



## Is it Really that Bad to Gossip?

**Proverbs 11:13:** (NASB) *He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy conceals a matter.*



Gossip is an integral part of our society and has been a constant in the history of humanity since the beginning of recorded history. If gossip is such a staple to society, doesn't it seem reasonable that there must be something redeemable about it? By the way, did you hear what happened to...Aw, c'mon, did you really think I was gonna go there? Gossip - what is it? How does it work? Is there ever a time or place when gossip is a good thing? Stay with us...this is gonna be juicy!

### What is gossip?

 **Gossip is good, *The Sociology of Gossip*, Lainey Lui, TED Talk**

- *I studied the celebrity ecosystem to understand social culture, to understand social behavior, to understand humanity, to understand ourselves. That is the function of gossip. Gossip then is good. Gossip is knowledge. Gossip is immortal. Gossip is historical.*

**Gossip** (noun) Dictionary.reference.com

1. Idle talk or rumor, especially about the personal or private affairs of others:
2. Light, familiar talk or writing.
3. A person given to tattling or idle talk.

Synonyms: blab, dish, talk, tattle, wag, spill the beans

Related Words: bandy (about), circulate, noise (about or abroad), rumor; blabber, disclose, divulge, reveal, tell; hint, imply, insinuate, intimate, let on, suggest; inform, report, snitch, squeal, tip (off); babble, spill; confide

How "good" does gossip sound so far? What about gossip's first cousin, slander? Would anyone say slander is good?

**Slander:** Merriam Webster Dictionary

- 1: the utterance of false charges or misrepresentations, which defame and damage another's reputation
- 2: a false and defamatory oral statement about a person – compare libel

There are laws against slander, but not against gossip.

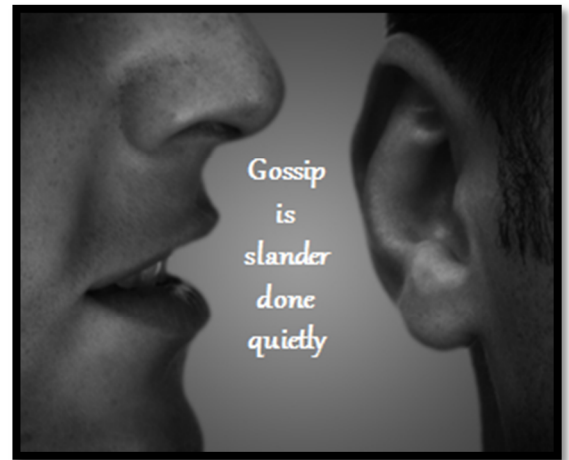
### So, what is the difference between gossip and slander?

**Romans 1:28-32:** (NRSV) <sup>28</sup>And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind and to things that should not be done. <sup>29</sup>They were filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, craftiness, they are **gossips <5588>**, <sup>30</sup>**slanderers <2637>**, God-haters, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, rebellious toward parents, <sup>31</sup>foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. <sup>32</sup>They know God's decree, that those who practice such things deserve to die yet they not only do them, but even applaud others who practice them.



**Gossips/Whisperer:** Strongs #5588 qiyuristhv psithuristes psith-oo-ris-tace a whisperer, secret slanderer, detractor

**Slanderers:** Strongs #2637 katalalos (kat-al'-al-os); talkative against, i.e. a slanderer: KJV-- backbiter.



**))) Social grooming update, What's Good About Gossip, Shimul Melwani, TED Talk**



- *There's an evolutionary biologist called Robin Dunbar, who actually has a really interesting hypothesis. He says that language, our ability to talk to each other, evolves simply for the purpose of engaging in gossip. He studied some of our ancestors, and I mean our ancestors. Basically suggesting that social grooming, which is what primates do, was a way to form alliances with each other. And that as group sizes started getting bigger and bigger they were unable to continue the social grooming process with hundreds and hundreds of people at any given point of time, and so language actually developed as way of sharing information about other people in our groups and networks.*

Proverbs 20:19: (KJV) *He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.*

Proverbs 21:23: (NASB) *He who guards his mouth and his tongue, guards his soul from troubles.*

**Why do people gossip?**

**))) Testing gossip scientifically, Jim Parsons as theoretical physicist Sheldon Cooper, Big Bang Theory (TV show)**



- *(Sheldon) Your mean hypothesis does intrigue me. How about we examine this more closely?*
  - *(Sheldon's scientist girlfriend, Amy) Do you have any ethical qualms regarding human experimentation?*
  - *(Sheldon) It's one of the few forms of interaction with people that I don't find repellent. (Laughter).*
  - *(Amy) We need to fabricate a tantalizing piece of gossip.*
  - *(Sheldon) And a second non-tantalizing piece to use as a control.*
  - *(Amy) Then we'll track its progress through our social group and interpret the results through the computing academic prisms of mimetic theory, algebraic gossip and epidemiology. (Laughter)*
- *(Sheldon) Look at you. Getting me to engage in the social sciences! (Laughter).*



## Is ALL gossip bad?

We have to determine how we talk about others in a non-gossipy way. What, why and how are we saying what we say?

James 3:7-16: (NRSV) <sup>7</sup>For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, <sup>8</sup>but no one can tame the tongue a restless evil, full of deadly poison. <sup>9</sup>With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. <sup>10</sup>From the same mouth comes blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so.

Sinful human nature is not easily set on the course of godliness. One of the greatest tools of carnality (earthly thinking) and of godliness is communication - through this tool comes the highest praises to our Father in heaven and the lowest insults to those around us. Our greatest strength of communication is our greatest weakness! We have to be careful about what we are saying, why we are saying it and how we are saying it. If what we are saying is derogatory, we best not say it.

<sup>11</sup>Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? <sup>12</sup>Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh. <sup>13</sup>Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. <sup>14</sup>But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. <sup>15</sup>Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual; devilish. <sup>16</sup>For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind.

This contradiction ought not to be if we were to be focused on the most important thing! Christians are not exempt from evil thoughts and deeds. Gossip often comes from bitterness, envy and selfish ambition.

Philippians 3:13-14: (NASB) <sup>13</sup>Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.



A caller from Tennessee suggested reading the previous CQ Rewind for the program on *Bitterness* and how it relates to gossip. We are all created in God's image. Try to remember that the person you are talking about is a brother in Christ. Think about how God loves them as much as you.

If we do find ourselves gossiping, have the strength and integrity to correct it.

James 3:7-16: (NRSV) <sup>17</sup>But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, **without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy.** <sup>18</sup>And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

Gossip is full of partiality and hypocrisy!



## Good for you study, *Can Gossiping Be Good, CalTV Berkeley*

- *Research in fact shows that over sixty percent of our conversations center around gossip. Psychology graduate student, Matthew Feinberg, was determined to show that not all gossip is necessarily bad.*
- *One thing we want to look at is maybe it just makes us feel better. Like when we witness an unfair act or a selfish act, we just get riled up, we get a negative effect. Maybe one thing we can do in response to that is spread some reputational information, spread some gossip and by doing so it will make us feel better.*
- *Feinberg's study shows that engaging in what he calls pro-social gossip - the warning of others about dishonest people - not only benefits the recipient, but is actually good for our own health and wellbeing.*
- *Your heart rate doesn't go up as powerfully, you won't get as angry if you're able to engage in this type of gossip.*

What about celebrities? They live a public life. What they do in private is their own business. Why do we think that we can talk about them? We can talk about their public performances only.



Is what we say about others true? Needful? Kind?

Ephesians 4:14-16: (NRSV) <sup>14</sup>We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. <sup>15</sup>But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup>from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

Speak the truth in love! Weigh our words carefully so that what we speak is of benefit and not idle talk or damaging to others.



))) Introduction, Cal Connect, *Can Gossiping be Good, CalTV Berkeley*

- *Gossip. We're all guilty of it at some point or another. And for centuries it's gotten a pretty bad reputation as being malicious and unproductive. But, is that always the case? A recent study at UC Berkeley suggests that gossip may in fact be a good thing. Facebook, Twitter, Yelp, text messaging. In today's world, gossip outlets are pervasive as ever with the constant opportunity to spread information, wrecking havoc on relationships and tarnishing reputations.*

**How many of these seven things can be tied into gossip and slander?**

**Proverbs 6:16-19:** (NKJV) *These six things the LORD hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him:*

- *A proud look*
- *A lying tongue*
- *Hands that shed innocent blood*
- *A heart that devises wicked plans*
- *Feet that are swift in running to evil*
- *A false witness who speaks lies*
- *One who sows discord among brethren*

))) Fun, but not kind, *Stop Gossiping, Gretchen Ruth*

- *The thing about gossiping is that it is fun. It is fun to gossip. And I didn't realize how much I did gossip until I really tried to stop. Now researchers will tell us that gossiping actually serves a very important social function. Gossip is the way that we enforce social norms and find out what are the norms of our community. So, if somebody does something like take credit for something that they weren't responsible for, by gossiping everybody exposes this and says this is not right and the person finds consequences for the action that they've done. And just as a matter of fact, it's interesting that both men and women gossip the same amount, but both men and women prefer to gossip to women because women make a better audience. But although gossip serves an important social function and it is fun, it is not kind.*

But is society really that noble where our enforcement of social norms lifts people up?



A caller from Indiana suggested: *Gossip is a two-way street. Receiving gossip is also a temptation. (Proverbs 26:22) Receiving gossip can be rewarding, so we need to recognize when it is happening and shut it down. Be strong enough to not be a part of it.*



Do we like to have our own lives misrepresented? So why would we think to do this to another person? We have all fallen into the trap of gossip, but what do we do to avoid it?



### Compare and choose!

Proverbs 10:17-23: (NRSV) <sup>17</sup>Whoever heeds instruction is on the path to life, but one who rejects a rebuke goes astray. <sup>18</sup>Lying lips conceal hatred, and whoever utters slander <1618> is a fool. <sup>19</sup>When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but the prudent are restrained in speech. <sup>20</sup>The tongue of the righteous is choice silver; the mind of the wicked is of little worth. <sup>21</sup>The lips of the righteous feed many, but fools die for lack of sense. <sup>22</sup>The blessing of the LORD makes rich, and He adds no sorrow with it. <sup>23</sup>Doing wrong is like sport to a fool, but wise conduct is pleasure to a person of understanding.



Gossip is like a social sport that causes hurt.



**Low self-esteem, Why Do We Love to Gossip, Davis Essel**

- *The biggest reason that you or I would gossip about anyone, a celebrity, a lover, a next-door neighbor, a co-worker is because we have very low self-esteem. You see when we have very low self-esteem, we feel that is one of the quickest ways that we can boost our self-esteem, and it's an illusion. But one of the quickest ways we think we can boost it is by putting someone else down. So, when we judge other people and talk about them and say how my former partner is such an idiot because he hasn't kept up with child support or he hasn't kept up with alimony or whatever it might be and we're letting all of our friends know this, it gives us this illusion that we're on top of the world because we're putting someone else down. In actuality the opposite happens. People that gossip on a regular basis feel pretty crappy about themselves and that doesn't change until they stop gossiping.*

How selfish is this?

### We have a choice as to what we feed to those around us:

Proverbs 26:18-23: (NRSV) <sup>18</sup>Like a maniac who shoots deadly firebrands and arrows, <sup>19</sup>so is one who deceives a neighbor and says, I am only joking! <sup>20</sup>For lack of wood the fire goes out, and where there is no whisperer, quarreling ceases. <sup>21</sup>As charcoal is to hot embers and wood to fire, so is a quarrelsome person for kindling strife. <sup>22</sup>The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels; they go down into the inner parts of the body. <sup>23</sup>Like the glaze covering an earthen vessel are smooth lips with an evil heart.

If you do not feed the fire of gossip by listening, the fire will go out. The words we speak should be beneficial and not tear someone down.

Proverbs 20:19: He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.

Do we want to stay away from those who tear others down with words, or are we drawn in?



**Gossip's definition, Dealing with Gossips, Joseph Tan**

- *Gossip is sharing detrimental information with those who are not part of the problem or part of the solution. So, gossip is spreading stories and even sometimes telling information that is true, but it's the audience of the information that is in question here. You are telling it to people who are not part of the problem, or part of the solution and they really can do nothing about it.*



So, why are you talking to them? They are just an audience!

### What was the Old Testament view of gossip?

A caller from California is happy that the Christian Questions programs are archived because the live programs are early in California! Titus 3:2 ...*Speak evil of no man.* The word *evil* here means derogatorily.



He who steals my purse steals trash  
But he who filches from me my good name  
robs me of that which enriches him not  
but leaves me poor indeed. - *Shakespeare*

If we say we are Christians, we are bound by the guidelines in the Scriptures.

Exodus 20:16: *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*

**The following is a scathing consequence of misrepresenting another:**

Deuteronomy 19:15-21: (NKJV) <sup>15</sup>*One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.* <sup>16</sup>*If a false witness rises against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing,* <sup>17</sup>*then both men in the controversy shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who serve in those days.* <sup>18</sup>*And the judges shall make careful inquiry, and indeed, if the witness is a false witness, who has testified falsely against his brother,* <sup>19</sup>*then you shall do to him as he thought to have done to his brother; so you shall put away the evil from among you.* <sup>20</sup>*And those who remain shall hear and fear, and hereafter they shall not again commit such evil among you.* <sup>21</sup>*Your eye shall not pity: life shall be for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.*

One of the biggest problems with gossip is that it is based on hearsay and not fact. Gossip is inherently a misrepresentation and an exercise of distortion. It is like the old **telephone game**. The last person receives distorted information.



Leviticus 19:16: *Thou shalt not go up and down as a **talebearer <7400>** among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the LORD.*

**Talebearer**: Strongs #7400 rakiyl (raw-keel'); a scandal-monger (as traveling about): KJV-- slander, carry tales, talebearer.

 **Helps maintain social order, *Can Gossiping Be Good, CalTV Berkeley***

- *Aside from personal benefits, Feinberg's discovery suggests that gossiping also helps to maintain social order, as a threat of being talked about negatively motivates individuals to act virtuously.*
- *Often times it has been a bad thing and it can be maliciously motivating and serve a malicious purpose. If there's a way to differentiate, that would be useful but hopefully this research will at least get people to recognize that not all gossip has to be that bad.*



- *So, the next time you decide to engage in gossip, recognize that you may actually be doing something good for your health as well as society.*

What a crock! Since when does our society ever preach negative reinforcement? We don't discipline children for fear of damaging self-esteem; we don't even keep score in kids' games so no one will lose! As adults our speech must be politically correct lest we offend another - and we think that gossip is good?? We are afraid of negative reinforcement!

Here is an example from Rick of building one another up instead of negative gossip:

My daughter, Amy, was married yesterday. She has been through a lot of difficulties in her life, but has now found a wonderful man for herself and her son Domenic. During the wedding ceremony, after Dan said his vows to Amy, Dan knelt down next to Domenic (the "Best Little Man") and expressed his vows of allegiance to him also. This showed the quality of the man.



This is building one another up! This is how we should talk about other people and avoid the negative chatter in our lives.

Proverbs 11:12-13: (KJV) <sup>12</sup>*He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace.* <sup>13</sup>*A talebearer <7400> revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.*

So, even in the justice-based system of the Old Testament, the clear instruction was - no gossip!

Exodus 23:1-3: (NRSV) <sup>1</sup>*You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with the wicked to act as a malicious witness.* <sup>2</sup>*You shall not follow a majority in wrongdoing; when you bear witness in a lawsuit, you shall not side with the majority so as to pervert justice;* <sup>3</sup>*nor shall you be partial to the poor in a lawsuit.*

We need to watch our own heart, thoughts and mind.

Justice should be blind. Violation of this commandment of bearing false witness against your neighbor indicates a deep lack of respect for truth and your neighbor. To achieve a level of not bearing false witness can be a monumental task, for the terrain one must trek is not only slippery but very deceptive as well.



A caller from Connecticut suggests: Our heart's intent is the key.

Matthew 12:34: *Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.*

Jeremiah 17:9: *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?* Psalms 61:10: *Create in me a new heart, O Lord, and renew a right spirit within me.*





## What is the New Testament view of gossip?

### Gossip and karma, *Why Do We Love to Gossip, David Essel*

- You know there are many reasons why people gossip in life, but I'll tell you this - one of the reasons that I did this segment right now is because of what we know as karma. When we talk about someone, when we think about someone in a derogatory way, it's coming back to us, because the definition of karma is that every thought, every word and every action goes out into the universe and returns in kind. So if we're talking poorly about Lindsay Lohan or Tim Tebow, or anyone else in this world, or your next-door neighbor, or it could be your partner even, it's going to come back to us and we're going to receive the same thing in kind at some point in the future.*

But is "karma" a Christian principle as well?

### Is it possible to slander another by accident?

Matthew 12:33-36: (KJV) <sup>33</sup>Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. <sup>34</sup>O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. <sup>35</sup>A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. <sup>36</sup>But I say unto you, that every **idle <692>** word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

There's your karma! There is an accounting for every idle word we speak.

**Idle**: Strongs # 692 argos (ar-gos'); inactive, i.e. unemployed; (by implication) lazy, useless: 1) free from labour, at leisure 2) lazy, shunning the labour which one ought to perform



Another caller from Connecticut suggests: Numbers 23:8: *How can I curse whom God has not cursed? How can I denounce those the Lord has not denounced? Gossip weakens us. Show integrity and sound speech. Titus 2:7-8: *In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach.**

So then, idle words then are not thought out or planned as they should be. Instead, they are mainly reactionary, lazy and not meant for building one another up. They are words that come far too easily to one's mind and without a filter, they are tools of destruction! Our words should be for a beneficial purpose.

If we are our brother's keeper, how do we stay away from gossip when trying to help our brother?

Don't talk to everyone and discuss the issue. Have a one-on-one discussion. If asking someone else to help and give you advice to help your brother, speak in generalities only. Seek counsel with the broadest approach possible so that no reputation is brought down. Don't bring down your brother's reputation.

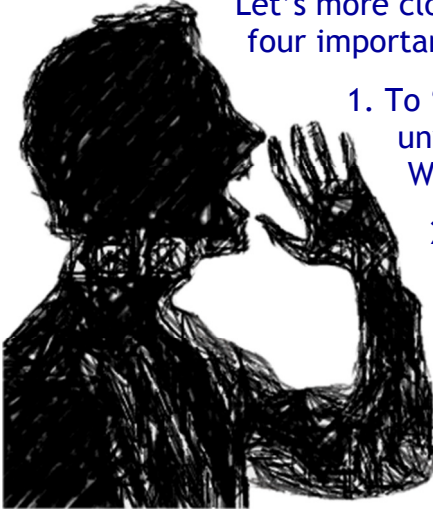
### Four reasons for gossip, *What's Good About Gossip, Shimul Melwanim, TED Talk*

- And so overall they propose that in terms of society, or groups, or large communities, gossip has four main functions. It allows people to gather and disseminate information about each other; it allows people or groups to establish norms. So, if somebody doesn't follow the norm, you can actually*



*hurt them by discussing and hurting their reputation. By sharing these norms and agreeing upon what's good behavior, we also establish group solidarity. And then finally, it's just kind of fun and as a relief in the monotony of daily life.*

Let's more closely examine those statements above about gossip serving four important functions:



1. To "disseminate information," really meaning to spread unverified rumors! Which of these two are more natural: Which are more likely?
2. Mob mentality and purposefully hurting is now the order of the day - all based on unverified rumors! Instead, we are to approach the person face-to-face. Speak the truth to the person with whom you have the issue.
3. We establish group solidarity - meaning we as a mob decide acceptability. That's what gangs do! Gossip crumbles when confronted with reason.

4. Is it fun to verbally beat others down based on rumor? How bad must our self-esteem be for this to be fun.

**Here is Jesus' firm statement on proper treatment of one another:**

Matthew 5:21-24: (KJV) <sup>21</sup>*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:* <sup>22</sup>*But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, **Raca <4469>**, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, **Thou fool <3474>**, shall be in danger of hell fire-(Gehenna).* <sup>23</sup>*Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;* <sup>24</sup>*Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*

**Raca:** Strongs #4469 rhaka (rhak-ah'); O empty one, i.e. thou worthless (as a term of utter vilification)

**Thou Fool:** Strongs #3474 moros (mo-ros'); dull or stupid (as if shut up), i.e. heedless, (morally) blockhead

1 Timothy 5:11-13: (NASB) <sup>11</sup>*But refuse to put younger widows on the list, for when they feel sensual desires in disregard of Christ, they want to get married, <sup>12</sup>thus incurring condemnation, because they have set aside their previous pledge. <sup>13</sup>At the same time they also learn to be idle, as they go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also **gossips <5397>** and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention.*

**Gossips:** Strongs #5397 fluarov phluaros floo'-ar-os from phluo (to bubble); ; adj  
1) of persons uttering or doing silly things, garrulous, babbling  
2) of things, foolish, trifling, vain



## How do we break the gossip habit?

))) Study results, *What's Good About Gossip, Shimul Melwani, TED Talk*

- *People who gossiped felt and showed higher levels of positive emotion and this was done by a series of coders who rated these videos and found that people who gossiped, laughed more, smiled more, and just seemed to be overall happier. And you could say well what good are positive emotions? Well, research over years has actually shown that positive emotions, inside the workplace and outside, have all kinds of wonderful benefits. They allow people to have better performance, more creativity, help each other more, and also are related to some of the things I also found. One being they were able to actually show and feel better relationship outcomes. So, people who gossiped reported feeling closer to each other.*

## How to **BREAK** the gossip habit

**Important Point #1:** You really can't get away with gossip!

Galatians 6:7-10: (NASB) <sup>7</sup>Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. <sup>8</sup>For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. <sup>9</sup>Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. <sup>10</sup>So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.



**Important Point #2:** Proclaim your loyalty to God outwardly! Spend your time praising God and you won't have time to gossip. Replace the habit!

Psalms 101:1: (NRSV) *I will sing of loyalty and of justice; to you, O LORD, I will sing.*

**Important Point #3:** Study only righteousness and walk with integrity.

Psalms 101:2: (NRSV) *I will study the way that is blameless. When shall I attain it? I will walk with integrity of heart within my house;*

Instead of reading a tabloid, read the Scriptures! Think replacement! Fill your heart and mind with good things because what you put in will reflect what comes out.

**Important Point #4:** Decide to only look upon those things that uplift. Do not look at things that absorb your time or those things that are not wholesome. This may be nearly impossible, so we have to battle it constantly.

Psalms 101:3: (NRSV) *I will not set before my eyes anything that is base. I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me.*



## **The Cost of Negative Gossip, Shimul Melwani, TED Talk**

- *I found that people who engage in negative gossip - it was just more common, very, very prevalent. Very few pairs talked about other people positively. This is actually really problematic because negative gossip comes with a series of costs, both for the individual and for the group. So, individuals who engage in negative gossip had a sort of drop in their self-esteem, they just felt kind of bad about themselves. Other research has actually shown that people who engage in high frequency negative gossip are less likable and are also seen as less powerful. In addition, some social network research shows that targets of negative gossip are especially hurt by this.*

**Important Point #5:** Purge out evil and deceit from your heart - hear it not and speak it not! Monitor your words daily. Make it your homework.

Psalms 101:4: (NRSV) *Perverseness of heart shall be far from me; I will know nothing of evil.*

**Important Point #6:** Personally confront that which damages in your circle of influence. Have courage to stand up against someone when they are slandering someone else.

Psalms 101:5: (NRSV) *One who secretly slanders a neighbor I will destroy. A haughty look and an arrogant heart I will not tolerate.*

**Important Point #7:** Seek out those who stand for righteousness and mercy! Gather around others who do not gossip. Put yourself in a good environment where you just build up others.

Psalms 101:6: (NRSV) *I will look with favor on the faithful in the land, so that they may live with me; whoever walks in the way that is blameless shall minister to me.*

**Important Point #8:** Remove yourself from an environment of lies and deceit. Get rid of those influences. Gossip degrades those who were *also* created in the image of God.

Psalms 101:7: (NRSV) *No one who practices deceit shall remain in my house; no one who utters lies shall continue in my presence.*

**Important Point #9:** <sup>16</sup>*Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*

We can bear false witness (which is a form of stealing) by:

- Assigning credit for a task to the wrong place
- Ruining someone's reputation
- Misrepresenting someone or something (slander or libel)

Gossip is a devious little habit that permeates throughout all of our society. We must face gossip for what it is - nothing valuable or that we should want to be a part of. We need to learn how to properly speak about one another.

***So, is it really that bad to gossip?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions,  
Think about it...!***





**And now even more to think about...  
only in the Full Edition of CQ Rewind**

**To put it all in perspective:**

**1 Peter 3:8-12:** (NASB) <sup>8</sup>To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; <sup>9</sup>not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing. <sup>10</sup>For, the one who desires life, to love and see good days, Must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit. <sup>11</sup>He must turn away from evil and do good; He must seek peace and pursue it. <sup>12</sup>For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, And His ears attend to their prayer, But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.

**Ephesians 4:23-32:** (NKJV) <sup>23</sup>and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, <sup>24</sup>and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. <sup>25</sup>Therefore, putting away lying, Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. <sup>26</sup>Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, <sup>27</sup>nor give place to the devil. <sup>28</sup>Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. <sup>29</sup>Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. <sup>30</sup>And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup>Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. <sup>32</sup>And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

**Repetition is a great teacher!**

**Psalms 140:1-13:** (NRSV) <sup>1</sup>Deliver me, O LORD, from evildoers; protect me from those who are violent, <sup>2</sup>who plan evil things in their minds and stir up wars continually. <sup>3</sup>They make their tongue sharp as a snake's, and under their lips is the venom of vipers. Selah <sup>4</sup>Guard me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; protect me from the violent who have planned my downfall. <sup>5</sup>The arrogant have hidden a trap for me, and with cords they have spread a net, along the road they have set snares for me. Selah <sup>6</sup>I say to the LORD, "You are my God; give ear, O LORD, to the voice of my supplications. <sup>7</sup>O LORD, my Lord, my strong deliverer, you have covered my head in the day of battle. <sup>8</sup>Do not grant, O LORD, the desires of the wicked; do not further their evil plot. Selah <sup>9</sup>Those who surround me lift up their heads; let the mischief of their lips overwhelm them! <sup>10</sup>Let burning coals fall on them! Let them be flung into pits, no more to rise! <sup>11</sup>Do not let the slanderer be established in the land; let evil speedily hunt down the violent! <sup>12</sup>I know that the LORD maintains the cause of the needy, and executes justice for the poor. <sup>13</sup>Surely the righteous shall give thanks to your name; the upright shall live in your presence.



**James 4:11-17:** (NASB) <sup>11</sup>*Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it.* <sup>12</sup>*There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?* <sup>13</sup>*Come now, you who say, Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.* <sup>14</sup>*Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.* <sup>15</sup>*Instead, you ought to say, If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.* <sup>16</sup>*But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.* <sup>17</sup>*Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.*

### **Can you truly love someone if you gossip about them?**

**1 John 3:14-15:** (NASB) <sup>14</sup>*We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.* <sup>15</sup>*Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

### **DON'T do the things listed in the first part of text, but do the things in Verse 23:**

**Psalms 50:16-23:** (NRSV) <sup>16</sup>*But to the wicked God says: What right have you to recite my statutes, or take my covenant on your lips?* <sup>17</sup>*For you hate discipline, and you cast my words behind you.* <sup>18</sup>*You make friends with a thief when you see one, and you keep company with adulterers.* <sup>19</sup>*You give your mouth free rein for evil, and your tongue frames deceit.* <sup>20</sup>*You sit and speak against your kin; you slander your own mother's child.* <sup>21</sup>*These things you have done and I have been silent; you thought that I was one just like yourself. But now I rebuke you, and lay the charge before you.* <sup>22</sup>*Mark this, then, you who forget God, or I will tear you apart, and there will be no one to deliver.* <sup>23</sup>*Those who bring thanksgiving as their sacrifice honor me; to those who go the right way I will show the salvation of God.*