

# Tasty Trifles

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

## Introduction:

- A. Prov. 18:8 - Many people love gossip
  - 1. "If you haven't got anything nice to say about anybody, come sit next to me." (Alice Roosevelt Longworth)
  - 2. "A rumor is a social cancer: it is difficult to contain and it rots the brains of the masses. However, the real danger is that so many people find rumors enjoyable. That part causes the infection." (Crissjami)
- B. A weakness for gossip is not different from a weakness for liquor, drugs, porn
  - 1. "Gossip is just a tool to distract people who have nothing better to do from feeling jealous of those few still remaining with noble hearts." (Anna Godbersen)
  - 2. Most folks will love this lesson because they have often been the victim of someone else's gossip, and they know how much it hurts.
  - 3. However, it is sadly ironic that those who complain the loudest about others' gossip are often the biggest offenders themselves.
  - 4. Listen with the intent to personally benefit from the lesson.

## I. WHAT IS WRITTEN?

- A. Lev. 19:16 - "talebearer" - Strong's Hebrew #7400 – [rakiyl/raw·keel/] "slander, slanderer, tale bearer, informer."
- B. 2Thes. 3:11 - "busybodies" - Strong's Greek #4020 - [periergazomai /per·ee·er·gad·zom·ahee/] "to bustle about uselessly, to busy one's self about trifling, needless, useless matters; used apparently of a person officiously inquisitive about other's affairs."
- C. Rom. 1:30, 32 - "backbiters" - Strong's Greek #2637 - κατάλαλος [katalalos /kat·al·al·os/] "a defamer, evil speaker."
- D. Prov. 10:18 - "slander" - Strong's Hebrew #1681 - [dibbah /dib·baw/] "whispering, defamation, evil report. 1a whispering. 1b defamation, defaming; evil report, unfavorable saying."
- E. 2Cor. 12:20 - "backbiting" - Strong's Greek 2636 καταλαλιά [katalalia /kat·al·al·ee·ah/] "defamation, evil speaking."
  - 1. "Whisperings" - Strong's Greek #5587 [psithurismos /psith·oo·ris·mos/] "a whispering, i.e. secret slandering; of the magical murmuring of a charmer of snakes."
- F. 1Tim. 6:3-4 - "evil surmising" - evil - Strong's Greek #4190 - πονηρός [poneros/pon·ay·ros/] "bad, of a bad nature or condition. 2a in a physical sense: diseased or blind; in an ethical sense: evil wicked, bad."
  - 1. Surmising – Strong's Greek #5283 - [huponoia] "a surmising; to make a judgment without sufficient evidence"
- G. Prov. 20:19 - "reveals" - Strong's Hebrew #1540 – [galah /gaw·law/] "to uncover, remove"
  - 1. "Secrets" - Strong's Hebrew #5475 – [cowl /sode/] "a council of familiar or intimate conversation"

- H. 1Tim. 5:13 - “tattlers” - Strong's Greek #5397 - φλύαρος [phluaros /floo·ar·os/]  
“of persons uttering or doing silly things, garrulous, babbling; of things, foolish, trifling, vain.”
- I. Most of us will quickly agree that gossip is a sin, but may be guilty of redefining what we are saying, making excuses and calling our evil words good - Isa. 5:20
- J. We often attempt to justify our tasty trifles. What do we say to “make it okay”?

## **I. THE BLATANT DENIAL**

- A. “I don’t mean to gossip, but...” - Mal. 3:13-15
1. Putting a disclaimer on gossip doesn’t change what it is.
  2. “I don’t mean to steal, but...” (Doesn’t excuse the thief).
  3. “I don’t mean to kill, but...” (Doesn’t excuse the murderer).

## **II. THE SECRET PACT**

- A. “Promise not to tell anyone... Can you keep a secret?”
1. The whisperer does his work in secret because he knows he is doing something shameful and wrong - Prov. 16:28; John 3:19-20

## **III. THE TRUTH EXCUSE**

- A. “But what I’m saying is true!”
1. Even if the tasty trifle is true, there is no justification for spreading it if it will tear someone down, cast evil suspicion, or lead some to revel in the personal problems of others - 2Cor. 2:6-8; Matt. 18:15

## **IV. THE PRAISE DIVERSION**

- A. “He’s a nice guy, but did you know...?” “She is an excellent Bible student, but did you hear about...?”
1. A compliment does not offset gossip. When a compliment is added to gossip to make it more palatable, it is used to deceive; so, one has not only gossiped, but has also lied - Prov. 20:19; Psalm 12:2-3

## **V. THE ENEMY LICENSE**

- A. “But he did me wrong! I am only defending myself.”
1. Some believe the rules against gossip do not apply to their enemies.
  2. God said to repay evil with good - Titus 3:1-2; 1Thes. 5:15

## **VI. THE COUNSELOR PRIVILEGE**

- A. “I was just seeking counsel. I need your input on dealing with this.”
1. A wise man will seek counsel - Prov. 11:14
  2. But when someone comes to you for an advice session, be careful it doesn’t turn into a gossip session.

## **Conclusion:**

- A. “Strong minds discuss ideas, average minds discuss events, weak minds discuss people.” (Socrates)
- B. Luke 16:15; Eph. 4:29