

WHITE COLLAR SINS

Series with Skip Heitzig

SERIES:	White Collar Sins
MESSAGE:	Psst! Have You Heard...?
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Leviticus 19:11-18

MESSAGE SUMMARY

The sin of *gossip* has never made it into the same lists as murder and manslaughter. It's regarded as one of the "little sins" that even Christians are unwilling to avoid. But gossip is in the same family as murder because it assassinates a person's character. It destroys reputations, disrupts families, divides friends, and causes heartbreak. And the problem isn't just in the speaking but in the hearing as well. Let's look at a direct command *not* to gossip.

DETAILED NOTES

I. Introduction

- A. The human tongue can inflict a lot of damage through gossip
- B. We are given a direct commandment from God not to gossip
- C. The book of Leviticus is about holiness
 - 1. Holiness is God's least attractive attribute
 - a. We want to talk about God's love, power, grace, etc.
 - b. Holiness scares us
 - c. We don't really know what it means
 - 2. Of all God's attributes, His holiness is mentioned most
- D. In Leviticus 19, the Ten Commandments are repeated and fleshed out (see vv. 1-10)
- E. In verses 11-18, the author talked about our speech

II. Words Are Personal (vv. 11-12, 14, 16)

- A. They convey who you are as a person to others
- B. The word *you* occurs fifty-four times in this chapter alone
- C. God has given us the capacity to communicate with our words
 - 1. Men and women communicate differently
 - 2. Zacharias was made mute for not believing his wife would conceive (see Luke 1:5-20)
- D. We not only speak words, but we also write them down
 - 1. Letters, email, social media, texts
 - 2. Written words are harder to understand
 - a. You cannot hear intonation or inflection
 - b. You also cannot see body language
 - 3. The fullest form of communication is in person
 - 4. Social media has revolutionized the way our culture communicates
 - a. Our language is changing meaning
 - b. We are cultivating thin relationships

- III. Words Have Potential (vv. 11-15)
 - A. We can choose to use our words for good or for bad (see Proverbs 18:21)
 - 1. Some words can destroy—others can delight; some words can enrich—others can kill (see Proverbs 12:18)
 - 2. James acknowledged the potential of the tongue (see James 3:2-10)
 - B. The tongue can bless or curse
- IV. Words Are Powerful (v. 16)
 - A. Talebearers
 - 1. There may be traces of truth in what they say
 - 2. They are not trying to reveal truth; they are trying to ruin the person they are talking about
 - 3. The difference between a talebearer and a concerned friend is the difference between a butcher and a surgeon
 - 4. Words can ruin one's reputation by bearing a tale
 - 5. *Rakil* = slanderer
 - B. As believers, we have become very crafty at the sin of gossip
 - 1. We package it not as gossip, but as concern
 - 2. We package it in prayer
 - 3. To discern whether what you are sharing is gossip, ask yourself whether you raise or lower your voice as you tell it (see Proverbs 16:28)
 - C. Of the seven things God hates, three of them have to do with the tongue
 - 1. If God hates something, we should pay attention so we don't do it
 - 2. "One who sows discord among brethren" (Proverbs 6:19)
- V. Words Should Be Purposeful (vv. 17-18)
 - A. Words are just a gauge of the heart (see Luke 6:45)
 - 1. If you speak good things, it reveals good things are in your heart
 - 2. If you speak bad things, it reveals bad things are in your heart
 - B. If you really love people, you don't slander them (see 1 Corinthians 13:6)
 - 1. If someone hurts you, you must go to that person directly and talk about it
 - 2. Don't talk *about* that person—talk *to* them (see Matthew 18:15)
 - C. The problem is not just that people love to say gossip; it's that people love to hear it
 - 1. There wouldn't be so many open mouths if there weren't so many open ears
 - 2. We enjoy hearing gossip (see Proverbs 18:8)
 - D. When someone wants to bring you gossip:
 - 1. Ask them why they are bringing it to you specifically
 - 2. Ask them where they got their information
 - 3. Ask them if they have gone directly to that person
 - 4. Ask them if they have personally checked out the facts
 - 5. Ask them if you can quote them on it

Figures referenced: Tim Challies, Billy Graham, Bill Grayolis, Erik Jan Hanussen, Adolf Hitler, Gervase Markham

Works referenced: "Solomon on Social Media"

Hebrew words: *rakil*

Cross references: Leviticus 19:1-10; Proverbs 6:19; 12:18; 16:28; 18:8, 21; Matthew 18:15; Luke 1:5-20; 6:45; I Corinthians 13:6; James 3:2-10

Topic: Gossip

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