

From the study about Satan¹ it is clear that speaking badly about others, devil, is characteristic of the character of Satan.

Anyone who gossips enters Satan's territory.

Why is gossip wrong?

Gossip has no understanding of others.

Gossip often comes from jealousy, or from a bad self-image. People who have different habits are often gossiped about.

Gossip puts someone in a bad light and knows no compassion or mercy.

Talking badly about someone does not take account of the personality and the background against which he behaves.

- *You shall not give false (untruthful, misleading) testimony against your neighbor.*
(Exodus 20:16)

Gossip leads a life of its own and often serves lies.

When someone hears something negative about someone else, it is usually repeated to others, and the story starts to lead a life of its own. It usually gets spicier and more dramatic as time goes on.

Something that is told as an assumption, "I think I am right in saying that ...", gradually becomes more certain, and is eventually repeated as a definite fact.

Gossip takes away someone's first impression.

When someone meets a person, about whom he has heard gossip, for the first time, he will find it difficult to feel free and open towards that person.

The first impression is influenced negatively in advance.

As a result, suspicion is born and the other person will - unbeknown to himself - first have to prove himself in order to remove that suspicion.

Gossip influences the manner in which someone is thought about.

Suppose that, for whatever reason, Mr. X gets drunk.

It is possible that this never happened before and that it will never happen again, but someone has seen it.

If that person spreads the message around that he has seen Mr. X drunk, there is a real possibility that many people will consider him to be a drunkard and that people will avoid him.

Gossip brings estrangement between people.

It is clear that estrangement will be brought about between Mr. X and his surroundings, in the case mentioned above.

Gossip is often the cause of disputes within families and whole communities can fall apart because of malicious talk.

¹ Study: Satan (see: Under the magnifying glass).

Whoever gossips becomes an adversary of God.

Jesus prayed to His Father:

- *I pray ... for those who will believe in me ... **that all of them may be one**, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. **May they also be in us** so that the world may believe that you have sent me. (John 17:20-21)*

On the other hand, Jesus said:

- *... whoever does not gather with me **scatters**. (Matthew 12:30 / Luke 11:23)*

Whoever gossips brings about estrangement between people and plays along with Satan.

Gossip condemns.

Man is not to judge. Jesus even said:

- *If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, **I do not judge that person**. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. (John 12:47)*

Gossip testifies to lack of forgiveness.

Pharisees came to Jesus gossiping about a woman who had been caught in adultery.

They had even brought her with them, and according to the law of Moses she should have been stoned, together with the man with whom she had committed adultery.

The Pharisees had the law on their side.

Jesus said however:

- *Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her. (John 8:7)*

And when everyone trickled away without saying anything, He said to the woman:

- *... **neither do I condemn you** ... Go now and leave your life of sin. (John 8:11)*

Whoever gossips has understood nothing of the love of Jesus.

Paul writes:

- *Who are you to judge **someone else's servant**? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand. (Romans 14:4)*

It is wrong to pronounce judgement on others and totally wrong to trumpet such personal opinion around.

Whoever gossips scatters, damages people and damages the church's testimony in the world, as the image of Jesus Christ, as well.

How God wants us to get along with each other.

If someone has done something wrong, Paul warns:

- *Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person **gently**. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. (Galatians 6:1)*

Anyone who understands, in the depth of his heart, what it means to be completely accepted and forgiven by Jesus, is ready to forgive totally his whole life long.

The commandment is:

- *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and, 'Love your neighbour as yourself. (Luke 10:27)*

A tremendous promise God gives us:

- *Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.*
- ***"If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk,***
- ***then** your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.*
- *The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.*
- *Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings. (Isaiah 58:9-12)*

See too:

The tongue, in the Epistle of James.²

² Study: The tongue - in the Epistle of James.