

G O S S I P

We've all been there. "Hey Tyler, did you hear that _____ got caught alone with this woman from work and is now getting divorced?" Or we try to Christianize it sometimes by saying "Susie, make sure you and your Community Group pray for ol' _____ because he's turned to drinking and getting violent at home." How does it make you feel, though, when you've witnessed or been involved in a life altering event in someone's life and you hear people talking about it without knowing *all* of the facts or both sides of the story and they are saying things that are not true? If we were to be honest, we've all been involved in gossip in and around our church, either willingly or unwillingly. Maybe from something that happened 15 years ago, 6 years ago, 2 years ago, or 2 days ago. You don't *have* to know everything about everybody, especially when it comes to airing out their dirty laundry. Gossip is incredibly destructive and divisive in families and friendships, but especially in the church. I knew a pastor who had his "escape phrase" whenever he got the sense a church member was sharing something simply to gossip. He would say "How about those Braves? They sure are playing some good baseball right now." Maybe it would be worth it for you to adopt a similar mentality. Be willing to shut down gossip, especially in the church, before it has the chance to take root and cause division or worse, harm someone's reputation.

Read Ephesians 4:29

Confess the sin

When is the last time you willingly or unwillingly were involved in a gossiping conversation?
What is your true motive behind knowing?

Identify the lie

Have you or your family been hurt by being the object of gossip?

Replace the lie with truth

Read the following passages:

Proverbs 16:28

Romans 2:1

Titus 3:1-2

James 1:26

James 4:11

According to James 1:26, what are Christians to do with their tongue?

How will this shape or change your relationships and conversations with others?

Apply grace to respond

Make it your personal mission this week to change the topic of conversation from meddling in people's lives to something wholesome and God-honoring.

Be prepared to give a soft answer regarding others.

Memory verse

Ephesians 4:29