

*In
Search
of*

Truth and Right

Tim Henderson, Editor

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"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Philippians 4:8 (NASB-U)

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Gossip: A Heart Disease

By: David Hartsell
via—Charlottesville Beacon

What is gossip? It is negative, unflattering words that when spread hurt the reputation of others. Sometimes gossip is made up out of thin air. Other times the bear facts related, might be true, but many significant factors are left out, thus leaving the wrong impression. Some gossip can be true but can serve no good purpose to pass it on to others. How does the Bible describe gossip? God's Word often uses words like whispers, backbiters, and evil speaking. (Romans 1:29-32, 2 Corinthians 12:20, & 1 Peter 1:1) But how serious is this behavior in God's sight. Briefly, let us look at some truths about gossip and its spiritual dangers.

Why is whispering so detrimental? What are its fruits? First, whispering often causes strong friendships to dissolve. (Proverbs 16:28) Can you imagine how this would interrupt spiritual unity and progress in a congregation if the conflicting friends were brethren? We must carefully measure everything we say for the consequences can be powerfully negative. Also, backbiting can feel like the "piercing of a sword." (Proverbs 12:18) Has unfair, critical talk about you gotten back to you? It hurts so deeply! This is not what Jesus has taught us to do. He commands us to treat others in the way we would like to be treated. (Matthew 7:12) Loose speech not only damages the reputation of others, but it diminishes the usefulness of the gossip. The only one who wins in this scenario is Satan.

Since God's Word offers such serious warnings against whispering, why do people do it? There are many reasons people partici-



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TIMES OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

**Bible Classes* 10:00 AM
AM Worship 10:45 AM
PM Worship 6:30 PM**

WEDNESDAY

**Bible Classes* 7:00 PM
(* Bible Classes for All Ages)**

pate in loose talk. Let's just look at a few of them. Some pass on negative information either because they are unaware of the truth or unconcerned about its veracity. Paul said that he was slandered when people reported he taught it was alright to do wrong as long as good was accomplished. (Romans 3:8) That concept is not true. He did not teach it. And it, no doubt, hurt his influence with some. Envy is another reason people will gossip. Some at Corinth were jealous of Paul's authority and influence over the brethren there. Therefore, they strongly criticized his right and ability to lead God's people. (2 Corinthians 10:10-11) Paul warned those backbiters that he would deal with them when he came back to Corinth. Finally, some just like meddling in other people's affairs. It's exciting to them. Peter strongly cautions disciples not to be busybodies (1 Peter 4:15) He puts this sin in the same category as being a thief, an evil doer, or a murderer. God disapproves of careless speech.

Today's Sermon:

*AM—The Bible—The
Inspired Word of God*

*PM—The Oneness of the
Church*

How can I refrain from gossiping? The simplest answer is to love God. We show our love for Him best by "*keeping His commandments.*" (1 John 5:3) And when we love Him we love each other. Jesus once said, "*By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*" (John 13:35) That love will not just refrain from evil speech but it will uplift and encourage others. (Ephesians 4:29) Are we the faithful, wise Christians that can listen to sensitive things and give sound advice while keeping quiet about the whole matter? Or Are we a verbal sieve through which everything we are told flows. God has shown us what is good. Let's not forget it!

The Culture of No Consequences

By: David Hartsell
via—Charlottesville Beacon

In the beginning, The Lord blessed man with a paradise garden to keep, trim, and enjoy. Only one prohibition was mentioned. Adam and Eve were not to eat of the "*tree of the knowledge of good and evil*" (Genesis 2:17). If they ate they would lose their place in garden and forfeit their right to the "*tree of life.*" They would lose their lives and their special relationship with The Lord. This was the consequence. Sadly, they ate of the prohibited tree and paid the consequences.

Have you noticed the singular lack of consequences in almost every system of American culture? God's plan of behavior management for children (the rod of discipline—Proverbs 22:15) has been set aside by parents and schools. Athletes, stars and politicians are seen to break laws with impunity. Bad manners and rudeness are tolerated if one is popular or famous. Coaches throw chairs, athletes sling helmets, and parents attack other parents, all clear violations of team rules and rules of appropriate behavior. Yet, rarely are those actions held to account. Proverbs 19:19 tells us the truth: "*A hot-tempered man must pay the penalty; if you rescue him, you will have to do it again.*" Priests and teachers have abused children without penalty. Presidents lie, congressmen take money, etc.

Human beings require structure and discipline. Fortunately for us, our Creator planned for our growth and happiness by holding us accountable. God is honest with us: sin brings death. The Word clarifies His expectations and holds us accountable. God is predictable, consistent, and fair. And aren't we thankful for that! The beauty queen and best player have the same consequence and reward as the rest of us. Moses, God's chosen leader, was held accountable for disobedience (Numbers 20). Samson, a judge chosen by God, maintained supernatural strength as long as he followed God's directions. However, God allowed Samson to suffer the consequences of foolish behavior: the Philistines cut his hair, blinded and imprisoned him. Ultimately Samson gained victory over himself and over his enemies; God did not abandon Samson but answered his prayer.

Obedience begins with the fear of consequences. God's people cannot thrive if they accept the culture of no consequences. Churches grow numerically but not spiritually. Many are suffering from the lack of discipline among their members. Fornication, bar-hopping, gossip, and bitterness find their way into churches. Behavior that is plainly un-Christian is ignored while the "positive" is accentuated. By overlooking sin the consequences of sin are not seen or felt. Paul rebuked the Corinthian church for this (1 Corinthians 5:1-5). They accepted an adulterer as a faithful brother. Paul told them to deliver him to Satan – to let him know where he was spiritually. They were not even to eat with him. How cruel! No! This is God's way of shocking the sinner into seeing the consequence of his sin.

Not all consequences are bad. In fact, the disciplining of the Corinthian adulterer caused him to repent and return to Christ. Paul urged the brethren to reaffirm their love to him (2 Corinthians 2:3-9). The renewal of Christian fellowship was crucial in helping this brother remain faithful. It remains the same today. We can not live without consequences. Some believe because God does not punish sin immediately He will not punish it at all. *"Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil"* (Ecclesiastes 8:11). This is a serious mistake. In this life we might evade many bad consequences. However, in judgment all will be made right. Everyone will stand before God to be judged based on the things we have done of earth (2 Corinthians 5:10). Don't buy into the idea of a culture with no consequences for there is no such place in existence.

News N Notes

Remember these in your prayers:

- Dave Brewer's granddaughter—Cheyenne Elizabeth Brewer
- Lucille Harless, Dave Harless' mother
- Blake Headen, Alberta's husband.
- Virginia Malick, Peggy Miller's mother
- Blake Swanson, Dorothy Lancaster's grandson
- Trudell Tennant
- Bud and Merl Frey
- Tammy Garrison, Zeda Goddard's daughter
- Audrio Gaudio, Nancy Morris' great-granddaughter
- Marie Roberts, & Ed's father, Jim Roberts.
- Ila Marshall, Harold Marshall's mother
- Cary & Grace Lancaster

Nursing Home:

- Pauline Sellers
- Ethel Mahan

Shut-ins:

- Josephine Clow
- Mabel Fleming
- Pauline Midcap