

TO TELL OR NOT TO TELL

What is gossip? What does it do? How should I handle it?

Gossip Defined

- ⦿ Gossip is speaking to someone who is neither directly part of a problem or solution concerning another person who is not present.
- ⦿ A gossip is a person who has privileged information about people and proceeds to reveal that information to those who have no business knowing it and can do nothing about it except spread it.

Proverbs 17:4, 18:8

“An evildoer gives heed to false lips
(listens to gossip); a liar listens
eagerly to a spiteful tongue.”

“The words of a talebearer (gossip)
are like tasty trifles, they go down
into the inmost body.”

Types of Gossip

- ***Slander*** – spreading rumors or lies about a person to purposefully cause damage.

James 4:11 – “Brothers, do not slander one another.”

- ***Dishing*** – sharing the “juicy info”; keeping the gossip alive

Proverbs 20:19 – “A talebearer reveals secrets ...”

Types of Gossip

- ***Rumors*** – info not confirmed as true but good stuff!

Proverbs 13:3 – “He who guards his lips saves his life.”

- ***Backbiting*** – speaking spiteful or slanderous words about another who is not present to defend themselves

Psalms 101:5 – “Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him will I destroy.”

Types of Gossip

- ◎ ***“I was just joking” Jokes*** – taking some part of the truth and turning it into a joke about someone that makes others question their character; mockery

Ephesians 5:3-4

- ◎ ***Planting Seeds*** – saying something that would make the listener question or assume something about the character of another person

Proverbs 16:28 – “A perverse man stirs up strife and a gossip separates the best of friends.”

What does gossip do?

- ⦿ Reveals secrets
- ⦿ Feeds a false sense of superiority
- ⦿ Sows distrust among everyone
- ⦿ Harms my testimony
- ⦿ Destroys my integrity
- ⦿ Harms/ends relationships
- ⦿ Ruins reputations
- ⦿ Comes back to haunt you

What do I do?

- Before you speak ask yourself, “Is this gossip?”
- Stop gossip before it starts – Don’t participate or turn the conversation
- Be an advocate. Stand up for the defenseless
- Pray for those who gossip
- Ask forgiveness for my own gossip