

What About Gossip, Backbiting, And Being Busybodies?

I. Introduction:

A. The English words defined:

1. Gossip: “casual or unconstrained [not restricted] conversation or reports about other people, typically involving details that are not confirmed as being true” (New Oxford American Dictionary). “...a person who habitually reveals personal or sensational facts about others; rumor or report of an intimate nature; a chatty talk (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/gossip>).

2. Backbiting: “malicious talk about someone who is not present” (New Oxford American Dictionary). “to say mean or spiteful things about a person (such as someone who is not present)” (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/backbiting>).

3. Busybody: “a meddling or prying person” (New Oxford American Dictionary). “an officious or inquisitive person” (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/busybody>).

B. Words we find in the KJV:

1. Gossip - not found. However, we do find reports about people that are not true (**Romans 3:8**). We also find reports revealing private matters (**Proverbs 20:19; 25:9**).

2. Backbiter (i.e. **Romans 1:30**): “talkative against, i.e. a slanderer: — backbiter; a defamer, evil speaker” (Strong’s # 2637).

3. Busybody (i.e. **I Peter 4:15**): “overseeing others' affairs, i.e. a meddler (specially, in Gentile customs): — busybody in other men's matters. One who takes the supervision of affairs pertaining to others and in no wise to himself, a meddler in other men's affairs” (Strong’s # 244).

II. Body: We Should Not Be A Malicious People (**I Corinthians 14:20, Colossians 3:8, and I Peter 2:1-2**).

A. For thought, is it wrong to give a true report, without malicious intent, about someone not present; behind that person’s back (**I Corinthians 1:11; 5:1; 11:18**)?

1. If you say it is, what about **Colossians 4:7-9** or **I Thessalonians 3:1-5**?

2. If you say it is, what about **Romans 16:17-18**?

3. If it is wrong to talk about people, what would that mean about Jesus (**Matthew 5:20, Matthew 16:6, Matthew 23:1-8, Mark 8:14-15, and Luke 12:1**)?

B. How far are “private matters” to be taken or protected (**Proverbs 11:13**)?

1. What does your conclusion do to **Matthew 18:15-17**?

2. What does your conclusion do to how you would handle false doctrine taught privily (**II Peter 2:1** and **Jude 1:3-4**; cf. **Galatians 2:1-5**)?

3. What about familiar instructions such as **James 5:19-20**?

C. What about people that are busybodies (**II Thessalonians 3:11**)?

1. What's the point taught in **I Timothy 5:11-14**? If you're busy in your own business how much time do you have to be in everyone else's business (**I Thessalonians 4:11**)?
2. Isn't there a balance though (i.e. **Romans 12:15, James 5:19-20**, etc.)?
3. Doesn't much of this come down to motives (**II Corinthians 7:8-15**)?

D. If we live as Christians the negative side of the issues we've discussed won't be an issue (**Colossians 3:5-14**).

1. **Ephesians 4:25**
2. **Titus 2:7-8**
3. **Proverbs 18:13**

III. Conclusion: **I Peter 3:8-12**