

Forbidden Fruit

Gossip

- Introduction:
1. In Genesis 3, we read of the temptation and fall of Adam and Eve.
 2. The fall of mankind was as a result of partaking of “forbidden fruit.”
 3. The nature of that fruit doesn’t really matter, what matters are the consequences.
 4. It’s easy to look at that event and be critical of Eve’s decision, however...
 - a. She had never actually heard God give the command not to eat.
 - b. Satan twisted God’s word.
 - c. Then he flat out lied to her, making grand promises to her.
 5. Before we come down too hard on Eve, maybe we ought to consider our own struggles with “forbidden fruit.”
 6. In tonight’s lesson we will examine the forbidden fruit of gossip.

I. What the Bible Says About Gossip

- A. (Proverbs 20:19)
- B. (Proverbs 6:19) He who sows discord among brethren.
- C. (2 Thessalonians 3:6-14).
- D. (James 3:8) No one can tame, but it must be bridled.
- E. (Matthew 5:9) Blessed are the peacemakers.
- F. (Romans 10:9) Abhor that which is evil.
 1. Easy to find 100 people who love God.
 2. Harder to find 100 people who hate sin.
 3. We need to learn to hate sin and quit treating some sins like a joke.
 - a. Someone has said that Christians don’t gossip, they share prayer requests.
 - b. This sort of light-hearted talk is totally inappropriate.
 3. We must determine to take this sin, this forbidden fruit, seriously.

II. How To Avoid This Forbidden Fruit

- A. Understand what gossip is.
 1. Gossip can be true; it need not be a lie.
 2. The question is not of truthfulness, but of helpfulness.
 3. (Proverbs 17:9) Whoever covers an offense seeks love, but whoever repeats a matter separates friends.
 4. Saying, “Bless his heart” doesn’t excuse what you say.
- B. Think before you speak.
 1. (James 1:19).
 2. Impact on your children, neighbors, spouses, etc.
- C. Refuse to participate.
 1. (1 Timothy 5:19).
 - a. This passage is not condemning making an accusation against an

elder.

- b. It is condemning the act of receiving an accusation against an elder.
- c. It takes two to gossip.
- d. We could shut down gossip immediately if we would simply say, "I don't want to hear this."
 - 1. Not only would it shut it down this time, it would probably break a "gossiper" from ever coming to you with their gossip again.

- Conclusion:
- 1. After hearing all of this, is it ever right to talk about other people?
 - 2. Certainly.
 - a. We can talk about other people's lives, but when it turns to matters that would cause another to think less of them, we should stop.
 - b. Except in the case that the person you are sharing this information with is someone who can help them.
 - c. We will know the difference if we're honest with ourselves.
 - 3. Wouldn't it be great if we would talk less about others and more about Jesus?