

DISCIPLESHIP. SUPPLEMENT 10

[CHRISTIAN CHARACTER] GOSSIP AND SELF-CONTROL OF THE TONGUE

1. Gossip and slander.

Discover and discuss. What does the Bible say about gossip and slander?

Read	Proverbs 10:18	(a slanderer is a fool)
	Proverbs 11:13	(a gossip is a betrayer)
	Proverbs 16:28	(a gossip separates close friends)
	Proverbs 17:9	(a gossip separates close friends)
	Proverbs 26:20	(a gossip causes quarrels)
	James 3:1-12	(the tongue is a world of evil and corrupts the whole person)
	1 John 2:9-11	(one who hates his brother is still in the darkness)

2. Damage.

Discover and discuss. What damage does gossip and slander cause?

Read	Proverbs 25:18	(gossip is like hitting someone with a club or piercing him with a sword or an arrow)
	Proverbs 26:28	(a lying tongue hates those it hurts)
	Matthew 5:21-22	(angry words are equal to murder)

3. Punishment.

Discover and discuss. How does God punish gossip and slander?

Read	Proverbs 6:16-19	(God hates a lying tongue, a false witness and a man who stirs up dissension)
	Proverbs 19:5,9	(a false witness will be punished and eventually perish)
	Acts 5:1-11	(Ananias and Sapphira lied to God and dropped dead)

4. Wisdom.

Discover and discuss. How do you become a wise person?

Read	Proverbs 8:7-8	(a wise person never lies)
	Proverbs 13:3	(a wise person guards his lips and thus guards his life)
	Proverbs 14:15	(a wise person does not believe everything he hears)
	Proverbs 18:13	(a wise person first listens and then answers)
	Proverbs 18:17	(a wise person always investigates both sides)
	Proverbs 20:19	(a wise person avoids people who talk too much)
	Proverbs 22:24	(a wise person does not make friends with a hot-tempered man)
	Matthew 5:37	(a wise person is always sincere when he says "yes" or "no" and adds nothing to it)

5. Principles for self-control of the tongue.

Read Matthew 5:21-26 and Matthew 12:33-37.

Discover and discuss. What are some biblical principles (truths that are always true)?

(1) The heart of the Christian is revealed and known by his words.

The tree is known by its fruit. The heart of man is known by the words that come out of his mouth. Gossip or slander spoken secretly or angry words spoken openly reveal what is in the heart (and in this way becomes known to all).

(2) The Christian must give an account in the final judgement about every careless word he has spoken.

(3) Jesus Christ stands between the Christian and his brothers and sisters.

The call to discipleship causes Jesus Christ to stand between the disciple and his brothers and sisters. Jesus Christ will not be separated from them. Every idle word (spoken in gossip or slander or anger) makes the brother or sister an object of contempt in the congregation or causes him or her to harbour a grudge against the congregation. Such idle words make the worship of the congregation and the sacrifices they bring worthless and unacceptable to God. Christian worship cannot be divorced from service to the brother or sister (cf. 1 John 2:9-11). Jesus Christ entrusts the welfare of our brothers and sisters to our keeping. The way to our crucified Brother, Jesus Christ, is via reconciliation with our earthly brothers and sisters. It is God's grace that allows us to get reconciled to our brother or sister instead of being judged later in the final judgement day.