

Gossip's Opportunities



Proverbs 15:1-7, 23-28

A well-known writer observed, "Some say our national pastime is baseball. Not me. It's gossip." Participating in this national pastime can be an opportunity, an opportunity to spread half-truths, to cast doubts on someone's character, to ruin another's reputation, or to end a friendship. If I'm choosing to disobey God's clear command to believers: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (*Ephesians 4:29*); then I'm choosing to tear down instead of to build up and edify.

The temptation to speak or to listen to gossip also presents other opportunities:

- 1) When tempted to talk about others, I can go to the Lord and ask for His help in what I share.
- 2) I can trust God to enable me in the discipline of taming my tongue, that unruly, poison-filled evil which needs to be bridled (*James 1:26; 3:8*).
- 3) I can be alert and discerning when a conversation starts with, "I'm concerned about...or "I want to share a prayer request."
- 4) I can seize the opportunity to be a good example by confronting the speaker, changing the subject, or by saying, "Let's take a moment and pray for this person or situation."
- 5) I can make every effort to be prepared for the gossiper (or the temptation to gossip) by filling my heart and mind with Psalm 71-type thoughts: "Let my mouth be filled with Thy praise and with Thy honour all the day" (v. 8); "My mouth shall shew forth Thy righteousness and Thy salvation all the day" (v. 15); "My tongue also shall talk of Thy righteousness all the day long" (v. 24). May we ever pray, "Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips" (*Psalms 141:3*).

~George Zeller: www.middletonbiblechurch.org

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