

Gossip & slander - the evil, the damage, the cause and the cure

Ps 15:1-3 **LORD, who may enter your Temple? Who may worship on Zion, your sacred hill? (Who can live in Your presence and in Your power?) A person who obeys God in everything and always does what is right, whose words are true and sincere, and who does not slander others. He does no wrong to his friends nor spreads rumors about his neighbors. TEV**

Verse 3 TLB **Anyone who refuses to slander others, does not listen to gossip, never harms his neighbor (that person lives in God's presence and in His power)**

Webster's dictionary definitions:

Gossip: (1) What - A rumor or report of an intimate nature.
(2) Who - A person who habitually reveals personal or sensational facts.

Slander: The utterance of false charges or misrepresentations which defame and damage another's reputation.

Prov 10:18 **...Anyone who spreads gossip is a fool. TEV**

Some of the things that gossip does and what it reveals about the gossiper

Prov 16:28 **An evil man sows strife; gossip separates the best of friends. TLB**

Prov 25:23 **Gossip brings anger just as surely as the north wind brings rain. TEV**

Prov 18:8 **The words of a whisperer or talebearer are as dainty morsels; they go down into the innermost parts of the body. (so harming the hearers) AMP**

Prov 12:13 **The gossip of bad people gets them in trouble; the conversation of good people keeps them out of it. MESSAGE**

Prov 16:27 **Mean people spread mean gossip; their words smart and burn. MESSAGE**

God's admonitions about bad mouthing leaders and believing accusations against elders

Eccl 10:20 **Don't bad-mouth your leaders, not even under your breath, And don't abuse your betters, even in the privacy of your home. Loose talk has a way of getting picked up and spread around. Little birds drop the crumbs of your gossip far and wide. MESSAGE**

1 Tim 5:19 **Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses.**

What is God's counsel to us Christians on the subject of talking about the faults of others

Prov 11:13 **He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy and faithful in spirit keeps the matter hidden. AMP**

Prov 19:11 **The discretion of a man (the discernment, having God's understanding)**

makes him slow to anger, And his glory is to overlook a transgression.

Prov 17:9 **He who covers and forgives an offense seeks love, but he who repeats or harps on a matter separates even close friends.** AMP

Eph 5:4 **Though some tongues just love the taste of gossip, Christians have better uses for language than that...Thanksgiving is our dialect** MESSAGE

Col 3:13 **Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you must do**

But what if the gossip is about me?

Ps 119:23 **While bad neighbors maliciously gossip about me, I'm absorbed in pondering Your wise counsel (God's words to me).** MESSAGE

How can we possibly do this - refrain from gossip about others & ignore gossip about us?

We can't change ourselves, we can't change our nature – we act according to our nature:

Jer 13:23 (God asks) ...**Can the leopard change its spots, can you do good who are accustomed and taught even trained to do evil?** (No we can't) AMP

But God can and will change our nature if we will simply submit to how He does it:

Ps 119:11 **Your word I have hidden in my heart, so that I will not sin against You.**

Ps 19:7-10 **The word of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The word of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; The words of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The word of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; The word of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The words of the Lord are true and righteous altogether (substituting God's word for 6 synonyms)**

More to be desired are they than gold, Yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. As I eat and believe them in my heart.

John 8:32 **And you shall know the word, and the word will make you free (1 synonym)**

An amazing allegory about a lazy man's overgrown field – our hearts are our spiritual field

1 Cor 3:9 **...You (your hearts) are God's field...His vineyard...where He plants His word**

Prov 24:30-32 **I went by the field of the lazy man, And by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding; And there it was, all overgrown with thorns; Its surface was covered with nettles (instead of God's words it was full of Satan's thoughts); Its stone wall (its will to do God's will) was broken down. When I saw it, I considered it well; I looked on it and received instruction:**

33-34 **A little (spiritual) sleep, a little slumber (and defiling yourself with gossip, strife, anger, offence, envy, complaining, malice and deceit)...So shall your poverty come like a prowler (Satan)...your need like an armed man.**