

Encourager

1 Cor 13:4-7 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

A survey asked mothers to keep track of how many times they made both negative and positive comments to their children. The surveyed mothers admitted that they criticized at least ten times for every one time they said something favorable. Another survey taken in one city's schools found that the teachers were negative seventy five per cent of the time. This study concluded that it takes four positive statements to a child from a parent or teacher to offset the effects of one negative statement. Wow, when I think about how many times I've said negative things to people in my lifetime, I have some positive paying back to do!

Many times we justify our criticizing, hurtful words and actions by thinking we're right in a matter. But, in fact, the only one who's all right is the Lord! And

He has called us to be the encouragers of the world! We have the gift of God residing within us, and we are ambassadors of His love. We need to constantly remind ourselves to operate under that love in every circumstance – even the most difficult!

When we find ourselves getting ready to criticize, let's strive to stop in our tracks and say something encouraging instead – not only to the world around us but to ourselves!