

Solve It!
Don't Spread It.
PART FOUR



SERIES BIG IDEA:

Our words have power, and we are responsible to harness them for the benefit of others.

Gossip does not build others up; it tears them down.

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

Ephesians 4:29 (NIV)

Gossip [noun] is idle talk or rumor, especially about the personal or private affairs of others.

Gossip [verb] is to talk idly, especially about the affairs of others; go about tattling.

<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/gossip>

A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret

Proverbs 11:13 (NIV)

A perverse person stirs up conflict, and a gossip separates close friends.

Proverbs 16:28 (NIV)

²⁹*They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, ³⁰slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; ³¹they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. ³²Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.*

Romans 1:29-32 (NIV)

I fear that there may be discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder.

2 Corinthians 12:20 (NIV)

Gossip is tearing someone else down when they are not present.

Gossip is tearing someone else down to build myself up.

¹⁶*There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: ¹⁷haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, ¹⁹a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.*

Proverbs 6:16-19 (NIV)

Gossip stirs up conflict and breaks unity in God's family.

TEACHING BIG IDEA:

When I'm not directly part of the solution, I won't be the problem.

How to respond to gossip:

- I must repent of my selfish motives when I negatively talk about someone when they are not there.
- Interrupt a conversation immediately to pray for God to bless the person who is the subject of the gossip.
- Employ the wisdom of Matthew 18:15 by directing the gossip to go directly to the person.

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"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over."
Matthew 18:15 (NIV)

We won't talk negatively about someone.

We will go directly to the person instead of talking about the person.

When I talk about another Christ-follower, I must remember, I'm talking about the body and bride of Christ.

How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!
Psalm 133:1 (NIV)

MY NOTES:



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TEACHING SUMMARY:

"Rumour is a pipe blown by surmises, jealousies, conjectures and of so easy and so plain a stop. That the blunt monster with uncounted heads, the still-discordant wavering multitude, can play upon it" ~ William Shakespeare

A blunt monster with uncounted heads is a very good description of gossip, isn't it? We have all seen times when a little rumor turns into something so much bigger than it was ever intended to be. People get hurt, relationships get damaged, trust is broken.

Scripture is very clear throughout the book of Proverbs that we are to guard our tongues and run from gossip. But that doesn't just mean don't gossip, it extends to not even entertaining gossip around us.

Charles Spurgeon said, "If there were no gratified hearers of ill reports, there would be an end of the trade of spreading them."

We have a responsibility to speak up when we hear gossip, speak the truth rather than spread gossip, and be part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

TALK IT OVER:

Think about a time when you saw gossip hurt someone? What was that like? What did it feel like to see them hurt or experience the hurt from gossip yourself?

Why is it difficult to confront gossip when you see it?

How can you use your words to be a positive force in people's lives by combatting gossip?

What is one next step you can take today?

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

- Mon: Proverbs 26:20-21
- Tue: Proverbs 17:4
- Wed: Psalm 37:29-31
- Thu: Psalm 64
- Fri: James 1:26; James 3:7-10
- Sat: James 4:5-8 (ESV)