

2024-08-23 CWW Week 37 - Gossip

Well, hi everyone, and welcome to week 37 of Church Without Walls In the years pushing ahead, that's for certain. And, uh, it's great to be back with you today. Uh, Michelle and I very refreshed after two weeks at the Misty Mountain Health Retreat. Owned and operated by, uh, Michael and Barbara O'Neil. And I can tell you it was amazing.

The staff were incredible. The service was fantastic, and what we learned was so, so good. We feel so much better after two weeks there. And it was a very spiritual time as well. Uh, over two separate days, I baptized six people, two of the staff and four of the guests, and we also anointed three lovely ladies who were very unwell.

So we prayed for those ladies that they have a speedy recovery, but it was an incredible time. It wasn't a holiday, it was very busy, lots to do and lots of lectures to attend, and lots of exercising and treatments. But I highly recommend it. It was just great. And, um, I wanna thank all the beautiful staff for their care and their, their love and attention.

And, uh, thank you to Barbara O'Neill for all the great work that she does as well. Let's pray for the infilling of the Holy Spirit as we open our Bible today. And let's remember to do that each time that we open the Bible. I know some of you're very new to the journey of faith in relationship with Jesus Christ, and we know it's important to invite our coach, the Holy Spirit.

To open the word with us and guide and lead us through our understanding of it. So let's pray. Dear Lord, father in heaven, as we approach the topic of today, we pray that you will guide us to a better understanding and a more practical sense of character development. Father God, your Holy Spirit is everything we need at this time to guide and lead us, and we pray for that to happen today.

In Jesus' name, amen. Gossip. That's the topic for this week. Um, and it's a pretty, uh, it's, it's a pretty out there topic, isn't it? I'm sure most of you have had a good gossip at times. I know I have, uh, much to my regrets sometimes, but, uh, I've been involved in it. I've been involved as a topic of gossip, as I'm sure many of you have, and, uh, it's not a very nice feeling.

To be gossiped about, especially when, uh, when the truth is stretched to a great, uh, a great length. I once heard a story of a Catholic priest who asked one of his parishioners in confession when she confessed that she was gossiping to go home to her apartment building and tear open a feather pillow from the rooftop and cast the feathers to the wind.

And she asked why she should do that. And he said, I want you to do that and come back and see me next week. And she came back and he said, did you actually do that? I asked you and she said, yes, I tore open a feather pillow, and all of the wind blew the feathers everywhere. And he said, okay, now I want you to go and collect every feather from that pillow and put it back in the pillow case.

She said, that's impossible. He said, exactly. That's gossip. I once, uh, was told of a man that was gossiping about me to another gentleman, and the gentleman could realize that he was being involved in the gossip. Actually said, um, to the gentleman, would you say that if you knew Jesus was standing next to you and the guy sculpted away, gossip's not a healthy thing.

In fact, it's a very damaging thing. It damages the person being gossiped about and it damages the gossip as well. And we know that's a trait that we need to stamp out and develop our character to protect ourselves from going down that pathway. And the Bible offers us some wonderful counsel in that regard.

So let's get our Bibles out now, and I'm going, first of all, I'll review some of the verses in the Old Testament and I have here in my new King James, my new international version Bible. Uh, I'm going to the book of Leviticus in the Old Testament chapter 19 and verse 16, and it reads, do not go about spreading slander among your people.

Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor's life. I am the Lord endangers your neighbor's life. It's an interesting concept to think about because there have been, I'm certain, in fact it's, it is absolutely certain that a great number of people over the years have been murdered because of gossip and, uh.

Uh, Dr. Timothy Jennings, who we've interviewed on this program several times, talks about a lie, believed, breaks the circle of love and trust, and that can be incredibly damaging, incredibly damaging. And so the Bible refers to that in the book of Leviticus, and that therefore, the Lord takes it, uh, very, very personally.

He even says, I am the Lord. In other words, this is my, this is my edict upon you. Let's go to Proverbs. Chapter 11 and verse 13. Pretty straightforward. Proverbs 11:13. A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret. Ain't that the truth? A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret.

I've often heard people in prayer groups. Uh, who've been praying for somebody and they'll say, oh, let's pray for, for Mary at the moment. Because I heard in our recovery group last week that she's having a problem with such and such. Um, prayer is often used for gossip. Um, we have to be very, very careful about breaking confidences.

We're still in Proverbs. Let's go forward to chapter 16. And verse 28 and it reads, A perverse person stirs up conflict and the gossip separates close friends. Once again, very true. Many friendships have been broken up because of gossip and perverse. People who like to see that kind of entertainment for themselves will participate in gossip, add to it, spread it, even start it.

We go now to Proverbs chapter 20 in verse 19, and it says, whoever goes about slandering reveals secrets. Therefore, do not associate with a simple babblers. We know that sin thrives when people keep secrets, but it's up to those keeping the secrets to determine whether they want to hang onto those secrets or declare them and get out of that, that darkness in their character.

Excuse me. Um, Proverbs 26 and verse 20. Now, Proverbs 26 and verse 20 says, without wood, a fire goes out. Without a gossip, a quarrel dies down. How many times have gossips kept the argument going, looting to the ultimate destruction of relationships? Especially many married relationships, uh, quite often gossip takes on a life of its own.

We go now to the New Testament and, uh, the book of Romans. Romans chapter one, verses 29 to 30. Romans chapter 1:29, 2:30. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, and maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God. Not very pretty. Is it to be included as a gossip in, uh, envy, murder, strife, deceit, and maliciousness.

But that's what it is. That's what it is. And if it leads to hatred of others, well that's murdering somebody in your mind. If you, Jesus said, if you hate your brother, you've murdered him. You may as well do it. If you've done it well not do it, but if you've done it in your mind, you're capable of doing it in your heart.

Second Corinthians 12 and 21st 20, uh, second Corinthians 12:20. For I am afraid that when I come, I may not find you as I want you to be. Says Paul, I fear that there may be discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition. Slander, gossip, arrogance, and disorder. Once again, gossip appears in a long list of dark secrets and sins that we don't wanna associate with, and these things fester.

They just go on and on and on. As I said earlier, they get a life of their own. Let's now go to one Timothy Book of one, Timothy chapter five and verse 13. Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idle, but also busy bodies who talk nonsense, saying things they ought not to.

Isn't that going on a lot lately? How bad has it been in the last five years? We go now to the book of James. James chapter four and verse 11. Brothers and sisters do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them, speaks against the law and judges it. I'll say that again.

Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them, speaks against the law and judges it. How does that work? Well, let's talk about that. Jesus said, uh, when questioned by the Pharisees in the temple, you reckon you are the son of God? So tell me which is, which are the most important of God's laws?

And he said, clearly, well, there really are only two. Love the Lord your God with everything you've got. And love your neighbor as you love yourself. All the laws and the prophets hang on these two commandments. Well, the first, uh, four commandments of the 10 are covered by love. The Lord you God, with everything you've got.

And the last six of the 10 Commandments are love your neighbors. You love yourself. And that talks about do not murder, do not tell lies, do not cover it. And all these things, all these laws are broken when we gossip because we're generating distrust and hate hatred for other people. That's not loving your brother.

So that's how that law gets broken. We must always be mindful of that, my friends. So let's just sum up our, uh, our chat for today. Gossip is often grouped with serious sins in the Bible and is seen as divisive and destructive to community and trust. Scripture. Scripture calls believers to speak with love, truth, and self-control.

Ain't that the truth? I say it is. So in this time of great trouble and, um, anxiety and perplexity, let's not add to that by becoming gossips. And if gossip is something you enjoy doing, perhaps you need to pray about that. So let's do that now. Dear Lord, father in heaven, we praise honor you, Lord God, and we ask for your guidance as we approach the topic of gossip.

Help us to deal with it. Help us to approach people who are doing it. Help us also to remember that people only drive us crazy if we give them the keys. So Father God, guide and lead us through this process and the devotionals. This week is my prayer. In your precious name, Lord. Amen. Don't forget the hoodies Bible study Network hoodies, bible studies.com au.

A wonderful organization you can avail yourself of, um, of someone friendly to guide you through your journey into the Bible. For those of you who are new to it or rein, reinvigorating your faith, well go and stick with it. And, uh, now's the time because there's a train coming and it's got Jesus' name on it.

He's not far away. The world isn't getting any lighter folks, so it's up to us to bring light into the situation. Until next week, God bless you all. My name is Graham Hood from Church Without Walls, and I look forward to chatting with you again in a week's time and also on our daily devotionals starting today.

God bless you, and bye for now.