God?

Which of these four questions will help you the most with zipping it? And why?

5. When we are criticized, our tendency is to react in kind and write off the person who slammed us. Is there a better response? Here's how Jesus responded to criticism.

- Read Luke 23:35-39. How did Jesus experience criticism first hand?
- Read Luke 23:34. What was Jesus' response to the criticism he received? Why should our response be the same?
- What would it look like for you to forgive and accept the person who criticized you?
- Read Luke 6:35-36. How do we reflect God when we forgive and accept those who criticize us? What are the benefits?

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Who are you regularly criticizing? How will you specifically cut back on criticizing them? (See Roger's five steps from message)

If jealousy is driving you to criticize, how will you deal with it? How did Moses counteract his jealousy? See Numbers 12:3. How does humility play a part in countering criticism in your life?

What principle or insight from this week's topic could help you more consistently to avoid criticizing others?

Who is someone in your life who criticizes YOU? How will you forgive and accept that person this week?

My next step is to: _____

How can your life group pray for you?

THINK ABOUT IT (Something to chew on or memorize)

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