



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 44, No. 43, October 24, 2017 / Southside Baptist Church & Christian

School / P.O. Box 1594 / 1028 South Water Avenue, Gallatin, TN 37066 (615) 452-5951 / The Grow in Grace Newsletter is a **weekly Bible Study**, plus local church news notes— designed first and foremost for members and those attending services at Southside Church; and is sent forth with the desire to aid one and all, (including friends far and wide), in the experience of 2 Peter 3:18. ***"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen."***

Psychology, SOUL CARE, and TALE BEARING! (Part 8) Beware of **"the words of a talebearer..." Proverbs 18:8.**

What do people talk about in counseling? The one with the listening ear may be a 'Professional', a pastor, a friend, or whoever — but the point is that YOU HAVE SAT DOWN with such ones, for them to LISTEN to you talk about yourself, your feelings, your relationships, your problems, and/or other people in your life. The counselor, therapist, pastor, or even a friend will generally ask questions about present circumstances, past circumstances, the various people in your life, and related feelings— all in hopes of better understanding your situation and needs.

More often than not, the counselee will talk about **people WHO ARE NOT present.** NOW, while there may be no intentional lying, the story will be told from **the teller's** perspective, with details chosen from **the teller's** memory. And because of the nature of memory, the story cannot possibly be an exact replica of the events. **THEREFORE, it often turns into a tale that places the teller in a better light than the others being talked**

about! THE BIBLE IS VERY CLEAR: Every man will proclaim HIS OWN goodness; the person who talks first, SEEMS RIGHT... but then others come and bring to light LEFT OUT PARTS of the story!

HERE IS SERIOUS REALITY... that most NEVER consider: VERY OFTEN, **counseling encourages tale bearing!** TALE BEARING— is spreading gossip, secrets, biased impressions, etc... **about people who are not present.**

PLEASE NOTE: **WARNING about gossip and tale bearing IN NO WAY condones any covering up of actual serious sins** that may have been committed— sins which would need to be verified, not just talked about in counseling. **If an actual crime has been committed**, the person should report the crime to the authorities, not just talk about it in counseling. Moreover, there are some occasions where PROTECTION might need to be set up and provided for those in dangerous situations.

What we are dealing with in this article is the FACT that IN MULTITUDES of cases (when there is deepening trouble in RELATIONSHIPS), all the parties are guilty! But instead of CONFESSING and repenting of OUR OWN sin— the common practice is to ‘smoke-screen’ and ‘blame-shift’, and TELL TALES about the other person— especially in their absence... to a friend, or to a pastor, or to a counselor.

MOREOVER, EVEN IN ‘CHRISTIAN’ and “BIBLICAL’ counseling **very often the FOCUS is PROBLEM-centered, INSTEAD of Gospel-Centered.** Thus, a major way to deal with problems of living is to talk about problems, feelings, circumstances, and especially the sins (real or imagined and/or exaggerated) of others WHO ARE NOT PRESENT. **WAKE UP: Counseling or therapy that exposes sins, secrets, or private matters of ‘ABSENT’ others can**

quickly turn into tale bearing. IF a spouse complains about their 'not present' spouse in counseling or to friends or co-workers — he/she is very possibly revealing private matters, exposing perceived or actual faults, and/or making him or her seem worse than he/she really is. That is tale bearing, gossip, and discord sowing. SUCH tale bearing harms relationships and may be one of the main reasons **marriage counseling so often leads to divorce!**

The Bible warns us about the evil of tale bearing:

** "The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly" (Proverbs 18:8; 26:22); ** "He that goeth about *as* a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips" (Proverbs 20:19); ** "Where no wood is, *there* the fire goeth out: so where *there is* no talebearer, the strife ceaseth" (Proverbs 26:20). ** Moreover, the Lord commands His people not to act as talebearers: "Thou shalt not go up and down *as* a tale bearer among thy people" (Lev. 19:16).

Complaining about ABSENT other people will generally give a very biased view. As the counselor OR friend hears the complaints, he/she cannot help but form an impression of the person being complained about. **The counselor is hearing only one side of the story and would tend to see the situation from that perspective.**

When tale bearing includes false information about another person, **it becomes bearing false witness.** "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour" (Exodus 20:16; see also Deut. 5:20; Ps. 101:5; Prov. 24:28). **Bearing false witness in**

counseling often happens as a person describes situations from a hurt, bitter, or biased perspective.

Sometimes a person is covering his own sin by exaggerating the sins of others and finding fault in areas that would not even be considered sinful, such as annoying habits. Tainted tales about other people are grievous. Proverbs 25:18 says, "A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour *is* a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow."

How many counselors, pastors, and/or friends actually check out the details of the stories they have been told? Very few, if any.

In fact, 'recovered memory counselors' contend that it is their duty to believe and support the counselee, even though research has demonstrated not only that memory is faulty, but also that counselees lie to their counselors. Many counselees deceive by telling only part of the story and thereby turn it into tale bearing. **The Bible advises getting the facts before believing tales:**

"He that is first in his own cause seems just; but his neighbour comes and searches him" (Prov. 18:17).

Gossip and tale bearing gives lots of attention to the flesh. MOREOVER, when we tell our tales from our own perspective, we may get lots of sympathy and support. Yes, indeed, the flesh will feel better. In fact, people often feel relieved to "get it off their chest," but the feeling of relief does not make it right or even helpful to the situation. **Those who encourage people to talk about others BEHIND THEIR BACK cannot be performing a biblically-sound service!**

But, some may insist that this kind of talk is absolutely necessary and that all such information is confidential. First of all, the tale bearing, gossiping, or even bearing false witness has already happened in the counseling office.

Second, the word "confidential" does not mean that no one else will know. Counselors often keep written records of their sessions. This information may spread further than one might suppose. If counseling is associated with a counseling clinic, these notes will be included in the files. In addition, counselors often consult with one another and thereby **share the tales they have heard** in the counseling room. They may have the counseling session in the presence of a COUNSELOR TRAINEE... and so, gossip, tale bearing, slander is spread further.

"A tale bearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter" (Prov. 11:13). Most offenses are small, and for these, love should cover a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:6).

BUT WHAT IF there is ... (AND THERE OFTEN IS) a serious offense of one person against another, of one spouse against another, of one family member against another?

How can that be resolved? Not by tale bearing! Proverbs 25:9 says, "Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another" (Prov. 25:9).

JESUS HAS GIVEN US clear guidelines to follow:

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican (Matt. 18:15-17).

Those who love one another will not share private matters about another person with others, **including psychological, biblical counselors, pastors, or friends. A husband** who loves his wife as Christ loved the church would not expose her private life, conversations, actions, and faults with others, including a counselor... OR TO A PASTOR! **A wife** who honors her husband would not expose his private life, conversations, actions, and faults with others, including a counselor... OR TO A PASTOR!

SADLY, this not only happens in counseling; it is encouraged! Even Christians who write so-called case studies that may be composites of more than one case include details about relationships that they should have no business knowing, but which are expected and encouraged in counseling. For years people have been told that it is good to talk about their problems and to share personal details about others. **Is This Kind of Talk Necessary?**

Somehow talking about these things has been promoted as necessary for mental-emotional healing, even though there is research that reveals the contrary— that people often feel worse because the problems appear bigger after discussing and analyzing them.

Once a person describes a spouse in negative terms it is difficult to see the positive qualities, because positive qualities might undermine what has been said to the therapist.

Rather than the attitude about the situation improving, there is a strong possibility that the attitude may become strongly attached to the description given to the counselor. A felt need to justify one's complaints may solidify the negative report given to the counselor and lead to further deterioration in the marital relationship.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO HELP PEOPLE without the sins of THOSE NOT PRESENT being exposed? Is it possible to help people without tale bearing? Is it possible to help people without focusing on problems; BUT RATHER, to have a GOSPEL FOCUS?

After all, people may temporarily feel better after they have talked with a sympathetic listener (counselor, pastor, or friend) about problem people in their lives. **But, this feeling of unburdening oneself is short-lived and, in itself, does not solve the problems.**

In fact, problems often get worse, because, when people spend emotional energy thinking and talking about what bothers them about their circumstances and others' involvement, the problems draw so much attention that what is good and right fades into the background.

Even if a person does feel better knowing that someone else has heard and cared, **can counseling that encourages or even allows tale bearing be the right way to help someone when tale bearing is harmful and is forbidden in Scripture?**

THERE ARE BETTER WAYS!

Paul spoke of the foolishness of preaching. Yes, preaching is important for salvation, but what about afterwards? Paul would still

opt for preaching and teaching, **for he declared in Galatians 3:1-3:**

O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

Problems of living are to be dealt with by the hearing of faith and responding in faith. Yes, personal ministry is possible, but it should be geared to "the hearing of faith." **One can seek what God wants to do in one's life without revealing the sins or secrets of others!**

First, ONE CAN pray and pour out one's heart to God, who is the only One who understands anyway. ONE CAN study the Bible and seek the Lord's wisdom from His word. ONE CAN grow in endurance, knowing that the trial of one's faith is "much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire" (1 Peter 1:7).

It has been demonstrated again and again that "suffering makes strong believers," but it is not the suffering itself, but whether the sufferers turn to the Lord and strengthen their faith in Him through the suffering.

If a believer needs WISDOM, support, and encouragement — a fellow believer can draw alongside for support and encouragement without knowing the details, especially since the direction one must always be pursuing is one's own obedience and spiritual growth rather than depending on someone else to change to make life more tolerable. If

information is needed for the purpose of biblical instruction and possible application, the situation can be stated without lurid details.

All problems of living can be used as reminders to draw close to the Lord, know Him more deeply, trust Him more fully, and seek to walk pleasing to Him through great trials, as well as through the ordinary challenges of life. The Lord IS involved in the life of every one of His children. He is the potter; we are the clay. And, He is forming a glorious bride without "spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph. 5:27). **Christians have hope beyond anything that can be gained through counseling that encourages gossip and tale bearing.** They/ WE have a hope that should carry them/US through the trials of life right into the presence of the Lord. [This article is edited from *PsychoHeresy Awareness Letter*, May-June, Vol. 13, No. 3, 2005]

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls (1 Peter 1:3-9)

Grace to all in Christ! James Bell www.southsidegallatin.org

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES:

MONDAYS: Jail Ministry— First and Second Monday of each month at 7:30pm. Questions? Contact Mike Munday at 615-681-7533

TUESDAYS: Come and sing every Tuesday night at Gallatin Health Care Nursing Home. Meet at the front door at 5:30PM.

WEDNESDAYS: ☐ **6:30pm— Children Ministry/activities;** ☐ 6:30pm— **Youth** Activities and Bible Study— **(Enter via double doors by gym)**

☐ **6:30pm— Wednesday CHURCH PRAYER SERVICE... (Enter via double doors by gym)** ... meet in Ladies Sunday School Room

***** LADIES BIBLE STUDY—** the Gospel of Luke, 11:14-26! ... Cindy Bell, teaching. **THE REMAINING MEETINGS FOR 2017: TUESDAYS, OCTOBER 31, and November 7... all @ 11:00am. Door UNLOCKED by 10:30am... locked back at 11:10am**

***** MEN:** EVERY SATURDAY MORNING @ 8am: Men's Fellowship/Bible Study! **(NEW Study, starting 10/21/17— HEBREWS 11:1-40— LIVING BY FAITH!)** AT THE back of Church building... Come in under the drive-thru awning, walk forward! **Juice, coffee, Hardee's biscuits, & Donuts WAITING starting at 7:30am**

SUNDAY SERVICES OCTOBER 29 —

9:30am - Sunday School

10:45am - Worship Service **/// NO MEAL**

6:00PM, FIFTH SUNDAY EVENING OF SCRIPTURES AND PRAISE! BE PRESENT AS WE SHARE SCRIPTURES AND PRAISE BEFORE AN AUDIENCE OF ONE— HE IS WORTHY!

**WATCH and LISTEN to the Preaching of the Word of God!
AND share the LINK with others!**

http://www.southsidegallatin.org/Listen_to_other_sermons_on_sermonaudio/