

Billy Graham's Advice for Dealing With People Who Judge and Criticize You

Raise your hand if you've ever felt victimized by an online bully.

You? Yes, me too. Thankfully, even though the advent of the internet provides a mode for harsh criticism, we are not without our own protection.

Psalm 91 shows us how to avoid the fiery darts of the enemy. But when those darts are verbal, reactions become a bit more tricky.

In a question-and-answer column, a writer asked Billy Graham how to handle negative people.

The famed evangelist offered sage words as to why some strike out against others and also how to live peaceably among all men:

People who are negative about everything and always criticizing everyone are admittedly hard to live with—and sadly, they seldom change.

But they aren't only unpleasant; what they are doing is also a sin in the eyes of God. Why is this? One reason is because they probably aren't telling the truth, that is, what they're saying about the person they're criticizing often isn't true. Even if partly true, it's not the whole story, and it only brings hurt and conflict.

But it's also wrong because they are setting themselves above everyone else and acting as if they don't have any faults of

their own. Not only is this wrong, but it's also untrue, and it keeps them from admitting their need for God's forgiveness and help. Jesus said, "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. ... Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?" (Matt. 7:1, 3).

Pray for your sister, and pray for yourself as well, that you'll not react with anger or hurt, but with love. In addition, go out of your way to be kind and to express an interest in her life. People like this often are hungry for love, and God can use you to demonstrate his love for her. The Bible says, "Live in harmony with one another. ... If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone" (Rom. 12:16, 18).

Amen!