

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mrs. Calvert, Mr. Dowling, Mr. and Mrs. Hadley, Mrs. Kelly Hall, Mrs. Elizabeth Jackson, Ms. Kim (Ashley Law's mother), Lamar Mathis, Ms. Linda Nave, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mrs. Sowder, Ms. Ward, Mr. Winns.

Out of Town: Jared Law and family.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website: www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

Oak Grove Church of Christ Bulletin
2922 NW 76th Terrace, Jennings, FL 32053

October 25, 2020

Gossiping and Backbiting

By Derek Long

The Bible in both the Old and New Testaments speaks about the sinfulness of gossiping and backbiting. Here are some of the verses which warn us against these sinful behaviors:

- Leviticus 19:16-18 - "You shall not go about as a talebearer among your people; nor shall you take a stand against the life of your neighbors: I am the Lord. You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord" (NKJV).
- Psalm 15:3 describes the character of a righteous individual as, "He who does not backbite with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend" (NKJV).
- Psalm 101:5 - "Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy; the one who has a haughty look and a proud heart, him I will not endure" (NKJV).
- Proverbs 10:18 - "Whoever hides hatred his lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool" (NKJV).
- Proverbs 11:13 - "A talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter" (NKJV).
- Proverbs 18:8 - "The words of a talebearer are like tasty trifles, and they go down into the inmost body" (NKJV).

- Proverbs 20:19 - “He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips” (NKJV).
- Proverbs 25:23 - “The north wind brings forth rain, and a backbiting tongue an angry countenance” (NKJV).
- Proverbs 26:20-22 - “Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; and where there is no talebearer, strife ceases. As charcoal is to burning coals, and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to kindle strife. The words of a talebearer are like tasty trifles, and they go down into the inmost body” (NKJV).
- Romans 1:30 lists various sinful behaviors including, “backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents” (NKJV).
- 2 Corinthians 12:20 - “For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults” (NKJV).
- 1 Timothy 5:13 - “And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not” (NKJV).

It is clear from looking at these verses that God does not approve of one who goes about as a talebearer, gossips, backbites, slanders, etc. What is involved in gossiping and backbiting? Is saying anything about another person which is negative necessarily gossiping and backbiting? Here are some things which seem to clearly place something in the category of gossiping and backbiting:

1. Talking evil of someone which is motivated by hatred, malice, bitterness, vengeance, and anger (Ephesians 4:31) clearly seems to fall into the category of gossiping and backbiting. Such talking is sinful and must not be engaged in by Christians.
2. Talking evil of someone when what is being said is untrue is clearly a case of gossiping and backbiting. Such talking is sinful also because it violates the principle of not lying (Colossians 3:9)

3. Talking evil of someone when there is no effort being made to correct the individual can place one into the category of gossiping and backbiting. Sin in the lives of others needs to be confronted (Leviticus 19:26-27).

The Bible shows us there are instances where something negative is said about someone but it is not considered gossiping or backbiting. 2 Timothy 4:14 Paul speaks about Alexander the copper-smith doing him much harm but Paul was not gossiping or backbiting. 1 Timothy 1:20; 2 Timothy 2:17 speaks of individuals who have departed from the faith but Paul again is not gossiping or backbiting in these verses. Jesus warns His disciples about the doctrine of the Pharisees and the Sadducees (Matthew 16:5-12) but He was not gossiping or backbiting. 1 Corinthians 1:11 tell us Chloe’s household had told Paul about the divisions which existed among the church at Corinth but such does not appear to be considered gossiping or backbiting. Romans 16:17-18 requires us to mark and avoid people who causes divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine of Christ. It will be hard to mark an individual without letting it be known who the person is and what the person is doing. God expects us to mark and avoid and therefore such an action is not in the category of gossiping and backbiting.

Christians need to be very careful what we say about other people. Christians need to realize the power their words contain to both help and harm others. Christians need to remember it is dangerous ground we tread when we begin speaking negatively about someone. Christians need to make sure their motives are pure and they have a clear purpose in sharing information of a negative sort about others with other parties. Christians need to remember sharing information about the sinful actions of others though is not always a sinful thing to do.