

“

SET A GUARD,
O Lord, over my mouth
KEEP WATCH OVER
the door of my lips

Psalm 141:3

”

VBS

20

16

Day 3

Gossip v. Encouragement



calvary chapel of philadelphia

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Gossip v. Encouragement

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word

Objective To encourage the students to use their tongues to build up, to encourage, and to support, not to gossip and tear down.

Key Verses

Exodus 17:8-16

See attached Proverbs and verses on gossip (page 5)

Memory Verse - Proverbs 16:28

"A perverse person stirs up conflict, and a gossip separates close friends."

Hook

Ask for a volunteer. Have the student hold up the "heavy object" provided. Have them hold it up for as long as they are able to.

Ask them how their arms feel.

Now have two more volunteers go and help them by holding their elbows and supporting the weight.

Ask again how their arms feel, and how it feels to be supported and encouraged by others.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

In Exodus 17 the Israelites, while travelling through the wilderness, were attacked by another nation, the people of Amalek. Moses, hearing from the Lord, instructed Joshua to take some men and go to battle against Amalek, while Moses stood above them with his wooden staff. During the battle, if Moses' hands were lifted high in the air with the wooden staff, the people of Israel would start to win the battle, but if his hands dropped, then Amalek and his people would start to win. Aaron, Moses' brother, and Hur saw this and decided that they were going to encourage and support Moses. They saw that he was getting tired and that he could not hold his hands up any longer, so they placed a large stone behind him to rest his back upon, and the two men took Moses' hands and actually held them up for him. Moses would have failed, and the people would have lost the battle, but Aaron and Hur became encouragers and supporters for Moses, helping him, and the people to have victory.

We have already seen in James 3 that we can choose how we use our tongues and our speech. We are repeatedly instructed in the New Testament to encourage one another, to bless one another, and to support one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11 for example). The Bible also warns us against using our tongues to tear people down, to discourage, and to gossip. Proverbs specifically speaks about the dangers of gossiping, and how instead of building other people up, gossips tear them down, ruin friendships, and cause quarrels and arguments. See the attached appendix for the selected verses on gossiping from the book of Proverbs.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

Gossip is a dangerous thing. The word gossip means to spread unconfirmed rumors about someone else's personal life. It is done with the intent both to puff oneself up, and also to injure or insult another. The Bible takes gossip very seriously and warns us about controlling our desire to whisper, spread rumors, and stir up trouble.

The book of Proverbs tells us a great deal about people who gossip. It tells us that we should avoid gossipers, that they cause friendships to fail, that they stir up arguments and keep disputes going.

What makes things more difficult is that Proverbs 26:22 tells us, "The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to the inmost parts." That means that when we have something to gossip about, other

LOOK (Continued)

people want us to tell them what it is. They encourage us to share nasty rumors and we can be drawn into talking about people that we love in very insulting ways.

When Moses was struggling in the wilderness he had a lot of people who were complaining about him, they were talking badly about him as a leader, and even at one point tried to throw him out and set up new leaders. Moses needed good friends to be with him to encourage and support him. Thankfully, Moses had a good brother and a good friend who would stand alongside him to encourage and support him. They would be there for him to talk to and to pray with. They would even support him with their actions and not just their words. When Moses couldn't stand up and hold the staff above his head any longer, they would stand beside him and hold his hands up for him.

What kind of friend are you? Are you someone who is trustworthy? Do you stand beside your friends and encourage them, supporting them when they are in trouble? Or do you whisper about them to others? Do you spread rumors about your friends to make yourself seem more important?

We have already learned that we have to make careful choices about the way that we use our tongues. Are we going to lie or tell the truth? Are we going to grumble and complain or are we going to thank the Lord for the good things he has given us? Are we going to gossip and talk about people behind their backs or are we going to encourage and build up the people around us?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Proverbs 16:28.

Ask the students to share with the class about people in their life who have been encouragements to them. How did they support them or encourage them? What kind of words did they say? How did it make them feel to have that person helping them out?

Pray: Thank the Lord for the people in our lives who have been supportive and encouraging. Ask Him to help us to be encouraging to those around us and to control our tongues.

Parent Question: How did Aaron and Hur encourage and support Moses in the wilderness?

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life.

FURTHER STUDY

Proverbs (and Other Selected Passages) on Gossip

Gossip

Proverbs 11:13 A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret.

Proverbs 16:28 A perverse person stirs up conflict, and a gossip separates close friends.

Proverbs 18:8 The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to the inmost parts.

Proverbs 20:19 A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid anyone who talks too much.

Proverbs 26:20 Without wood a fire goes out; without a gossip a quarrel dies down.

Proverbs 26:22 The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to the inmost parts.

Romans 1:29 They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips,

2 Corinthians 12:20 For I am afraid that when I come I may not find you as I want you to be, and you may not find me as you want me to be. I fear that there may be discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder.

1 Timothy 3:11 Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.

1 Timothy 5:13 At the same time they also learn to be idle, as they go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention.

2 Timothy 3:3 unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,

Titus 2:3 Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good,

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Exodus 17 by David Guzik

Israel prevails in battle as Moses prays.

So Joshua did as Moses said to him, and fought with Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

a. So Joshua did as Moses said to him: This is the first passage that mentions Joshua. We find him doing what he did until the time Moses passed from the scene – Joshua served the Lord and Moses faithfully.

i. It's always good to remember that the name Jesus is simply the Greek way of pronouncing the name Joshua. It's the same name.

ii. "Both in the Septuagint and Greek Testament he is called Jesus: the name signifies Saviour; and he is allowed to have been a very expressive type of our blessed Lord. He fought with and conquered the enemies of his people, brought them into the promised land, and divided it to them by lot. The parallel between him and the Saviour of the world is too evident to require pointing out." (Clarke)

b. Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill: They did this so they could see, so they could be seen, and so that they could pray. Aaron was the brother of Moses, and some think Hur was his brother-in-law.

i. "Josephus (Antiquities III, 54 [ii.4]) preserves a Jewish tradition that Hur was the husband of Moses' sister, Miriam." (Kaiser)

c. And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: Moses supported the battle behind the scenes, busy in prayer. The fate of Israel in battle depended on Moses' intercession because when he prayed Israel prevailed and when he stopped praying Amalek prevailed.

i. Held up his hand: This phrase describes the Israelite posture of prayer, even as some people today might bow their head or fold their hands. Moses had to pray, and had to keep on praying. "Both the verbs 'to hold up' and 'to lower' are introduced by the perfect...Continued or frequentative action is clearly denoted." (Kaiser)

ii. This amazing passage shows us that life or death for Israel depended on the prayers of one man. Moses prayed as we should pray – with passion, believing that life and death – perhaps eternally – depended on prayer.

iii. It can be difficult to reconcile this with knowing God has a pre-ordained plan. But God didn't want Moses to concern himself with that – he was to pray as if it really mattered. Just because we can't figure out how our prayers mesh with God's pre-ordained plan never means we should stop believing that prayer matters.

iv. In his early days Moses thought the only way to win a battle was to fight (Exodus 2:11-15). Now Moses let Joshua fight while he did the more important work: pray for the victory.

3. (12-13) Moses' hands are strengthened in prayer.

But Moses' hands became heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

a. Moses' hands became heavy: The job of supporting the battle in prayer was difficult and Moses could not easily continue. We might think that fighting was the hard work and praying was the easy work, but true prayer was also hard work.

i. Prayer is sometimes sweet and easy; other times it is hard work. This is why Paul described the ministry of Epaphras as always laboring fervently for you in prayers (Colossians 4:12), and why Paul wrote we must continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving (Colossians 4:2).

b. Aaron and Hur supported his hands: Aaron and Hur came alongside Moses and literally held his hands up in prayer. They helped him and partnered with him in intercession. Their help was successful: his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

i. Though this was Moses' work to do, it was more than he could do by himself. Moses alone could not win the battle of prayer. He needed others to come by his side and strengthen him in prayer.

ii. "Several of the fathers consider Moses, with his stretched-out hands, as a figure of Christ on the cross, suffering for mankind, and getting a complete victory over sin and Satan." (Clarke)

c. So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword: Because of this work of prayer Israel was victorious over Amalek. We are left with no other option than to say if Moses, Aaron, and Hur did not do the work in prayer, Israel would have been defeated, and history would have been changed.

i. This amazing passage shows us the great importance of prayer. Life and death – the course of history itself – depended upon prayer. We can conclude that many times the people of God are defeated today because they will not pray, or prayer does not support their work.

ii. Nevertheless, Joshua had to fight. Praying Moses did not eliminate what Joshua had to do. The battle was won with prayer, but also through normal instruments – the work of the army, led by Joshua. "Prayer is a downright mockery if it does not lead us into the practical use of means likely to promote the ends for which we pray." (Spurgeon)

4. (14-16) A never-ending battle with Amalek.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Write this for a memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-Lord-Is-My-Banner; for he said, "Because the Lord has sworn: the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation."

a. Write this for a memorial in the book: Kaiser notes that there are five places in the Pentateuch where Moses wrote something down at the command of God (Exodus 17:14, Exodus 24:4-7, Exodus 34:27, Numbers 33:1-2, and Deuteronomy 31:9, 24). Not very long ago some academics were skeptical, and said that writing was not invented in Moses' day. Further research proved that man had been writing for at least 1,500 years before the time of Moses.

b. I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven: Amalek had a special guilt and shame in their attack against Israel.

- Amalek had the shame of being the first nation to make war against Israel.

- Amalek had the shame of going out of their way to attack Israel.

- Amalek had the shame of actually fighting against God.

c. And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-Lord-Is-My-Banner: Though Moses knew his prayer was important, he wasn't foolish enough to think that he won the battle. As an act of worship he built an altar and praised the name of Yahweh-Nissi (The-Lord-is-My-Banner).

i. Nissi describes a flag or a banner. The idea is that God is victorious in battle and the flag of his victory is lifted high. The same word is used of the serpent on the pole in Numbers 21:8, and in other significant passages:

- Psalm 60:4: You have given a banner to those who fear You, that it may be displayed because of the truth.
- Isaiah 11:10: And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; for the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His resting place shall be glorious.

ii. In Exodus 17 we see examples of God's power and man's effort working together. Moses struck the rock; but only God could bring the water. Joshua fought, Moses prayed, but only God gave the victory over Amalek. In it all, God received the glory. It wasn't Israel is my banner or Moses is my banner or Joshua is my banner; rather it was Yahweh-Nissi: The-Lord-is-My-Banner.

iii. We sometimes are even more aware of the power and the help of God when we work together with Him than we are when God does the work all by Himself. Jehovah-Nissi came after the battle with Amalek, not after the dead Egyptians at the Red Sea.

d. The Lord has sworn: the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation: This was not the last battle with or mention of the Amalekites. God continued His war against them, but gave them much time to repent of this great sin of attacking their cousin, Israel.

- Balaam prophesied of their ruin (Numbers 24:20)
- Hundreds of years later, Saul fought against them (1 Samuel 14:48)
- God then commanded Saul to continue the fight against Amalek, to bring complete judgment upon them for their ancient sin against Israel (1 Samuel 15:1-7)
- In partial obedience to God, Saul fought against the Amalekites and routed them, but kept their king alive (and presumably others) while also enriching himself in the battle (1 Samuel 15:7-9)
- The failure to obey God in regard to Amalek was the primary act of disobedience that cost Saul the throne (1 Samuel 15:2-9 and 1 Samuel 28:18)
- The Amalekites existed after this, so we know Saul did not complete the work God gave to him (1 Samuel 27:8, 30:17; 2 Samuel 8:12)
- There are some indications that this work was completed in the late days of the divide monarchy under Hezekiah (1 Chronicles 4:41-43), but it is possible that some descendants of the Amalekites remained (such as Haman in Esther 3:1)

i. Because of God's strong command to battle against Amalek until they were completely conquered, many see the Amalekites as a picture of our flesh, the unspiritual aspect of man that makes war against the spirit. In this sense, "Amalek" constantly battles against the spirit and must be struggled against until completely conquered (Galatians 5:17).