

The Slandering Tongue

(All scriptures are NKJV unless otherwise noted.)

Slander is a false and malicious statement or report about someone. Slanders make harmful statements about others with the intent of damaging their reputation, character, or good name. The difference between gossip and slander is that gossip is often done in the context of idle careless chatter; while slander is the open, intentional sharing of damaging information.

“A slanderer is a person who creates the smoke in which other people assume there’s fire” – Unknown

Slander is forbidden by scripture.

- Leviticus 19:16: "Do not go about spreading slander among your people. Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor's life. I am the LORD." (NIV)
- 1 Peter 2:1: “Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, *and slander of every kind.*” (NIV)

Slander is dangerous because of its far reaching consequences. It should always be avoided because of its adverse affects on **four groups of people**:

1. Those about whom it is **spoken**.

When Jobs “friends” slandered him, he responded, “How long will you **torment** my soul and **break me** in pieces **with words**?” – Job 19:2

2. Those who **listen** to it.

Proverbs 16:28: A perverse man spreads strife, And a slanderer separates intimate friends. (NASB) Listening to slander will affect your opinion about the one being slandered.

3. Those that are **connected** to the one being slandered.

In 2 Samuel 10:1-4, the princes of Ammon slandered David and then his servants were adversely affected.

4. Those who **speak** it.

- A. **Slanderers reap what they sow.** Proverbs 30:10: Never slander a worker to the employer, or the person will curse you, and you will pay for it. (NLT)

Galatians 5:14-15: For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*”¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

B. Slanderers create a bad reputation for themselves. Proverbs 25:9-10: Debate your case with your neighbor, And do not disclose the secret to another; ¹⁰ Lest he who hears *it* expose your shame, And your reputation be ruined.

C. Slanderers will be punished by God. Psalm 50:19-21: Your mouth is filled with wickedness, and your tongue is full of lies. ²⁰ You sit around and slander your brother—your own mother’s son. ²¹ While you did all this, I remained silent, and you thought I didn’t care. But now I will rebuke you, listing all my charges against you. (NLT) Psalm 101:5: Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, Him I will destroy; The one who has a haughty look and a proud heart, Him I will not endure.

CHARACTERISTICS THE SLANDERER:

1. They are fools.

Proverbs 10:18: Whoever hides hatred *has* lying lips, And whoever spreads slander *is* a fool.

2. They are liars.

Romans 3:8: And some people even **slander** us by claiming that we say, “The more we sin, the better it is!” Those who say such things deserve to be condemned. (NLT)

3. They are hypocrites.

Proverbs 11:9: The hypocrite with *his* mouth destroys his neighbor, (this is what slander is) But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.

4. They are jealous.

Acts 13:45: But when some of the Jews saw the crowds, they were jealous; so they slandered Paul and argued against whatever he said. (NLT)

SLANDER STOPPERS:

1. Commit to not saying anything bad about anyone for one day. If you do this, it will make you aware of just how often you say bad things about others.

2. Avoid suspicion of others. When we’re suspicious of others motives, we’re subject to slander them. The truth is, we really don’t know their motives.

3. Use Philippians 4:8 as a conversation sifter.

“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.”

MEMORY VERSE: 1 PETER 3:10 FOR “HE WHO WOULD LOVE LIFE AND SEE GOOD DAYS, LET HIM REFRAIN HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL, AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING DECEIT.

