

HOW TO HANDLE GOSSIP

There is no word used in the Bible that is actually a good equivalent for our English word _____

I. THE DEFINITION OF GOSSIP

A. Gossip Is the Sharing of _____ Information about Another Person

- 1) "Slander" is purposely sharing what we know is not true: _____ someone's reputation
- 2) Ja.4:11 defines gossip as speaking _____ another person whether we know it is true or not
- 3) Eph.4:29 defines gossip as "corrupting talk"—words that _____ down rather than build up another
This provides a test for our words: must we share negative information in order to find a _____ to an interpersonal problem and reconcile OR do we selfishly want to be heard and validated?
- 4) Lk.6:31 gives another test: If somebody said this about me, would I be _____ or displeased?

B. Gossip Includes an Element of _____

- 1) Ro.1:29 and 2 Co.12:20 use words in the original language that sound like _____
- 2) Prov.18:8 & 26:22 tell us how _____ gossip is: more tasty than a perfectly done filet mignon
- 3) These verses also teach that once we have heard a secret about someone we cannot _____ it
- 4) John Piper suggests that there is an element of _____ in hearing, knowing and sharing secrets
- 5) We also whisper gossip so we won't pay the _____ of others finding out what we are doing

II. THE EFFECTS OF GOSSIP

A. Gossip Causes Interpersonal _____

- 1) When we gossip we pour _____ into the gears of relationships; it causes them to grind to a halt
- 2) Prov.26:20 teaches that gossip is the _____ that keeps interpersonal conflict blazing: just quit it!

B. Gossip Displeases _____

- 1) Proverbs 6:16-19 teaches that God hates gossip because it is so destructive to His _____
- 2) Mt.12:36 teaches we will give account for every careless word—every word that does not _____

III. THE RESPONSE TO GOSSIP

A. We Must _____ of Gossip (A Multi-Step Process)

- 1) We must acknowledge gossip as a serious sin and _____ it (say the same thing about it as God)
- 2) We may need to ask forgiveness of others we have gossiped about and seek _____
- 3) Because "no man can tame the tongue" (Ja.3:8) we must seek _____ help to change this habit
- 4) We do not break this habit; we _____ tearing others down verbally with building them up verbally

B. We Must Refuse to _____ to Gossip

- 1) Prov.17:4 teaches that the "gossip-ee" is an _____: we must intentionally, purposely refuse it!
- 2) We can say something nice about the person or redirect the conversation or say: "It doesn't seem like I'm part of the _____ to this problem, so I don't think I should be part of this conversation."

C. We Sometimes Must _____ Those Who Gossip

- 1) When one complains how another has treated him, redirect him to the person who _____ him
- 2) Sometimes when a person shares his burdens it includes gossip; redirect them to _____