



VIDAPASIONADA LIFE GROUP

TOPIC: GOSSIP

WARM-UP

1. Have you ever experienced somebody talking about you to some other people behind your back? If yes, how did you find out? What did you do? What did you feel?
2. Do you like talking to other people about someone? Why yes or why not?

WORD

During a Life Group meeting, the leader said: "James, the brother of Jesus, once said that we should confess our sins to each other and pray for each other so we may be healed (James 5:16). Confession is good for the soul. We should do it." All the members agreed. So one member started: "I have been addicted to pornography for a long time." Another member said: "I'm the accountant at this company where I work for and I stole money from them last year." Still, another member said: "I have cheated on my wife and she still does not know it." When it came to the last member, he would not confess. So the others said: "We have confessed our sins. You also need to do the same. What would you like to confess?" After saying this a few times, finally he spoke: "Well, I gossip a lot and I cannot wait to get out of this meeting."¹

Gossip is a *topic* that is not talked about a lot, but it's an *act* that is being done a lot. What is gossip, anyway? It is sharing information (may it be true or not) which damages another person's reputation with those who have no need to know. It is speaking to someone who is neither directly part of the problem or the solution, concerning another person who is not present.² The Bible describes gossip by using some words, such as:

1. "Whisperer" (When people gossip, they normally do it by "whispering," meaning, they maliciously talk about a person privately, behind that person's back.)

¹ Christopher News Notes, June 1992.

² <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-13-have-you-heard-about-gossip-2-samuel-13-15>

For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults... (2 Cor 12:20 NKJV)

2. "Busybodies" (A busybody is someone who meddles or pries.)

We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies. (2 Thes 3:11)

3. Meddle in situations which does not pertain to you.

If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. (1 Pe 4:15)

4. "Talking nonsense" (Suggesting that gossip is empty, pointless talk, often not completely factual.)

Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also busybodies who talk nonsense, saying things they ought not to. (1 Tim 5:13)

5. "Malicious gossips" (It is the same word that is most often translated as "devil." It comes from a compound word meaning to throw something against someone. It ought to scare us to realize that when we gossip we are acting like the devil!)

In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. (1 Tim 3:11)

Gossip is so bad mainly because it does not do anything positive nor helpful. It is a poison because it DESTROYS. It destroys 3 important things:

1. It destroys you.

Generally, people like to cover their shortcomings and put it on other people. The way they do this is to gossip. When you gossip, it makes you feel

better about yourself and it makes you feel superior or a lot better than the person you are slandering. This produces pride in you and in due time, pride will destroy you. Gossip will also destroy your integrity. If you are talking about others when they are not around, they will wonder: "What will you say about me when I'm not around?" People will start to question your character. Lastly, gossip will come back to haunt you. More often than not, your gossip will eventually be discovered (especially by the person you are slandering) and you will definitely suffer the consequences of your ungodly action.

2. It destroys others.

Whether you like it or not, your words have weight because you have an influence on other people, especially if you are a leader. Your gossip may cause lasting or irreparable consequences. Gossiping harms relationships and then divides people. When this happens, careers, families, churches, organisations, etc. will eventually be destroyed. Gossiping never builds up or strengthens relationships. Instead, it strains and ends them.

3. It destroys your testimony.

If you are a disciple of Jesus, you can't gossip and love at the same time. You cannot walk in the Spirit and then gossip. You cannot be obedient to God and gossip at the same time, even when what you say is true, because the intention of gossip is never to help a person but to hurt, slander, and demean. Think about it this way: Why would people believe what you say about God if they cannot trust you?

APPLICATION

How can we put an end to gossiping, then? The simple answer is to REPENT. Repentance always involves 2 things:

1. Repentance is a change of thinking...

God hates gossiping because of what it does to people. If you are a disciple of Jesus, you must hate it as well. This lesson is to educate us on the very ugly and foul nature of gossiping. Sometimes, the way to understand things is to think about it this way: What if I were the subject of gossip, how would it make me feel? Would I like it? Would I be devastated? If I do not want to be treated that way, then I will not treat anyone that way. This should be the way we think when it comes to the topic of gossiping. If you ever have

participated in gossiping, today you can decide to repent and ask God for forgiveness.

2. ...that leads to a change of living.

Because we know the nature of gossip, we “kill it right away.” We do not play with it, nor do we go soft on it. We wage war against it and we put it to death right away. We decide to not participate in gossip. If we are not part of the solution, then we immediately disassociate ourselves from the conversation. We lovingly need to tell gossipers, “Let us not slander this person. In fact, why don’t we go directly to this person and let him know the issue and let us help him with this.” Let’s ask ourselves this question: “What does love require of me to do in this situation?” Then once we know the answer, we do it!

Let's answer these questions:

1. What caught your attention in today’s lesson? Why?
2. Have you ever gossiped or participated in a gossip? If yes, what do you think you have to do in light of what you have learned today?
3. What are the things you could do to “kill gossip” immediately?

PRAYER

1. Let everyone pray or repent of participating in gossiping or for gossiping.
2. Pray for each other.