

13 A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret.

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But what about what God's Word says? The Bible warns us against gossip, slander, bearing false witness, etc. many times all through both the New and Old Testament. We looked at several of many verses.

We asked why gossiping is such a big deal for God and said it is because gossip is divisive. It creates an "us against them" mentality, it destroys trust in families and relationships. Gossiping can not only hurt the one being gossiped about, it also hurts the reputation of the one doing the gossiping.

The worst thing about gossip is that Satan can use our own desire to gossip to help tear down others, breakup friendships and families and even destroy Churches.

We discussed what we can do to avoid gossiping and as always, the first thing we should do is to pray. Pray not only for strength to avoid gossiping but also for discernment to recognize and avoid others who are gossiping.

We said that the main thing to look at to know if you or someone else is guilty of gossip is motive. Ask why is this information being shared?

- Is it to bring help to the person or to warn others who could be harmed by this person?
- Is it to make yourself look better or make you feel better about yourself?

Generally, if the information is not helpful to build others up or to help others it probably doesn't need to be said.

If the person you're telling is not directly involved, is not part of a solution, or does not need to be warned for their protection then they probably don't need to know.

We used an example of telling someone that a friend was in a car accident for the purpose of soliciting their prayers for recovery. However, if you know that person was in an accident because they were drinking or using drugs, you don't need to share those details. Those additional details, whether true or not, do nothing to help the other person.

Positive information can also be gossip. What if you knew your friend was to be married and you shared this information with others but they had not yet told their parents? How would they feel if their parents found out through gossip instead of being told by their own child?

A good question to ask yourself is what would the person you're sharing about think about your sharing.

We discussed several other questions to ask if you sense someone is about to gossip.

1. Why are you telling me this? Is it to be helpful or to tear someone down?
2. Where did this information come from?
3. Have you gone directly to the person about this? Do they know you are sharing this information?
4. Can I quote you if I want to go check this out with the person myself?

We also talked about what to do if you become the victim of someone else's gossip.

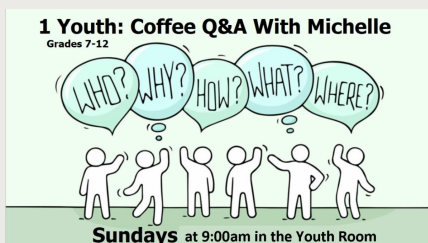
First, you can't control what other people say or do but you should **ALWAYS** remember who you are in Christ. You are a Child of God and what God thinks of you is all that really matters. Pray for guidance and for strength and yes, even pray for those who are doing the gossiping.

We said that it is so easy to gossip that many times we don't even realize we're doing it. Sometimes it can even seem harmless to share personal information about others. Ask, does that person know, do you have their permission to share or what would they say if they knew this was being shared?

We mentioned that there may be times that you need to seek the council of another person about someone else to help you in a specific situation and you may need to share some personal information. In this case, carefully look at your motive for sharing.

We said that the one "rule of thumb" you can generally use is to look at your motive for sharing or the motive of the person sharing with you.

Is it to help the person or others or to help yourself?



Pre-Service Coffee Q&A
Sundays at 9:00am

Join us in the Youth Room every Sunday, starting at 9:00am, for refreshments in a casual atmosphere for an opportunity for you and your friends to ask questions and discuss answers to your most pressing questions about God, Jesus, the Bible, other Religions, Christianity, or just about Life in general.

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