

October 14, 2018
La Jolla Christian Fellowship
THE TONGUE : What To Do With What You've Herd
Episode 2: Gossip & Slander
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Eph 4:29 *Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.*

James 1:26 *Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.*

James 4: 11 *Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.*

Proverbs 17:9 *Whoever would foster love covers over an offense, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.*

Proverbs 18:8 *The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to the inmost parts.*

Key Premise: **Words are a key building block of a society. A society of any kind must choose social construction upon words or truth and fidelity or deception and lies.**

- Are we committing to becoming a gossip-free church and a church that speaks directly to people rather than about people?
 - **Proverbs 17:4** *Wrongdoers eagerly listen to gossip; liars pay close attention to slander.*

What is Gossip: Casual or unconstrained conversation or reports about other people, typically involving details that are not confirmed as being true.

- Gossip is a coercive social weapon meant to create power and influence for the one sharing the information and to diminish the power or influence of the person being spoken about.
 - Helps individuals learn social information about other individuals within a society (often without even having to meet the other individual).
 - Builds social networks of individuals by bonding and affiliating and or disenfranchising people from one another.
 - Breaks existing bonds by ostracizing individuals within an organization.
 - Enhances one's social status/power/prestige within a society.
 - Inform individuals as to what is considered socially acceptable behavior within the society.

1. Gossip and Slander Affirm Lack Rather Than Abundance

- **Eph 4:29** *Do not let any **unwholesome** talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.*
 - **Unwholesome:** This word means "to lack fullness".
- **James 1:26** *Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is **worthless**.*
 - **Worthless:** Means "to lack value".

2. Gossip and Slander Put You In Direct Conflict With God's Law

- **James 4:11** *Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.*
 - It's impossible to slander someone or gossip without also judging God's entire law.

3. Gossip and Slander Are Contrary To Grace

- **Proverbs 17:9** *Whoever would foster love covers over an offense, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.*

4. Gossip and Slander Poison And Destroy You From The Inside Out.

- **Proverbs 18:8** *The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to the inmost parts.*
- **Proverbs 21:23** *He who guards his mouth and his tongue, Guards his soul from troubles.*

Food For The Journey: Use these questions and challenges to go deeper in one of our community groups or in personal reflection.

1. Where do you see gossip in our society and what effect is it having?
2. Ephesians 4:29 speaks about unwholesome talk. What does "unwholesome" mean?
3. When if ever is it okay to speak about a person when they are unaware of it?
4. Proverbs 21:23 says that a person who guards his mouth and tongue, Guards his soul from troubles. How does this truth play out in the "real world"?
5. Would you say that you are good at controlling your tongue?
6. Challenge: Take the 21-day criticism challenge.