

MAIN POINT

Gossip can destroy our relationships with others, tear apart the Church, and ultimately hurts those guilty of it.

INTRODUCTION

How prevalent do you think gossip is within the church?

What are some reasons we feel the need to gossip? Why does gossiping sometimes feel good?

Gossip is one of the most detrimental sins within the church because of its capacity to tear communities apart and because there are few people who exercise the courage to stand against it. In this study, we will look at some of the specific dangers of gossip and what the Bible says about those who gossip—as well as those who listen to it.

DISCUSSION

> **READ PROVERBS 16:28; 17:4; 18:21; 25:9-10.**

In Proverbs 18:21, why do you think the author used such strong language to describe the tongue? How can you bring life through your words? Conversely, how can you bring death in your relationships through your words?

Does gossip ever produce life? How does it produce death?

According to Proverbs, what “fruit” does gossip end up reaping for those who participate in it?

In the church we are all too guilty of “sharing a prayer request,” or “expressing our concerns about someone else.” When do these practices turn into gossip?

What are some practical alternatives to gossip in which we can participate when we are presented with the opportunity to speak poorly about others?

How would you put Proverbs 25:9-10 in your own words?

What does it say about people who unnecessarily reveal other people’s secrets?

How have you seen gossip separate close friends or a community? Have there been instances where you have lost friends due to gossip?

Why is listening to gossip just as bad as speaking it?

What does Proverbs 17:4 say about those who listen to gossip?

What are some practical and polite ways of refusing to listen to gossip?

How can we implement a strategy to remove gossip from our church or our spheres of influence?

APPLICATION

How often do you find yourself sharing personal information about other people without their permission? Is there someone you’ve spoken about or spoken to that you need to seek forgiveness from?