

Christian Families Build Each other Up

Introduction

Ridicule, constant criticism, biting sarcasm, and belittling have no place in the Christian family. God-fearing Christians care about one another deeply, look for opportunities to build one another up in the faith, and encourage one another in the ups-and-downs of everyday life.

Word of God: Luke 10:38-42

38 As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. 39 She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. 40 But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

41 "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, 42 but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

Questions

1. Was Martha's criticism of her sister aimed at building up Mary or tearing her down? Explain your answer.
2. Do you think this was the first time that Martha had criticized Mary in this fashion? What could result from a person hearing the same kind of criticism over and over from a family member or fellow Christian?
3. What is often the purpose that people have for belittling others and tearing them down? (See also Jude 16)
4. In this story, how did Jesus provide a positive model for building up others?
5. Paul never found pleasure in belittling others. He wrote the following about his purpose in life: "By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:10-11).

If Paul is the "wise builder," to whom might he be referring as the "someone else" who is building on the foundation he has laid?

6. Read Romans 15:1-6. How does this text translate into a call for parents to do everything they can to build their children up on the foundation that is Christ Jesus?