

# **GIVING AND RECEIVING CRITICISM**

By Janie Rice

"As iron sharpens iron, so one man (woman) sharpens another" - Proverbs 27:17

## **5 Reminders When Called Upon to Give Criticism:**

1. Pray! Ask God to purify your heart and make sure you are deriving no pleasure or ego-boosting from the confrontation. Go with a tear in your eye!
2. Go directly and privately to the person. Public humiliation is never the goal!
3. Lead with positive statements.
4. Be honest and specific. If possible, give examples of when the action/attitude was exhibited.
5. Suggest alternatives. If helpful, agree to "come alongside" the person and help in whatever way you can.

## **5 Reminders When Receiving Criticism:**

Remember there are two extreme responses: Overly sensitive or arrogantly ignore.  
God's desire is a balanced response.

1. Pray!
2. Let them finish. Do not interrupt or plan your response while they are speaking. When they are finished, ask them if there is anything else they need to say.
3. Give careful consideration to their evidence.
4. Determine what the real problem, not just the symptom.
5. Let the criticism be a source of learning.

**Sometimes our worst critic is ourselves. Remember to listen for the voice of God.**

**Discerning the voice of God vs. the voice of Satan**  
(Phyllis Markel shared this with me years ago)

<b>The Voice of God</b>	<b>The Voice of Satan</b>
God convicts in love	Satan accuses us in hatred
The Holy Spirit uses the Word to convict us	Satan uses memories and feelings to accuse us
When God convicts us, it draws us closer to Him	When Satan accuses us, it pulls us away from the Lord
God's conviction leads to discipleship and devotion	Satan's accusations lead to discouragement and depression
When God convicts, it is so we might look ahead and have hope	When Satan accuses, he wants us to look back and give up

**"There is therefore now no condemnation for those which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." - Romans 8:1**