

GOSSIP

What it is and how to avoid it

Our words are powerful. They have the power to build others up or tear them down. Because of this, Scripture is full of guidance on how to use our words. We must have a clear picture of what the sin of gossip is and be shaped by Scripture in avoiding it. May this resource help us do that.

Definition

A conversation about someone else with a tone of confidentiality, a negative aim, no redemptive purpose, and is often enjoyed with a prideful heart.

Scripture

Romans 1:29 - "They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips..."

1 Timothy 5:13 - "Besides that, they learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not."

Proverbs 16:28 - "A dishonest man spreads strife, and a whisperer separates close friends."

Proverbs 17:9 - "Whoever covers an offense seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates close friends."

Ephesians 4:29-32 - "²⁹ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."

Questions

Is there any way that sharing with this person is going to help the situation? E.g. Will it lead to prayer, or more negative sharing? Is this person involved in the situation or equipped to redeem the situation?

Am I sharing to elevate myself or feel better about myself?

Would I share this if they were standing behind me?

Is this a sin or a pet peeve that I am concerned about? If a sin, then how can I move toward redemption? If a pet peeve, how can I show grace?