

The Faithful Concealeth The Matter

I. Introduction:

A. We know the Scriptures teach us to get counsel from the faithful (**Proverbs 12:15, Proverbs 15:22, Proverbs 24:6, and Titus 2:1-8**).

1. For such, we often turn to those closest to us (**Proverbs 27:9**).
2. A good friend, a brother; is a person there when we face adversity (**Proverbs 17:17**).

B. We also know that there are chances that those we think are close and trustworthy could betray us (**Psalms 55:12-14**).

1. This happened to Jesus (**Psalms 41:9**; cf. **John 13:18**).
2. There have been times, among those supposed to be God's people, wherein no one could be trusted (**Micah 7:5-6**).
3. It is likely safe to say that we all want someone we can talk to and trust. Yet, when it comes to sensitive matters, we are vulnerable if we do so.

II. Body: **Proverbs 11:13-14**

A. A talebearer (**Leviticus 19:16**) is: "a scandal monger (as traveling about): - slander, carry tales, talebearer" (Strong's # 7400).

1. A person who reveals secrets (**Proverbs 20:19**).
2. Talebearers have sadly been among God's supposed people (**Jeremiah 9:4**).
3. Talebearers have costed people their lives (**Ezekiel 22:9**).

B. Since a talebearer slanders, let's consider what slander is (cf. **Proverbs 10:18**). The word there means: "slander: - defaming, evil report, infamy, slander" (Strong's # 1681). Thus, by implication, a talebearer is sharing information about a person to that person's harm. They are giving an evil report.

1. This was done to Jeremiah (**Jeremiah 20:10**) ["defaming"].
2. Paul and those working with him were slandered (**Romans 3:8**).
3. It is what the spies did to keep Israel from doing God's will in entering the land promised to them (**Numbers 13:32 and Numbers 14:36-37**).
4. Think of the trouble and harm brought about when someone chooses to be a talebearer (**Proverbs 26:20-22**).

C. Think about if you confess a sin to a brother or sister, to get their help (**James 5:16; 5:19-20**).

1. First, we have to address covering, hiding a transgression. This does not mean to hide transgression without confession to God, repentance, etc. (**Psalms 32:5**). A covered transgression is a forgiven one (**Psalms 32:1; 85:2**).
 - a. A person will not be forgiven if they do not confess their sin to God (**Proverbs 28:13 and I John 1:9**).
 - b. If a person does not repent, he or she will perish (**Luke 13:1-5**).

2. We know that a private sin can be held between two and not go further than that (**Proverbs 25:9-10** and **Matthew 18:15**).

3. When Joseph wrongly deduced that Mary had erred, he was going to deal with it privately (**Matthew 1:18-19**).

D. Now let's consider the motives of those who will cover, conceal; in a non-sinful way (**Proverbs 10:12** and **I Peter 4:8**).

1. How valuable is a person's reputation (**Proverbs 22:1**)? If you could lawfully protect a brother or sister's reputation, why wouldn't you?

a. If a person really repents, where is his or her sin (**Ezekiel 33:14-16**)?

b. What does God do with that sin (**Hebrews 10:17**)?

c. So, why is it that some people think it is their job in life to report to others about transgressions of others that are forgiven?

2. Not all secrets are something sinful (**I Samuel 19:2**).

3. While some things should not be hidden (**John 18:20**), that does not mean all things are to be revealed (**Proverbs 25:2**).

4. If something does not need to be shared, it should be private; what possible good reason would a Christian have in sharing it?

a. Having said that... Some things that are kept hidden do need exposed (**Romans 16:17-18** and **Ephesians 5:6-11**).

b. So, we don't want this lesson to become something that causes extremists to start thinking things should not be shared when done in secret. Sometimes people need exposed and shame needs to come upon them (**II Thessalonians 3:14-15**).

c. Earlier in this lesson we looked at **Matthew 18:15**. What happened next though if the private matter is not resolved (**Matthew 18:16-17**)?

III. Conclusion: If you repeat what has been told to you in confidence, you will ruin relationships (**Proverbs 16:28** and **Proverbs 17:9**).