

III. CAUSES FOR A CRITICAL SPIRIT

“I have become a laughingstock to my friends, though I called on God and he answered—a mere laughingstock, though righteous and blameless!”

(Job 12:4)

“What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have. . . .”

(James 4:1–2)

A. WHAT WAS MODELED IN CHILDHOOD?

“Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.”

(Psalm 82:3–4)

“Stone is heavy and sand a burden, but a fool’s provocation is heavier than both.”

(Proverbs 27:3)

A critical spirit is developed under the weight of:

- Unanticipated _____
- Undue _____
- Ungrounded _____
- Unreasonable _____
- Unremitting _____
- Unending _____
- Unjust _____
- Unsubstantiated _____
- Undeserved _____
- Unfair _____
- Unmerited _____
- Unwarranted _____

“My guilt has overwhelmed me like a burden too heavy to bear.”

(Psalm 38:4)

B. WHAT ARE CHILDHOOD WOUNDS?

“If you put away the sin that is in your hand and allow no evil to dwell in your tent, then, free of fault, you will lift up your face; you will stand firm and without fear.”

(Job 11:14–15)

“I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.”

(Psalm 109:22)

Emotionally hurt children feel the pain of:

H— _____ ... communicating, “You’re not worth any kindness.”

U— _____ ... communicating, “You have no value.”

R— _____ ... communicating, “You’re not acceptable.”

T— _____ ... communicating, “You deserve to be insulted.”

“Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.”

(1 Peter 3:9)¹

C. WHAT IS THE CYCLE OF CRITICISM?

“Only grant me these two things, God, and then I will not hide from you: Withdraw your hand far from me, and stop frightening me with your terrors.”

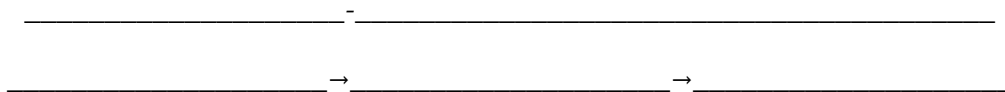
(Job 13:20–21)

“ ‘Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?’ But we have the mind of Christ. ... Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

(1 Corinthians 2:16; Romans 12:2)

Whenever a negative situation occurs in your life, you have a choice as to *how you think* about it—which determines *how you respond*. Children often develop patterns of thinking that dictate their feelings and ultimately their actions. The natural progression occurs as follows:

YOUR SOUL



¹ Hunt, J. (2008). [Biblical Counseling Keys on Critical Spirit: Be an Encourager—Not a Critic](#) (pp. 16–17). Dallas, TX: Hope For The Heart.

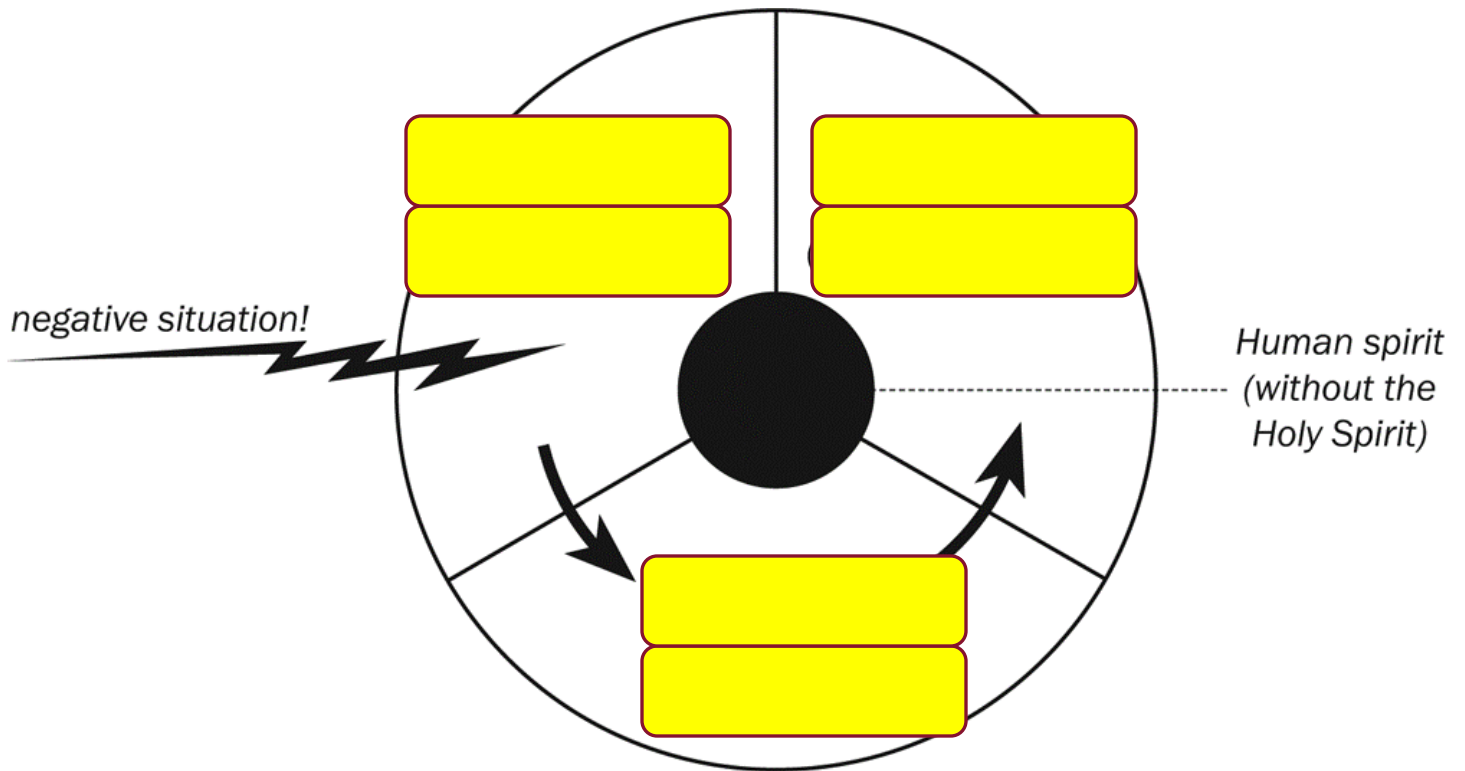


ILLUSTRATION #1

Negative Situation: Someone verbally cuts you down.

NATURAL HUMAN RESPONSE

— **Your mind** _____ . (“He’s so _____.”)

— **Your emotions** _____ . (“I _____ him.”)

— **Your will** _____ . (You act in _____ ways.)

“Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires.... The mind governed by the flesh is death....”

(Romans 8:5–6)

YOUR SOUL

_____ - _____

_____ → _____ → _____

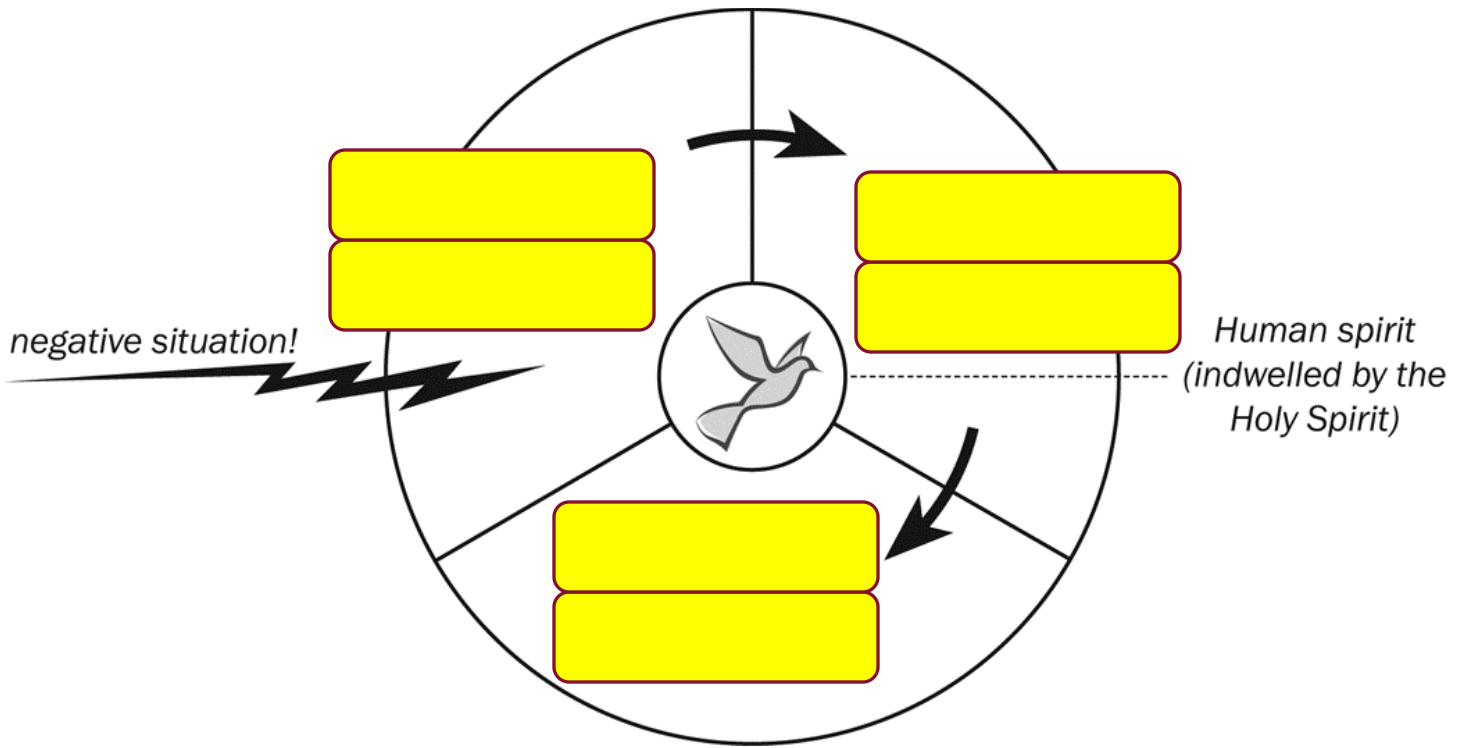


ILLUSTRATION #2

Negative Situation: Someone verbally cuts you down.

SPIRIT-LED RESPONSE

— **Your mind** _____

John 14:26 HCSB

Matthew 5:44

— **Your will** _____

John 16:13

— **Your emotions** _____

“... those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.... the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.”

Romans 8:5–6