

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

June 10

2018

Avoid Gossip

Someone once said, “It is easier to dam a river than to stop gossip.” However, gossip is something that must be stopped and avoided. For gossip is “casual or unconstrained conversation about other people, typically involving details that are not confirmed as being true.” You see, nothing good at all comes from gossip, and in Proverbs 16:27, the wise man informed, “*An ungodly man digs up evil, And it is on his lips like a burning fire.*” My friends, let those inspired words sink in, avoid gossip, and always remember...

1) Gossip Sows Strife.

One of the things that the Lord hates is one who sows discord among brethren (Proverbs 6:16-19). Therefore, we must do all that we possibly can to avoid strife and discord among brethren, and that would include ceasing to be one who gossips about others. You see, although some think gossip is something that is harmless, it is on the contrary very dangerous and harmful. So, be one who let’s no corrupt words proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification (Ephesians 4:29) and hold onto these words of wisdom, “*Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; And where there is no talebearer, strife ceases*” (Proverbs 26:20).

2) Gossip Separates The Best of Friends.

Not only does gossip sow discord among brethren, but it also causes friendships to cease. You see, sadly there have been a lot of friendships which have been ruined all because of gossip. Now, some may think that they have friendships that are too strong to be broken

by gossip, but notice and pay attention to these words of the wise man, “*A perverse man sows strife, And a whisperer separates the best of friends*” (Proverbs 16:28). Think about that, and beware of gossip.

3) Gossip Will Lead One Down A Path of Destruction.

Another thing that gossip does is it leads one down a path of destruction. How do I know this? Well, one who engages in gossip is one who whispers, one who spreads rumors, and tells tales about others, and in Romans 1:29, whispers are among those who are classified as unrighteous, and dropping down to Romans 1:32, we learn that those who practice such things are deserving of death, and not only them, but also those who approve of those who practice such. Folks, God’s word makes it very clear that gossip is unacceptable, and it reveals the consequence for practicing such.

4) Gossipers Are To Be Avoided.

So, knowing that gossip causes strife, it separates the best of friends, and it will lead one down a path of destruction, we all need to chose to avoid gossip at all cost. Therefore, stop whispering, spreading rumors, and telling tales about others which are not confirmed to be true, and likewise avoid those who do such. For, as we learn, “*He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; Therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips*” (Proverbs 20:19).

5) There Is A Remedy For Gossip.

The good news is there is a remedy for gossip. What is it? “*Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit*” (Psalm 34:13). Friends, may we all strive to be one who does guard our mouth and tongue (Proverbs 21:23) and let’s always remember if we can not say anything good, don’t say anything at all. So, to be simply put, it is best to just sometimes keep our mouths shut!

Ladies and gentlemen, hopefully we will all have a better understanding of the importance of avoiding gossip, and hopefully we will all be one who does just that. So, in conclusion, be one who always avoids gossip and never forget, “*A fool’s mouth is his destruction, And his lips are the snare of his soul*” (Proverbs 18:7).

✍️ Brad Phillips

THE LOCAL "FRAMEWORK"

What is "the framework of the local church"? Is it not the organizational structure God has authorized, whereby a plurality of His people may work as one?

The scriptures authorize overseers for the saints, but only on the "local level," i.e., these overseers may function only with respect to a single "local church" or "the flock of God which is among you" (1 Peter 5:2). Elders are intended "in every church" (Acts 14:23) which puts each church on an equality with respect to oversight. The "framework" of organization is therefore "local" – no larger and no smaller. There are other ways to prove this, but the above should suffice. This does not seem like such a terribly hard thing to grasp.

But gradually the role of local (what else?) elders has changed. An Evangelistic, Benevolent, Advertising, or Something Else Society may be set up, proposing to do these works for a "brotherhood" of churches; or perhaps the representatives (delegates ?) of a number of churches in an "area" may assemble, and decide upon some project – obviously inter-church – which they proceed to assign to some willing group of elders BECAUSE WE MUST DO THINGS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE LOCAL CHURCH.

The scriptural principles which make elders "local" in the first place are forgotten. The unit of organization is extended to "area" or larger, and a "project" treasury is established – far larger than could ever be considered the "local church" treasury – and these elders are asked to oversee this project, controlling and spending this fund on behalf of many churches – yet this is called "within the framework of the local church." It is hard to believe that brethren could so delude themselves.

If a county sheriff was given control over our Armed Forces, directing their activities and spending tax monies gathered on a national scale, would we say we had no national army? Is this a local police force because the commander is still called Sheriff? How

utterly ridiculous can we get? We would know that we were simply retaining county office names for a federal function. "Local framework" indeed!!

The Sheriff might continue to look after local county affairs, and **in these activities** still function as a county Sheriff; likewise, elders of a sponsoring church may continue to act as local elders with respect to many things – but they are "area-wide" or "churchhood" elders in that work they serve as such.

The "framework" which God gave His people is like "single harness" – designed to work a single local church. He designed no "double harness" – He made no provisions for "direction and guidance" whereby a "team" of churches could be worked together, and this is sufficient evidence to those who want to do "God's Work in God's Way" that He did not intend such activities.

God's plan calls for each independent, autonomous church to function according to its ability. Within this "Framework" alone, we have assurance of divine approval. *✍ Robert Turner*



Our meeting begins today. Be here and bring someone with you.

Belleville church of Christ
5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258
www.bellevillechurch.net

Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Evangelist

James Hahn	(317) 745-1507
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