

# No Place to Hide

He that covers a transgression seeks love;  
but he that repeats a matter separates friends.

Proverbs 17:9

**O**ne of the worst enemies anyone can have is invisible. This enemy lurks in the shadows to attack, and can travel the world in an instant. It's exceptionally powerful, and those who are attacked by it are helpless to defend themselves. The enemy I speak of is gossip.

Gossip has enormous power to destroy a person's reputation. It can separate the best of friends—as our verse today indicates. The pain and devastation gossip causes is often impossible to repair.

**"Gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret."**  
(Proverbs 11:13 NIV)

What is gossip? It's many things. Gossip often includes untrue comments about another. It doesn't check the facts about a matter and often, in repeating the sad story, there are details added that are lies and exaggeration.

However, gossip can also be the unfair repetition of truth. Let's say that someone has been caught in a sinful act, repented of it, and is restored to church fellowship. Anyone

who repeats the facts about the Christian's downfall is gossiping.

To tell someone that another person had an affair is gossip—and therefore sin. There's no merit or virtue in repeating the details about someone's downfall. Paul said in Ephesians 5:12 **"It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret."**  
(NIV)

Repeating the story of another's sin is also sinful. That's the irony of gossip. The act of gossip is a sin. A sin that many don't recognize.

**"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."**  
(Ephesians 4:29 NIV)

Many gossips get a form of pleasure in repeating such stories. They fail to recognize that the pleasure they get from talking about someone else's sin only indicates how evil their own hearts are.

**"Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on**

**their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless."** (James 1:26 NIV)

Perhaps today you've been wounded by gossip. Others have told the negative truth or invented some lies about you. There's nothing you can do to reverse the damage done to yourself and your family. There is no place to hide from their sinful tongues.

If this describes your circumstances, go to the Lord and tell Him about your sorrow. The gossip may ruin your reputation with people, but remember that your Father in heaven knows the truth. He esteems you, and will deal with those who gossip in His own time and way. Leave the matter to Him.

Be courageous about walking well in this life. As long as the Lord knows your heart it's enough.

**"Set a guard over my mouth, LORD; keep watch over the door of my lips."** (Psalm 141:3 NIV)

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