

The Book of Proverbs

Godly Wisdom for Everyday Life

SSBC Proverbs Bible Study # 28

Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passage that next Sunday's sermon will be focused on.

Wise Use of the Tongue

Key Passage: Proverbs 16:28

Related Passages: 11:13; 18:8; 20:19; and 26:20

Sermon Date: April 13th, 2008

Gossip Destroys

Wait until you hear what I just found out about! Did I tell you about.....? Gossip!! Don't we enjoy a juicy story about someone else? Do you ever dip into the gossip column in the paper or open one of those great journals of celebrity tell-alls and the personal-secrets-of-the-rich-and-famous?

Gossip is all about exposing the personal lives of others. It can be very entertaining—even engrossing.

However, the effects of gossip can be far reaching in broken trust, broken relationships and broken hearts. Gossip is often more harmful and lasting than physical wounds. Gossip even hurts the gossiper! Last week we learned that the tongue can heal. This week we'll see a way it can injure. Let's look together into God's Word and see what it tells us about gossip.

1. Read this week's Bible passage and use the following charts to note your observations and any questions you have.
 The first verse below is the key verse for this study. Keeping this verse in mind, read each of the subsequent verses and note how each provides further insight into the meaning of this key verse.

| Scripture | Your Observation & Questions |
|---|------------------------------|
| <p>Key Verse Proverbs 16:28 (NIV)</p> <p>16:28 A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends.</p> <hr/> <p>11:13 A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy man keeps a secret.</p> <hr/> <p>18:8 The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to a man's inmost parts.</p> | |

| Scripture | Your Observation & Questions |
|---|------------------------------|
| <p>20:19 A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid a man who talks too much.</p> <hr/> <p>26:20 Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down.</p> | |

2. Next, use this chart to interpret some key observations.

a. From the chart on the previous pages, select a few of your observations & questions that you find most interesting or important. Rewrite these below, and then interpret and apply each of them using the columns to the right.

b. For each observation, begin to interpret by asking yourself these kinds of questions:

- What does it mean?
- Why is this important?
- What does this tell me about the Father? Jesus? The Holy Spirit?
- Are there other scriptures that could help me understand this?

| Observation What does it Say? | Interpretation What does it mean? |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
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3. Now consider how you can **apply** the Word to your life. Look for:

- ◆ **S**ins to avoid
- ◆ **P**romises to believe
- ◆ **E**xamples to follow (remember "SPECK")
- ◆ **C**ommands to obey
- ◆ **K**nowledge to share

Don't just write things to write them — listen carefully to God's Word and what he seems to be teaching you, and look for relevant things that you're truly stirred to do. Then as you do them, God will help will help you learn, grow, and help others grow.

| Application How do I apply what it means? |
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4. What kinds of gossip could you sometimes find tempting to spread? (Be careful not to gossip when you answer!) What are some effects such gossip might have on people and relationships?
5. Proverbs 18:8 says the words of the gossip go down to the inmost parts of a person. They stay with you and have a lingering effect. Tell about the effect such words have had on you after you heard them?
6. Proverbs 18:8 also compares gossip to the tastiest bits of a favorite dish. Why do people find it so attractive to discuss other people's private matters?
7. Proverbs 11:13 commends the man who keeps a secret. When is it right or not right to keep a secret? (Consider Proverbs 16:28.)
8. How can I resist the temptation to gossip? What can I do to help others overcome gossip? (Consider Colossians 3:8-17.)
9. Proverbs 20:19 tells us to avoid the person who talks too much. Proverbs 10:19 contains a similar warning. What would be a wise way to heed these warnings in your interactions with people?
10. How can you apply what you have learned in this study to your life this week?

Memory Verse

Proverbs 26:20

^{26:20} Without wood a fire goes out;
without gossip a quarrel dies down.

Gossip is sin! Look at the other sins the Bible groups with it:

They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are GOSSIPS, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them. Romans 1:29-32

The Bible says our mouths are like "open graves" and our speech is like "the poison of vipers" (Romans 3:13).

The evil of our mouths brings down the judgment of God.

These studies are produced by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. Studies are distributed one week prior to the sermon and can be picked up from the table at the back of the sanctuary and are also posted at <http://sermonhouse.com/SSBC>.

Sermons are also recorded and can be listened to later by visiting that same website.

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