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blame reproachful sanctimonious. superior judge derogatory  
critical demeaning moralistic harsh preachy self-righteous

**Books:**

- *Families Where Grace is in Place* and *Tired of Trying to Measure Up* by Jeff VanVonderen
- *Be Transformed* by Scope Ministries
- *What's so Amazing about Grace?* by Philip Yancey
- *Grace: More Than We Deserve, Greater Than We Imagine* by Max Lucado

## Judgmental ....

*People who live their lives as if everyone should think and act the way they themselves do.*

One of our most **destructive communication patterns is to judge or criticize others.** A judgmental/critical person often uses shame to hurt people.

**Criticism blames** others for their emotions or problems. Criticism is harsh, condemning, and self-righteous.

John Gottman explains criticism, *Criticizing your partner is different from offering a critique or voicing a complaint! The latter two are about specific issues, whereas the former is a personal attack: it is an attack on your*

*partner at the core. In effect, you are dismantling his or her whole being when you criticize.*

- **Complaint:** "I was scared when you were running late and didn't call me. I thought we had agreed that we would do that for each other."
- **Criticism:** "You never think about how your behavior is affecting other people. I don't believe you are that forgetful, you're just selfish! You never think of others! You never think of me!"

**When we judge or criticize another person,** it says nothing about that person; it merely says something about our own need to be critical.

*If you judge people, you have no time to love them.* Mother Teresa

The judgmental/critical person establishes a criteria in their own behavior, which also applies to how others should behave. **They judge everyone by their own standards of worth.**

Most often, this type of person grew up in a home with judgmental, critical, or negative parents. It becomes a way of thinking. They have often been shamed and see that as a normal way of speaking. Then they use the shaming and criticism to attack or control others. **But you don't have to repeat that pattern!** (see below)

## Freedom ....

*Grace lives above the demands of human opinion and breaks free from legalistic regulations. Grace is the demonstration of Jesus' words: "If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed."* Chuck Swindoll

**In Christ, we can be free from living according to others opinion, standards, or even their attacks.** The total forgiveness and acceptance by

**God gives us the freedom to follow Him** without the pressure of trying to measure up to a set of rules or standards.

**I now have the freedom** to let other people follow Him without judging their behavior. I know that their correction or rebuke is **God's job, not mine.**

**My job is not** to try to change another person or decide how they should behave.

**With our children,** I can instruct them on matters of the heart. I do correct, teach, and train them, but I **cannot make** them obey or make them learn. **If they do not obey or learn,** I may need to change my methods. I **seek God and the Holy Spirit shows me** the way. But their obedience is an issue between the child and God. I do not have to carry the guilt of their disobedience.