

TOPICAL STUDIES

GOSSIP (SINS OF THE TONGUE)



SUMMARY: We need to recognize our tendency to gossip, consciously work on not gossiping (negative), and work to develop meaningful relationships with others to minimize the need to gossip.

DEFINITION OF GOSSIP: Groundless rumor, chatter, a news monger, (Archaic: a godparent, friend, or crony)

WHAT IS GOSSIP? Gossip is generally considered today to be saying or repeating things about other individuals which 1) one does not know to be true and 2) is detrimental to the character or activities of the person gossiped about (Flattery is also condemned!). The term carries negative connotations, with busybody (Unintended) being at one end and slander (Malicious) being on the other end of this type action.

Gossip is an attempt to elevate your position or importance by tearing down another individual. It is generally reflective of one who is not able to otherwise fulfill his or her need for social gratification.

To say something cruel about another person which you know to be true may not be very Christian like, but it is not gossip.

LEVELS OF CONVERSATION

The following are the general levels or types of communication between individuals.

- * **LEVEL 1: CLICHÉ CONVERSATION**
Like a sign on your door or the wording on a "welcome" doormat.
- * **LEVEL 2: REPORTING THE FACTS**
Like talking on a front door intercom
- * **LEVEL 3: MY IDEAS AND JUDGMENTS**
Cracking the door to your personality open to test the waters, but keeping the chain on the door just in case.
- * **LEVEL 4: MY FEELINGS (EMOTIONS) (GUT LEVEL)**
Opening the door to your personality wide, taking a chance to make myself vulnerable to you.
- * **LEVEL 5: PEAK COMMUNICATIONS**
Invite you thru the doorway of my personality into me, we become a one person.

TOPICAL STUDIES

GOSSIP (SINS OF THE TONGUE)



These levels of conversation between standing acquaintances generally relate to the maturity of the relationship between the individuals. The ability to communicate with other individuals is an indication of mutual trust and growth of the persons individually and together.

Generally, it is reasonable to conclude that gossip is not possible as long as you are only trading clichés so gossip would not normally be done at Level 1 communication.

The implication of being able to converse at the deeper levels of conversation such as Level 4 or Level 5 generally implies that you are more mature as a person and as a social being. These maturities would provide a tendency for you not to need to tear down of other persons to improve your status. This would mean that the probability of gossip at Level 4 or Level 5 conversation would be low (But could still exist).

This would mean that the most likely types of conversation to support gossip would be Level 2 and Level 3. Characteristically, these levels imply that you are not fully secure as a person and would prefer to examine the potential faults of other person rather than risking rejection by discussing your own feelings.

This means that if we can build to a more secure relationship with our associates, we will be able to spend our time discussing more personal and weighty subjects. We will not be dependent on raking potential faults of others over the coals as conversation material.

NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES RELATING TO SINS OF THE TONGUE

1. SPEAKING EVIL: Matt 5:22, Matt. 12:34, Acts 23:5, Rom. 1:29, Rom. 3:13, I Cor. 6:10, Eph 4:25, Titus 1:10-11, Titus 3:2, James 1:26, James 3:5-10, James 4:11, I Peter 2:1, I Peter 3:9, II Peter 2:7-10, Jude 8-10 (17 verses).
2. ACCUSATION, FALSE: Matt. 5:11, Luke 3:14, II Tim. 3:3, I Pet 4:14 (4 verses).
3. BUSYBODY: II Thes. 3:11-12, I Tim. 5:13, I Peter 4:15 (3).
4. FLATTERY: Luke 6:26, Gal. 1:10, I Thes. 2:4-6, Jude 16 (4).
5. SLANDER: Titus 2:3, I Tim. 3:11, Jude 8, Romans 3:8, I Peter 4:4, I Peter 3:10, Eph. 4:31, Titus 3:1-2, I Peter 2:12, I Peter 3:16, I Cor 4:13, Matt 5:11, I Cor. 4:13, II Cor. 12:20, James 4:11. (15 times).
6. "YOU WILL BE JUDGED BY WHAT YOU SAY", Matt. 12:36-37 (1)

There are a total of 44 instructions against sins of the tongue and only 8 against drunkenness and 13 for sobriety (Ref: Nave's Topical). Perhaps we are not fairly placing the emphasis on subjects such as these.