

The Words We Speak

2 Timothy 2:23-26, 3:1-5

2 Timothy 2:23-26 (NASB)

²³ “But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels.

²⁴ The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged,

²⁵ with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth,

²⁶ and they may come to their senses *and escape* from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.”

2 Timothy 3:1-5 (NASB)

¹ “But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.

² For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,

³ unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,

⁴ treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

⁵ holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.”

Gossip is often regarded as a relatively harmless pastime, particularly when compared to “bigger” wrongs like murder or adultery. Satan has painted idle talk as innocuous, but if we peel away that deception, we discover the ugly truth. In the Bible,

God lists gossip among the most depraved sins ([Romans 1:28-31](#)).

Romans 1:28-31 (NASB)

²⁸ “And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; *they are gossips,*

³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,

³¹ without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful.”

Nothing about gossip is harmless. Whether the talk is intentionally cruel or simply some idle musing, the target of the comments can be embarrassed or hurt. A friend of mine decided to trace a damaging story about himself back to the original source. He asked one man after another, “Where did you hear this?” Seventeen pastors later, he finally found the person who had originated the tale. This fellow admitted he had speculated aloud regarding a situation about which he knew little. A destructive chain reaction began with just one man jumping to a false conclusion while chatting with a friend.

Even if the victim never learns of the chitchat going on behind his or her back, gossip still has consequences. The people who spread a tale reveal their inner thinking: “...**For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart,**” ([Matthew 12:34 NASB](#)). A poisonous tongue flows with the jealousy, resentment, or pride that resides in the heart of the person.

Gossip has the power to hurt feelings, destroy reputations and friendships, and divide churches. We do not have the right to bring such damage into anyone's life. In fact, God is the only one we should turn to when we hear a story about somebody. Those facing trials need prayer and love rather than tongues wagging over their struggles and misfortunes ([Galatians 6:2](#)).

Galatians 6:2 (NASB)

² “Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.”