

Discipleship Series

Guarding Against GOSSIP!

Series Part 1, 2, 3

“A disciple is not greater than his teacher,
but everyone when fully trained will be
like his teacher” **Luke 6:40**

Wednesday Night Study Series

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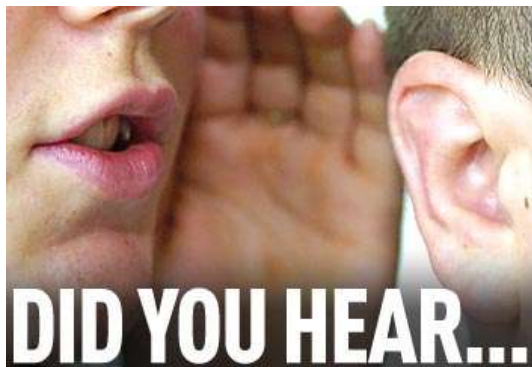
Christ Centered. People Building.

Gossip



Topics below to be discussed (05/09/12)

- **Gossip in the Bible and what does it Say**
- **Distinguished in two Ways**
- **Is Gossip Sinful**
- **Paul talks about Widows**
- **Men Gossip Too**
- **Guard your tongue**



Gossip

- Gossip in the Bible

KJV - The word for Gossip is “whisperers”
which comes from Greek “psithuristēs”(G5588)
meaning a secret *calumniator*

Other words for gossip are “talebearer” ,“whisperings”, and “Tattlers”

In the NIV “gossip” appears 7 times.

In the NKJV “gossip” appears 1 times.



Gossip

● What does the Bible say about gossip?

- The Hebrew word translated “**gossip**” in the Old Testament is defined as “one **who reveals secrets**, one who goes about **as a talebearer** or **scandal-monger**.”
A gossip is a person who has privileged information about people and proceeds to reveal that information to those who have no business knowing it.
- **Read Leviticus 19:6**
- **Proverbs 11:13, Proverbs 16:28**
- **Proverbs 18:8, 2 Cor. 12:20**
- **Proverbs 20:19**
- **Proverbs 26:20**
- **Proverbs 26:22**



Gossip

- Distinguished in 2 Ways...

- Gossip is distinguished from sharing information in two ways:
- 1. **Intent.** Gossipers often have the goal of building themselves up by making others look bad and exalting themselves as some kind of repositories of knowledge.
- 2. **The type of information shared.** Gossipers speak of the faults and failings of others, or reveal potentially embarrassing or shameful details regarding the lives of others without their knowledge or approval. Even if they mean no harm, it is still gossip.

Gossip

● Is Gossip Sinful?

- In the book of Romans, Paul reveals the sinful nature and lawlessness of mankind, stating how God poured out His wrath on those who rejected His laws. Because they had turned away from God's instruction and guidance, He gave them over to their sinful natures. The list of sins includes gossips and slanderers (**Romans 1:29**). We see from this passage how serious the sin of gossip is and that it characterizes those who are under God's wrath..
- Is Gossip a Sin?
- Yes
- One of the Sins that God gave them over for was "Gossip"

Gossip

● Paul Talk About the Widows

- Another group who were (**and still are today**) known for indulging in gossip is widows. Paul cautions widows against entertaining the habit of gossip and of being idle. These women are described as “gossips and busybodies, saying things they ought not to” (**1 Timothy 5:12-13**).
- Because women tend to spend a lot of time in each other's homes and work closely with other women, they hear and observe situations which can become distorted, especially when repeated over and over. Paul states that widows get into the habit of going from **home to home**, looking for something to occupy their idleness. Idle hands are the devil's workshop, and God cautions against allowing idleness to enter our lives.
- “A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid a man or woman who talks too much” (Proverbs 20:19).

Gossip

- Women are NOT the ONLY ones who GOSSIP!!

- **MEN DO IT TOO!!!!**

- Women are certainly not the only ones who have been found guilty of gossip. Anyone can engage in gossip simply by repeating something heard in confidence. The book of Proverbs has a long list of verses that cover the dangers of gossip and the potential hurt that results from it. “A man who lacks judgment derides his neighbor, but a man of understanding holds his tongue.
- A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy man keeps a secret” (Proverbs 11:12-13).

Gossip

- Men Gossip too!!!!

- **Throw the Rock and hide the Hand..**

- **The Bible tells us that “a perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends” (Proverbs 16:28). Many a friendship has been ruined over a misunderstanding that started with gossip. Those who engage in this behavior do nothing but stir up trouble and cause anger, bitterness, and pain among friends.**
- **Sadly, some people thrive on this and look for opportunities to destroy others. And when such people are confronted, they deny the allegations and answer with excuses and rationalizations. Rather than admit wrongdoing, they blame someone else or attempt to minimize the seriousness of the sin. “A fool's mouth is his undoing, and his lips are a snare to his soul.**
- **The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to a man's inmost parts” (Proverbs 18:7-8).**

Gossip

- Guard our Tongues

- **Loose lips sink ships!!**

- Those who guard their tongues keep themselves from calamity (Proverbs 21:23). So we must guard our tongues and refrain from the sinful act of gossip.
- If we surrender our natural desires to the Lord, He will help us to remain righteous. May we all follow the Bible's teaching on gossip by keeping our mouths shut unless it is necessary and appropriate to speak.

Gossip

● The Weapon of Gossip

- "If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless" (**Jas. 1:26**). "Men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned" (**Matt. 12:36, 37**).
- Gossip can be a **cruel weapon**, one that is turned on friends and enemies alike. It is completely against God's standard of **preserving unity** and lifting one another up.
- Gossip serves no purpose but a selfish one—there is no good result from gossip.
- A gossiping person may be trying to look better by making the other person look bad. I have news for you church: that strategy never works that way!!!! Anytime someone has talked badly to me about someone else, I always wonder what that person says about me when I am not around and then I no longer trust that person.

Gossip

- Gossip is SIN, No less or no more than any other!

- **Sometime we treat gossip with a cavalier attitude or we do not take it seriously.**

- **We treat it like a constant slip up!**

- Do Christians do you occasionally slip up and commit a murder here or there?

- Or how about theft -- do you occasionally burglarize a home or steal things from the store?

- You may think this is silly to ask. Of course, a Christian lifestyle doesn't behave that way.

- **But how about gossip or slander?** Do you engage in idle talk or rumors about others?

- Do you participate in bad-mouthing or spreading rumors about others?

- **According to the Bible, which sin is less severe?** Murder or gossip?

I'm sure you get the message. Paul said, BOTH are sins equally worthy of death.

- Read Romans 1:28-32

Gossip

● Gossip's Cousin.. "The Busybody"

- The Apostle Peter, also used murder as a comparison with another, sometimes under-rated sin. "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, **or as a busybody** in other men's matters" (**Read...1 Peter 4:15**).
- Notice that a "**busybody**" is placed in the same company as "murderers, thieves, and evildoers."
- The dictionary defines a **busybody** as "a meddler; a person who seeks confidential information about others; a snoop; a nosy person."
- **A busybody is another close relative to gossip** -- a person who meddles in the affairs of others. They are like a peeping-tom who snoops and spies.
- A busybody is the investigator for the gossips and rumormongers, seeking to uncover sensational details and to whisper the latest news.
- Sometimes busybodies are persons who have too much time on their hands, with nothing better to do than to talk too much. "Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they ought not to" (**Read...1 Tim. 5:13**).
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Gossip

● Gossip is NOT a little Bad Habit!!!

- Gossip is anything small as according to the Bible it is in the same category as murder! It must be a serious sin -- something that should not be taken lightly. But unfortunately, **Christians do not usually consider gossip and it's related activity as sin.**
- In all my years of preaching and ministry, I've encountered scores of Christians who don't seem to think gossip is wrong -- who are obsessed as busybodies, gossips, and bad-mouthers, and have caused irreparable damage to the body of Christ. Books could be filled with the stories of anguish and grief inflicted to hapless victims in the church. This is shameful.
- "The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to a man's inmost parts" **(READ Prov. 26:22).**
- Mean, vicious accusations and rumors have ripped out the heart and soul of many fellow Christians and leaders, draining them of their love, enthusiasm, and their desire to live for God.
- It has split churches, created strife, and promoted division and turmoil.
"Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down" (Prov. 26:22).
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• The Only Army that Kills its Wounded

- A Sad saying “the Church” is the only army that kills its wounded.
- Regrettably, this has sometimes been true. Brothers who have needed Christian love, forgiveness and encouragement have been mutilated by gossip and evil talk.
- Is it no wonder that gossip is equal to murder? It is nothing less than verbal rape and assassination.
- What we must realize is, gossip is more than a little bad habit. Gossip is wicked and sinful.
- Gossips use their mouth as a weapon -- a weapon which is always aimed at people to fulfill Satan’s desires to “steal, kill, and destroy” (**John 10:10**).
“With his mouth the godless destroys his neighbor” (**Prov. 11:9**).
- Gossip is an enemy to God and everything called holy -- a cancer which spreads a deadly infection to the body of Christ. Not only did Paul place a gossip in the same league with murderers and sexual deviates, but Jesus warned that for those who would offend his little ones, it would be better for them to be bound with a millstone and drowned in the sea (**Mark 9:42**).
Surely, a harsh and horrible punishment awaits those unrepentant gossips who harm followers of Jesus.

Gossip

● How to Recognize Gossip

Gossip is one of the most dangerous sins because it is so subtle and ambiguous -- many are unable to recognize it. Be on alert against gossip whenever you hear of “secret information” being circulated, or if you hear anyone else’s name is used in a conversation. Gossip exists whenever persons “talk about others” in less than a favorable way. The root of gossip is negativeness, judgementalism, slander, etc. Avoid associating with people who gossip “ You probably remember the old saying: “If you can’t say something good about others, don’t say anything at all. ” Wise advice if you wish to avoid sin.

Gossip often **masquerades** as “concern” for others. Rumors or gossip will seem more palatable if they first hide behind a pretentious expression of concern. “I hate to say anything about this to you, but I’m ‘concerned’ about so and so.” At other times the gossiper will seek you out as their “confidante” to unload their “heavy heart” about their concerns. “I’m very troubled about so and so and I don’t know who else to talk to about it.” In reality, the gossip is not sincerely concerned about solving the problem, only in talking about it -- stirring it up. “A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends” (Prov. 16:28). A gossip thrives on the negative, the controversial, and the sensational. Any person who is genuinely concerned about solving a problem, will go and privately confront the person at the source and express their concern. Or else they should go privately to the Minister so he will do it.

Gossip

- How to Recognize Gossip (Cont)

The gossip is like a spider looking for a prey to lure into their trap of gossiping. | They may confide to you secrets or their private concerns about other people. Perhaps in consolation, you may express your half-hearted agreement with their concerns, or you may even be enticed to confide your secret concerns to them. Consequently, the gossip will eventually repeat the process with someone else – but next time, they will add your name as an endorsement of their private “issue,” and will eventually even disclose the secrets you shared to them. And on and on it goes.

Gossip

- Things to remember about Gossip.

Things to Remember about Gossip

Gossip is as sinful as murder and will suffer the same consequences unless there is repentance (Rom. 1:32).

God holds you accountable to your words (Matt. 12:36-37).

The person who gossips to you about others, also gossips to others about you.

Gossip & slander disqualifies persons for spiritual leadership (1 Tim. 3:11, Jas. 3:2).

Gossip often masks as pretentious concerns for others.

Gossip often thrives upon secrecy. Where secrecy is removed, gossip is hampered.

Gossip always contributes to a problem and never to a solution.

Gossip always distorts and exaggerates, and is never a reliable source of truth.

Those who gossip & slander are not in right fellowship with God (Rom. 1:28-32).

Those who gossip rarely get answers to prayer, and often face persistent, unexplainable problems (Psalms 66:18, Prov. 21:23, Prov. 6:12-15).

Gossip

● Gossip Prevention

If you have been a gossip, confess this as sin and ask Christ to forgive you.

“Repent” by turning in a new direction and surrendering your tongue to Christ, not to gossip or bad-mouth again **(1 John 1:9, 1 Cor. 7:10)**.

Keep your nose out of other people’s business.

If you can’t say something good or encouraging about others, then nothing should be said at all. **(Eph. 4:29)**.

Never criticize another person, except to their own face (Matt 18) with an intent to help. Criticism can never be “constructive” if expressed to anyone else. If your “friends” start bad-mouthing others to you, stop them in their tracks – refuse to be a partaker of their sins (1 Tim 5:22).

Avoid association with persons who gossip (Prov. 20:19).

Expose works of darkness by reporting gossip to the Minister/Leadership that he may confront and offer correction.

Gossip should be treated as any other vile sin (Eph. 5:11).

“I will watch my ways and keep my tongue from sin; I will put a muzzle on my mouth as long as the wicked are in my presence” (Psalms 39:1).