

GOSSIP AND SLANDER

The Foundational Faith

Ibn Adam Al-Amin

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GOSSIP AND SLANDER

Praise the Lord God of all people and peace to all the sons of Adam,
This booklet which has been placed in your generous hands includes the solid basis for explaining to us the teaching and information about gossip and slander. This is a discovery lesson from the Noble Book, i.e. the New Testament.

What are the commands on us in regards to gossip and slander in the Noble New Testament? Let us discover most of the points and the important ones in this study. What does the Almighty God say to us about gossip and slander?

WISDOM

“A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy man keeps a secret” (Proverbs 11:13) (scripture translation from Al-Kitaab Al-Sharif, an equivalent reading for the Word of God)

“The first to state his case seems right, until his opponent begins to cross-examine him.” (Proverbs 18:17). A gossip will tell you only what they want you to hear.

“The one who goes about gossiping reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with someone who is always opening his mouth.” (Proverbs 20:19)

“Where there is no wood, a fire goes out, and where there is no gossip, contention ceases.” (Proverbs 26:20).

CHRIST’S WORDS

“In everything, treat others as you would want them to treat you, for this fulfills the law and the prophets.” (Matthew 7:12) (see also Luke 6:31)

And He also said, ***“Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is known by its fruit. Oh, offspring of vipers, how are you able to say anything good, since you are evil? For the mouth speaks from what fills the heart. The good person brings good things out of his good treasury, and the evil person brings evil things out of his evil treasury. I tell you that on the Day of Judgment, people will give an account for every worthless word they speak. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”*** (Matthew 12:33-37)

And He also said, ***“But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these things defile a person. For out of the heart come evil ideas, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.”*** (Matthew 15:18-19)

“He said, ‘Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?’ Jesus said to him, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. The second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the law and the prophets depend on these two commandments.” (Matthew 22:36-40)

“For from within, out of the human heart, come evil ideas, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, evil, deceit, debauchery, envy, slander, pride, and folly. All these evils come from within and defile a person.” (Mark 7:21-23)

“The good person out of the good treasury of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasury produces evil, for his mouth speaks from what fills his heart.” (Luke 6:45)

FROM THE APOSTLES

Gossip is an indication of the way to Hell. ***“And just as they refused to acknowledge God, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what should not be done. They are filled with every kind of unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, malice. They are rife with envy, murder, strife, deceit, hostility. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, contrivers of all sorts of evil, disobedient to parents, senseless, covenant-breakers, heartless, ruthless. Although they fully know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but also approve of those who practice them.”***
(Romans 1:28-32)

Is it our right to judge a servant that is not ours? But we must mention that God's creations, i.e. sons of people, are not our servants. Only those that sin need confronted by us. ***“Now receive the one who is weak in the faith, and do not have disputes over differing opinions. One person believes in eating everything, but the weak person eats only vegetables. The one who eats everything must not despise the one who does not, and the one who abstains must not judge the one who eats everything, for God has accepted him. Who are you to pass judgment on another's servant? Before his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. One person regards one day holier than other days, and another regards them all alike. Each must be fully convinced in his own mind. The one who observes the day does it for the Lord. The one who eats, eats for the Lord because he gives thanks to God, and the one who abstains from eating abstains for the Lord, and he gives thanks to God. For none of us lives for himself and none dies for himself. If we live, we live for the Lord; if we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For this reason Christ died and returned to life, so that he may be the Lord of both the dead and the living. But you who eat vegetables only, why do you judge your brother or sister? And you who eat everything, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, ‘As I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow to me,***

and every tongue will give praise to God.’ Therefore, each of us will give an account of himself to God.” (Romans 14:1-12)

“Love is patient, love is kind, it is not envious. Love does not brag, it is not puffed up. It is not rude, it is not self-serving, it is not easily angered or resentful. It is not glad about injustice, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.” (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

Paul wrote confronting the believers in the city of Corinth, *“For I am afraid that somehow when I come I will not find you what I wish, and you will find me not what you wish. I am afraid that somehow there may be quarreling, jealousy, intense anger, selfish ambition, slander, gossip, arrogance, and disorder.” (2 Corinthians 12:20)*

“Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may be blameless and pure, children of God without blemish though you live in a crooked and perverse society, in which you shine as lights in the world” (Philippians 2:14-15)

Slander is prohibited. *“But now, put off all such things as anger, rage, malice, slander, abusive language from your mouth. Do not lie to one another since you have put off the old man with its practices.” (Colossians 3:8-9)*

“Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunities. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer everyone.” (Colossians 4:5-6)

“And you do not need for me to write to you on the topic of brotherly love, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another. And indeed you are practicing it toward all the brothers and sisters in all of Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more, to aspire to lead a quiet life, to attend to your own business, and to work with your hands, as we commanded you. In this way you will live a decent life before outsiders and not be in need.” (1 Thessalonians 4:9-12)

“Likewise also their wives must be dignified, not slanderous, temperate, faithful in every respect.” (1 Timothy 3:11)

“No widow should be put on the list unless she is at least sixty years old, was the wife of one husband, and has a reputation for good works: as one who has raised children, practiced hospitality, washed the feet of the saints, helped those in distress, as one who has exhibited all kinds of good works. But do not accept younger widows on the list, because their passions may lead them away from Christ and they will desire to marry, and so incur judgment for breaking their former pledge. And besides that, going around from house to house they learn to be lazy, and they are not only lazy, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things they should not. So I want younger women to marry, raise children, and manage a household, in order to give the adversary no opportunity to vilify us.” (1 Timothy 5:9-14)

Beware if you do not agree with the message of the Lord Christ. ***“If someone spreads false teachings and does not agree with the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is the message of truth and the doctrine of holiness, he is conceited and understands nothing, but has an unhealthy interest in controversies and verbal disputes. This gives rise to envy, dissension, slanders, evil suspicions, and constant bickering by people corrupted in their minds and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a way of making a profit.”***

(1 Timothy 6:3-5)

“But as for you, communicate the behavior that goes with sound teaching. Older men are to be temperate, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in endurance. Older women likewise are to exhibit behavior fitting for those who are holy, not slandering, not slaves to excessive drinking, but teaching what is good. In this way they will train the younger women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be self-controlled, pure, fulfilling their duties at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the message of God may not be discredited. Encourage younger men likewise to be self-controlled, showing yourself to be an example of good works in every way. In your teaching show integrity, dignity, and a sound message that cannot be criticized, so that any opponent will be at a loss, because he has nothing evil to say about us.” (Titus 2:1-8)

“Remind the believers to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work. They must not slander anyone, but be peaceable, gentle, showing complete courtesy to all people.” (Titus 3:1-2)

“Oh brothers, do not speak against one another. He who speaks against a fellow believer or judges a fellow believer speaks against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but its judge. But there is only one who is lawgiver and judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. On the other hand, who are you to judge your neighbor?” (James 4:11-12)

“So get rid of all evil and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.” (1 Peter 2:1)

SOURCES OF GOSSIP AND SLANDER

If we adhere to the commands which are from the Lord as listed above, would we sin? Of course not. But some, who call in faith to Christ, they sin and find justification for their sin. But the excuses and justification are from Satan and his plan. It is necessary for us to avoid the excuses and follow the truth and not obey the excuses. Like the following:

LACK OF LOVE - ***“The one who forgives an offense seeks love, but whoever repeats a matter separates close friends.”*** (Proverbs 17:9)

LACK OF FEAR OF THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT – ***“I tell you that on the day of judgment, people will give an account for every worthless word they speak. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”*** (Matthew 12:36-37)

FORGETTING THAT SATAN IS THE SOURCE OF THE LIE – *“You people are from your father the devil, and you want to do what your father desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not uphold the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies.”* (John 8:44)

REVENGE – *“Do not avenge yourselves, dear friends, but give place to God's wrath, for it is says in the book, ‘This is the word of the God, Vengeance is mine, I will repay,’”* (Romans 12:19)

And, *“See that no one pays back evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good for one another and for all.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

FLATTERY TO CONTROL – *“Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who create dissensions and obstacles contrary to the teaching that you learned, avoid them. For these are the kind who do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. And they deceive the minds of the simple by their smooth talk and flattery.”* (Romans 16:17-18) Flattery beguiles with deception and courtesy. And flattery beguiles the simple. It is possible to try and find out what the result of sweet dripping talk and flattery is. But we must not invite anyone to control us and also we must not control another. But in the end of the matter we must know that these things do not please God and do not get close to Him.

LACK OF OBEDIENCE – *“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is worthy of respect, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if something is excellent or praiseworthy, think about these things.”* (Philippians 4:8)

LACK OF HARD WORK - *“For even when we were with you, we used to give you this command: ‘If anyone is not willing to work, neither should he eat.’ For we hear that some among you are living an undisciplined life, not doing their own work but meddling in the work of others. Now such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to work quietly and so provide their own food to eat.”* (2 Thessalonians 3:10-12)

And, *“And besides that, going around from house to house they learn to be lazy, and they are not only lazy, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things they should not.”* (1 Timothy 5:13).

ASSUMPTIONS – Guesses confuse us even if we think we are right to guess because of something. But the guess becomes a sin and that is called *“evil suspicions”* (see 1 Timothy 6:4)

SELF-DECEPTION - *“If someone thinks he is religious yet does not bridle his tongue, and so deceives his heart, his religion is futile.”* (James 1:26)

LACK OF SELF CONTROL – *“My brothers, not many of you should become teachers, because you know that we will be judged more strictly. For we all stumble in many ways. If someone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect individual, able to control the entire body as well. And if we put bits into the mouths of horses to get them to obey us, then we guide their entire bodies. Look at ships too: Though they are so large and driven by harsh winds,*

they are steered by a tiny rudder wherever the pilot's inclination directs. So too the tongue is a small part of the body, yet it has great pretensions. Think how small a flame sets a huge forest ablaze. And the tongue is a fire! The tongue represents the world of wrongdoing among the parts of our bodies. It pollutes the entire body and sets fire to the course of human existence, and is set on fire by hell. For every kind of animal, bird, reptile, and sea creature is subdued and has been subdued by humankind. But no human being can subdue the tongue; it is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse people made in God's image. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. These things should not be so, my brothers and sisters. A spring does not pour out fresh water and bitter water from the same opening, does it? Can a fig tree produce olives, my brothers and sisters, or a vine produce figs? Neither can a salt water spring produce fresh water.” (James 3:1-12)

MEDDLING – *“But let none of you suffer as a murderer or thief or criminal or as an interferer in the affairs of others.” (1 Peter 4:15)*

EXALTING ONESELF – When we listen or tell about others because of something bad or sinful they did or are doing we possibly feel at that time we are better than they are. But this is not true, but the truth is that pride increases in ourselves and this does not please God. When we feel that we are better we enter into pride in ourselves as we talk more about the people.

FALSE CONCERN – Maybe the concern for others is our excuse to talk about them. Maybe for the reason of anxiety or other reason and maybe we call it sadness for them or happiness for their loss and then we might spread the secrets about them. And this enters us into the circle of talking about people. If we want to be sure about a certain subject in relation to a certain person then it is better to go to them directly and talk to them face to face alone so that we may be far from difficulty and argument.

MISUNDERSTANDING AUTHORITY – Some people consider that authority over people permits them to talk about people even in a secret or hidden way without the people knowing. Maybe they put themselves in a good position to get what they want without the people knowing and without the knowledge of the truth from the people themselves. This way does not please God it is even not permitted and especially not for humble leaders. Christ said, *“whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave, just as the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”* (Matthew 20:26-28)

Leaders who ignore the Bible commands against gossip destroy trust.

Paul says, “follow Christ like I follow Him.” *“I encourage you, then, be imitators of me. For this reason, I have sent Timothy to you, who is my dear and faithful son in the Lord. He will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church.”* (1 Corinthians 4:16-17)

Gossip and slander are far from the behavior of Paul as he said, *“just as I also try to please everyone in all things. I do not seek my own benefit, but the benefit of many, so that they may be saved...Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.”* (1 Corinthians 10:33, 11:1)

The words of secrets are an untrustworthy source and it is like branches attached to a bitter source. But we, from what is better, rely on the Holy Spirit who is the source of life and the true Vine (see John 15).

HOW DO WE LIVE A LIFE THAT PLEASES GOD?

Is it possible for us to live the life that pleases God? Yes, surely! But, not by your personal labor but by the labor of Christ. Invite Him to live the life in you and carry your body and what you face, and you are to obey and follow Him. Christ faced many temptations in His life but even with this He did not complain nor sin any day. And by faith in His death and His resurrection we know every moment by faith that we died in relation to sin because Christ sacrificed Himself for us for us to live in peace. Paul confirms that. ***“I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So the life I now live in the body, I live because of the faithfulness of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”*** (Galatians 2:20)

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also behave in accordance with the Spirit.” (Galatians 5:22-25)

You are free to not think about yourself, even free to live be the Spirit of God to produce His fruit. You are free to not think about yourself because you have a good and faithful and able Shepherd who cares for you.

When you face adversity and difficulty you could say, *“Oh God, Oh Lord, I am unable to make myself succeed. But You, Oh my Lord, are the one who will carry my load for me on Your shoulder for me. I trust in You and know that my load will be light on You.”* And watch His work as you trust Him and obey Him.

So, what do you do if someone speaks evil of you?

HOW DO WE FACE SLANDER?

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to them. Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and say all kinds of evil things about you falsely on account of me. Rejoice and be glad because your reward is great in heaven, for they persecuted the prophets before you in the same way.” (Matthew 5:10-12)

And this is an example from Paul. ***“They have been informed about you, that you teach all the Jews now living among the Gentiles to abandon Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs. What then should we do? They will no doubt hear that you have come. So do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow; take them and purify yourself along with them and pay their expenses, so that they may have their***

heads shaved. Then everyone will know there is nothing in what they have been told about you, but that you yourself live in conformity with the law.” (Acts 21:21-24)

When you are slandered, be like Christ who carried such and more. *“But we who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not just please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good to build him up. For even Christ did not please himself, but just as it is written, ‘The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.’”* (Romans 15:1-3)

And, *“We do hard work, toiling with our own hands. When we are verbally abused, we respond with a blessing, when persecuted, we endure, when people lie about us, we answer in a friendly manner. We are the world's dirt and scum, even now.”* (1 Corinthians 4:12-13)

“We do not give anyone an occasion for taking an offense in anything, so that no fault may be found with our ministry. But as God's servants, we have commended ourselves in every way, with great endurance, in persecutions, in difficulties, in distresses, in beatings, in imprisonments, in riots, in troubles, in sleepless nights, in hunger, by purity, by knowledge, by patience, by benevolence, by the Holy Spirit, by genuine love, by truthful teaching, by the power of God, with weapons of righteousness both for the right hand and for the left, through glory and dishonor, through slander and praise; regarded as impostors, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well-known; as dying and yet, see, we continue to live; as those who are scourged and yet not executed; as sorrowful, but always rejoicing, as poor, but making many rich, as having nothing, and yet possessing everything. We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart has been opened wide to you. Our affection for you is not restricted, but you are restricted in your affections for us. Now as a fair exchange, I speak as to my children, open wide your hearts to us also.” (2 Corinthians 6:3-13)

We expect to be maligned. *“But understand this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, opposed to what is good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, loving pleasure rather than loving God. They will maintain the outward appearance of religion but will have repudiated its power. So avoid people like these.”* (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

“My beloved ones, I urge you as foreigners and exiles to keep away from fleshly desires that do battle against the soul, and maintain good conduct among the non-Christians, so that though they now malign you as wrongdoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God when he appears.” (1 Peter 2:11-12)

“For to this you were called, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving an example for you to follow in his steps. He committed no sin nor was deceit found in his mouth. When he was maligned, he did not answer back, when he suffered, he threatened no retaliation, but committed himself to God who judges justly.” (1 Peter 2:21-23)

“Do not return evil for evil or insult for insult, but instead bless other because you were called to inherit a blessing.” (1 Peter 3:9)

“But in fact, if you happen to suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. But do not be terrified of them or be shaken. But set Christ apart as Lord in your hearts and always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks about the hope you possess. Yet do it with courtesy and respect, keeping a good conscience, so that those who slander your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame when they accuse you.” (1 Peter 3:14-16)

EXAMPLES - WHY DO WE TALK ABOUT OTHERS?

Is talking about others who are not present allowed and commendable? Are we allowed to talk about them for any reason? No, of course not. Let us look more to understand more.

1. As an important lesson and not for scoffing and laughing, Christ taught us the way to pray and how we pray by pointing to an unsuccessful group and it was a well known group to all. ***“When you pray, do not babble repetitiously like the Gentiles, because they think that by their many words they will be heard.”*** (Matthew 6:7)
2. Christ warned about the false teaching of the religious men. ***“When the disciples went to the other side, they forgot to take bread. Jesus said to them, ‘Watch out! Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.’ So they began to discuss this among themselves, saying, ‘It is because we brought no bread!’ When Jesus learned of this, he said, ‘You who have such little faith! Why are you arguing among yourselves about having no bread? Do you still not understand? Don’t you remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets you took up? Or the seven loaves for the four thousand and how many baskets you took up? Why do you not understand? I am not speaking about bread! But beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!’ Then they understood that he had told them to be on guard against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees, not against the yeast in bread.”*** (Matthew 16:5-12)

And, also He said, ***“Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.”*** (Luke 12:1)

3. If a believer sins and does not repent from his sin confront him privately. If he does not repent confront him in front of a number of the brothers. And if he does not repent the command of Christ is that we confront him in front of all the believers. The purpose of the confrontation is repentance of the sinner. ***“If your brother sins, go and show him his fault when the two of you are alone. If he listens to you, you have regained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others with you, so that at the testimony of two or three witnesses every matter may be established. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. If he refuses to listen to the church, treat him like a Gentile or a tax collector.”*** (Matthew 18:15-17)
4. Christ talked about two groups and what evil they will do. ***“As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve aside privately and said to them on the way, ‘Be careful! We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the experts in the law. They will condemn him to death, and will turn him***

over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged severely and crucified. Yet on the third day, he will be raised.” (Matthew 20:17-19)

5. Christ condemns a group that is wrong. ***“But, you do have this going for you: You hate what the Nicolaitans practice which I also hate.”*** (Revelation 2:6)
6. Paul confronted Peter and the brothers with him because they left faith in Christ and trusted in the law. ***“But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he had clearly done wrong. Until certain people came from James, he had been eating with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he stopped doing this and separated himself because he was afraid of those who were pro-circumcision. And the rest of the Jews also joined with him in this hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was led astray with them by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they were not behaving consistently with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of them all, ‘If you, although you are a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you try to force the Gentiles to live like Jews?’”*** (Galatians 2:11-14) The reason Paul wrote this to the believers in Galatia is to warn them of the danger of trusting in the law in order to please God.
7. One of the people was confusing the group with incorrect teaching. ***“I wrote something to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not acknowledge us. Therefore, if I come, I will call attention to the deeds he is doing, the bringing of unjustified charges against us with evil words! And not being content with that, he not only refuses to welcome the brothers himself, but hinders the people who want to do so and throws them out of the church!”*** (3 John 1:9-10) It is assumed that John obeyed the command of Christ by confronting Diotrephes according to the words in Matthew 18 and he was removed from the group. It seems that Diotrephes interfered between the believers from his selfishness. So, God gave wisdom to John to warn the group of believers.
8. ***“...you must hold firmly to faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and so have suffered shipwreck in regard to the faith. Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.”*** (1 Timothy 1:19-20) Paul warned Timothy about those that left the faith, and of them were Hymenaeus and Alexander and they did not repent. It is expected that Paul obeyed the word of Christ by confronting Hymenaeus and Alexander.
9. And also, Paul warns Timothy about two others who were faithful but left the faith. ***“You know that everyone in the province of Asia deserted me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes.”*** (2 Timothy 1:15)
10. And also, Paul warned Timothy about others that were teaching things that do not fit the teaching of Christ. ***“But avoid profane chatter, because those occupied with it will stray further and further into ungodliness, and their message will spread its infection like gangrene. Hymenaeus and Philetus are in this group. They have strayed from the truth by saying that the resurrection has already occurred, and they are undermining some people's faith.”*** (2 Timothy 2:16-18)

11. And, “*For Demas deserted me, since he loved the present age, and he went to Thessalonica.*” (2 Timothy 4:10)
12. And, lastly, Paul warned of Alexander who opposed his message. “*Alexander the coppersmith did me a great deal of harm. The Lord will repay him in keeping with his deeds. You be on guard against him too, because he vehemently opposed our words.*” (2 Timothy 4:14-15)

We presume that in these examples that Paul and John both obeyed Christ’s words in Matthew 18, and followed the steps of confrontation, and it is presumed that the people did not repent or maybe they did not respond.

CONCLUSION

Beautiful talk encourages others. However, we need to flee from corrupt talk.

First, two important points:

1. Gossip and slander do not please God.
2. Avoid those who practice in their speech gossip and slander.

There is one special case for us to talk about others. It is after confrontation of the person is complete, if the person does not repent and remains on the path to commit sin. This is completed according to the Book, like what is written in Matthew 18.

1. Confront the sinner while you are alone with them. The goal of their confrontation is repentance.
2. If they do not repent, confront with two or three others who can confirm the person’s sin. Again, the goal of the confrontation is repentance.
3. If they do not repent, confront in front of the group of believers. Again, the goal of the confrontation is repentance.
4. And lastly, it is allowed to announce and warn about the sinner, the believer who continues in sin, to correct their sin of incorrect belief and flee from the sin of action.

Flee from talking about others with gossip and slander and avoid those who practice such.

Finally, from (Ephesians 4:29-32), “*You must let no unwholesome word come out of your mouth, but only what is beneficial for the building up of the one in need, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. You must put away every kind of bitterness, anger, wrath, quarreling, and evil, slanderous talk. Instead, be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you.*”

Amen.