

Sunday July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017

## **150 FOR CANADA'S 150<sup>TH</sup>**

### **FINDING SIGNIFICANCE IN RELATIONSHIPS - PART 2**

Relationships with friends, neighbours, co-workers, relationships in the church - the Body of Christ

#### *How Important is the Tongue in Relationships?*

The tongue can be a:

**TREE** of LIFE

**WEED** of WICKEDNESS when it is used to gossip, slander, lie and cause strife.

Psalm 15 - **O Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent? Who shall dwell on your holy hill? <sup>2</sup> He who walks blamelessly and does what is right and speaks truth in his heart; <sup>3</sup> who does not slander with his tongue and does no evil to his neighbor, nor takes up a reproach against his friend; <sup>4</sup> in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but who honors those who fear the Lord; who swears to his own hurt and does not change; <sup>5</sup> who does not put out his money at interest and does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things shall never be moved.**

Slander and gossip are the **CATASTROPHIC COUSINS** (Joe Stowell)

What damage results from slander and gossip?

1. It **DISQUALIFIES** you from fellowship with God – Psalm 15:3

2. It **DESTROYS** relationships – Psalm 31:13 - For I hear the whispering of many— terror on every side!—as they scheme together against me, as they plot to take my life.

3. It **DEFAMES** a person's reputation and integrity

Psalm 50: 19-20 - "You give your mouth free rein for evil and your tongue frames deceit."<sup>20</sup> You sit and speak against your brother; you slander your own mother's son.

4. It **DOGS** you for a long time

Psalm 101: 1-5 I will sing to you, Lord! I will celebrate your kindness and your justice. <sup>2</sup> Please help me learn to do the right thing, and I will be honest and fair in my own kingdom. <sup>3</sup> I refuse to be corrupt or to take part in anything crooked,<sup>4</sup> and I won't be dishonest or deceitful. <sup>5</sup> Anyone who spreads gossip will be silenced, and no one who is conceited will be my friend.

"Bad reputations are hard to live down.... Gossip and slander are unfitting companions to a believer who wants to grow spiritually and reflect God's glory." Stowell, 39-40

"Rumors are the vehicles that turn life into a demolition derby, and gossip and slander are the tracks on which they travel. The tracks of gossip and slander are paved with careless, idle chatter as well as malicious, intentional sharing of bad reports."

We all know the damage that results from gossip and slander. So why do we do it?

1. A **DESIRE** to be the centre of attention.
2. To **DEFEND** ourselves after we've done something wrong.
3. Gossip and Slander are the **DOORS** that we open to allow our bitterness and anger to spill out.
4. **DEROGATORY** words about others make you / me feel better

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Every single one of us has a choice:

\* Spread lies and slander and keep company with those who do.

OR \* Break the cycle

How do we Break the Cycle?

Philippians 2: 1-5 - Christ encourages you, and his love comforts you. God's Spirit unites you, and you are concerned for others. <sup>2</sup> Now make me completely happy! Live in harmony by showing love for each other. Be united in what you think, as if you were only one person. <sup>3</sup> Don't be jealous or proud, but be humble and consider others more important than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Care about them as much as you care about yourselves <sup>5</sup> and think the same way that Christ Jesus thought.

1. **COME** alongside your most difficult people and **COMFORT** them, **MINISTER** to them, in love **ADMONISH** them in the power and love of God's Spirit. vs. 1

2. **CEASE** favouritism – it destroys families – including church families. vs. 2

“Believers are to love others in the Body of Christ equally – not because they are all equally attractive, but by showing the same kind of sacrificial loving service to all that was shown to them by Christ.” MacArthur

3. **CHANGE** Lanes – from **MY WAY** to the **HIGH WAY** of Jesus Christ -vs. 3

4. **CULTIVATE** God-glorifying Humility – vs. 3-5

I Peter 5:5 – Be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

\* Supreme example of 1-4? **JESUS**

Philippians 2:6 - Christ was truly God. But he did not try to remain equal with God.

One thing more about gossip and slander: **IRRETRIEVABLE**

*4 Things to Do this week:*

1. **GIVE** thanks to God in prayer for His complete forgiveness through the Blood of Christ.
2. **GO** to people you have spoken ill of, and in a spirit of selfless humility as their forgiveness and seek restoration of relationship.
3. **GUARD** and protect the reputation of those people in the future.
4. **GET** up each day with determination under God to live as David did in Psalm 15

Let's memorize Galatians 5: 13-15 – You were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather serve one another in love. The entire Law is summed up in a single command: Love your neighbor as yourself. If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.