

WAYS TO SILENCE CRITICISM

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture texts: **1Tim. 4:10-16; Lk. 6:27-36; 7:1-10.**
- B. From Roy H. Enoch (June 14-18, 1993).
- C. Plato: "We silence criticism by our conduct. We must live in such a way that all men will have to see the charge is false."
- D. See 1Pet. 2:11,12.
- E. Getting ready:
 1. Ask the students to get into groups of three, and make a list of the kinds of conduct that would silence criticism. Have each group select someone to report their decisions.
 2. Hand out copies of "Tommy a True Story" worksheet. Read the story and answer these questions: Have you ever had an experience like this? Did it make any difference in your feelings or behavior? How? The spokesman can share answers w/the class.
 3. Make the transition into the lesson based on 1Tim. 4:10-16: In the first letter to Timothy, Paul tells the young preacher that there was a kind of behavior that would silence criticism, so let's see what it is.

BODY.

- A. See 1Tim. 4:10-16.
- B. Discussion:
 1. There must be LOVE--unconquerable benevolence. What us love?
No matter what other people do or say to us, we will seek nothing but other's good--no matter how they treat us. We must never be bitter, resentful, nor refuse to forgive. This kind of love takes the whole of man's personality to achieve, and we cannot do it on our own. We must depend on God to help us act this way. This love is a decision to act in a way that we will only do what is good for others. Xian love is the battle of self which enables us to develop an unconquerable caring for other people.
 2. There must be loyalty--faithfulness to X, no matter what that faithfulness costs.
A dependable soldier is one who can fight even when his body is weary, his stomach is empty, the situation seems hopeless, and he is in the middle of a campaign that he does not understand. In the same way, a Xian is loyal to X, despite circumstance whether light may shine or shadows fall.
 3. There is purity--allegiance to the standards of X.
This standard of honor and honesty, self-control and chastity, discipline and consideration is far above the standards of the world. Life lived on the standard of Jesus X, not on the standards of the world are what Paul calls us to live.
- C. Discuss:
 1. Class lessons will help us in understanding how we can develop these conduct traits in our lives. The lessons will also help us gain a little more insight into love and allegiance to Jesus. Therefore, let us read a story about a soldier in Lk. 6:17-36 and 7:1-10.
 2. Return to your groups, read the worksheets, and answer the questions. When you have finished, let the chairman of each group share their thoughts.

CONCLUSION.

- A. Let each member of the class suggest some area of his or her life in which more love needs to be shown. Then close with a prayer that we may all follow God's word to grow in this area and to pray for each other during the week.