

GOSSIPS

Proverbs 16:28 ... "A perverse man sows strife, and a whisperer separates the best of friends."

If you want a blunt answer to a question about sin, look in the book of Proverbs. Of course, we often do not want blunt answers, but perhaps they are best for us. Today is no exception. The forbidden practice of gossiping might seem like a small thing. But, how do we explain Psalm 101:5, which reads: "Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy..." After all, nearly everyone does it. No rational person would consider the sin of gossip to be as bad as murder, would they? No one dies as the result of a gossip telling tales, do they?

We cannot exclude the possibility that terrible things can happen as the result of gossip. The Bible describes gossip as slandering another person behind his or her back. People who are normally strong and courageous, can collapse under humiliation and shame as victims of the gossip of others. People can and do kill themselves under the weight of such humiliation, even when the gossip's story is not true. Other victims of gossip feel they must run from their home or job, stop going to church, even abandon their families. In fact, it is the weak persons around us who are the targets of gossip because gossips enjoy seeing people crushed and hurt by the power of their words.

Are you beginning to sense why God is so harsh on people who gossip? Can you see the similarity between killing someone, and driving someone to harm him or herself by spreading gossip about them? Even if the victims of gossip do not hurt or kill themselves, their reputation, friendships and families can be harmed forever. And, we find gossips not only in the homes of our neighbors and workmates, but in our churches. Christians often take the position that since they cannot hurt or kill others, they can commit the "small" sin of gossip to hurt those they dislike or are envious of and not suffer the consequences. That is a terrible mistake, as seen in Psalm 101:5.

Copyright © 2017 Datu Wali Mission Foundation