

# The Problem of Gossip (1)

*James 3:1-12*



In God's Word, the sins of the tongue are mentioned more often than the sin of homosexuality and more often than the sin of adultery. The sins of the tongue are mentioned more frequently than the sin of stealing. These other sins are certainly serious in God's sight, but the Lord has much to say about the misuse of the tongue (*James 3:2-12*).

The gossip loves to reveal personal or sensational information about another person, whether or not that information is true. We need to exercise utmost care when speaking about another person.

***Here are some vital questions for us to ask:***

**Is it true?** If I report something untrue about another, what an insult that is to the God of truth who indwells me, and how it must grieve the Spirit of truth.

**Is it kind?** "Speak evil of no man" (*Tit. 3:2*). Even if he's my enemy, I do not need to verbally abuse him or use my tongue as a weapon.

**Is it necessary?** Is there a need for me to say this about the person? There's a time to hold the tongue and be "slow to speak" (*James 1:19*). Just because I know something about another person does not mean that this information needs to be shared.

**Would I talk about this person in this way if he or she could hear me?** How we need to speak respectfully of others, especially when they are not present.

The Bible in both Testaments speaks of a "backbiter." A backbiter is someone who talks about another person in a bad way when the person's back is turned, that is, when the person is not present or not able to hear the conversation. "Let your speech be always with grace" (*Col. 4:6*). We shall give account for "every idle word" (*Matt. 12:36*).

~George Zeller: [www.middletonbiblechurch.org](http://www.middletonbiblechurch.org)

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