



Lesson 4

Not Malicious Gossips

by Katie Leedy

*The one who desires life,
to love and see good days,
**must keep his tongue from evil
and his lips from speaking deceit.***

1 Peter 3:10

*Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, **not malicious gossips** nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women . . . so that the word of God will not be dishonored. Titus 2:3-5*

“Not malicious gossips”:

- It is **one** of *just a very few* qualifications for older women in the church.
- It is part of being reverent in our behavior.
- We need to give diligent heed to what it means:
 - *so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us. Titus 2:8b*
 - *so that they [we] will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect. Titus 2:10b*

A. What does “malicious gossips” mean?

1. “malicious gossips” = the Greek word “*diabolous*”
 - The word means “**slanderer**”
 - KJV translates it—“**false accusers**”; ESV translates it—“**slanderers**”
2. English dictionary definition of “slander”

“to defame” or “the utterance of false charges or misrepresentations which defame and damage another's reputation”

3. Only 3 times translated “malicious gossips” (NAS)

Titus 2:3 (our passage), I Timothy 3:11 (a similar passage dealing with women leaders in the church), and II Timothy 3:2-5

It is used here [in these 3 passages] in its original and proper sense, to denote a “calumniator,” “slanderer,” or “accuser.” Elsewhere in the New Testament, it is uniformly rendered “devil” . . . and is given to Satan, the prince of the fallen angels . . . by way of eminence, as “the accuser.”

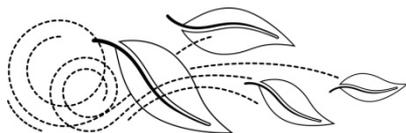
~ Barnes' commentary

4. Usually translated “devil”
 - What is the connection between our word “malicious gossips” and the **devil**?!
 - What is the devil like?
 - Genesis 3—Satan as the serpent **slandered** God to Adam and Eve
 - Job—Satan falsely **accuses** Job before God
 - Revelation 12:10—Satan is called **the accuser of the brethren**
 - John 8:44—Satan is a **liar** and the father of lies

B. *Why is it included in the list of qualifications for older Christian women in the church?*

1. Women have a propensity toward this kind of talk.
 - In general, women like to talk, and we like to talk about and hear about other people.
 - Older women usually have more free time on their hands.
 - Older women know a lot of people and talk to a lot of people.
 - All these things can lead to our falling into the “malicious gossip” speech category.

2. What kinds of talk could we be using that fall into this category?
 - Misrepresentation
 - Half truths
 - Silence
 - Inaccuracy in details
 - Assigning motives to others when you cannot know their heart
 - Hinting (you don’t even have to speak to do this—you can just *look* a certain way)
 - Hearsay
 - Revealing secrets



C. *What does God say about this kind of speech?*

1. Evil speech is characteristic of the old life, the former life, the unregenerate life.
 - Romans 1:29-30 Those who do not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, *they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God . . .*
 - Proverbs 10:18 *He who spreads slander is a fool*

2. It is possible for Christians to fall into this kind of speech.
 - II Corinthians 12:20 Paul writing to the Corinthians—He is afraid he might find them *to be not what I wish . . . that perhaps there will be strife, jealousy, angry tempers, disputes, **slanders, gossip**, arrogance, disturbances.*
 - James 3:2, 6, 8 *For we all stumble in many ways. **If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well. And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity;** the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison.*

3. But we are to put all these kinds of evil speech aside.
 - We are new creatures in Christ when we are saved (II Corinthians 5:17), and we are **not** to have the same kind of speech that an unregenerate person has.
 - Ephesians 4:31, Colossians 3:8, I Peter 2:1-3—**put them all aside**
 - Proverbs 4:24 **Put away** from you a deceitful mouth and put devious speech far from you.
 - Psalm 15:3 **A description of a citizen of Zion, He does not slander with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor takes up a reproach against his friend.**

4. God hates lying and false witness and deceit. He will destroy slanderers.
 - Psalm 101:5 *Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, **him I will destroy.***
 - Proverbs 6:16-19 *A lying tongue and a false witness who tells lies and one who spreads strife among brothers—these are all in the list of things which the Lord **hates!***

5. This kind of speech is destructive.

- It can ruin friendships.
 - Proverbs 16:28 *A slanderer separates intimate friends*
 - Proverbs 17:9 *He who conceals a transgression seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends.*
- Death and life are in the power of the tongue. Our words can cut like a sword.
 - Proverbs 18:21 *Death and life are in the power of the tongue.*
 - Proverbs 18:8 *The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels, and they go down into the innermost parts of the body.*
 - Proverbs 12:18 *There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword.*

D. *What kind of speech should we have?*

1. Kind speech

Proverbs 3:3 **Do not let kindness and truth leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.**

2. Truthful speech

- Ephesians 4:25 *Therefore, laying aside falsehood, **speak truth** each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.*
- Proverbs 14:25 *A truthful witness saves lives, but he who utters lies is treacherous.*

3. Wise speech

- Proverbs 8:6-9 **Wisdom** is speaking: *Listen, for I will **speak noble things**; And the **opening of my lips will reveal right things**. For **my mouth will utter truth**; And **wickedness is an abomination to my lips**. All the **utterances of my mouth are in righteousness**; **There is nothing crooked or perverted in them**. They are all **straightforward to him who understands**, and **right** to those who find knowledge.*
- Psalm 37:30 *The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom and his tongue speaks justice.*

4. Joyful speech

- Psalm 100:1-2 *Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness; come before Him with joyful singing.*
- The opposite of joyful speech: Grumbling
 - Philippians 2:14 *Do all things without grumbling or disputing.*
 - Why? vs. 15 *So that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear (shine) as lights in the world.*

5. Restrained speech

- Proverbs 10:19 *When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, but he who restrains his lips is wise.*
- Proverbs 11:13 *He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy conceals a matter.*

6. Edifying and healing speech

- Ephesians 4:29 *Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.*
- Ephesians 5:19 *Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.*
- Proverbs 12:18b *The tongue of the wise brings healing.*

7. Thankful speech

- Ephesians 5:20 *Always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- I Thessalonians 5:18 *In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

8. Praise to the Lord

- Psalm 145:21 *My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord.*
- Psalm 146:1-2 *Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul! I will praise the Lord while I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.*
- Psalm 147-150—all are giving praise to the Lord

E. How can we make progress in exercising godly speech?

1. Consider your ways.

- Haggai 1:5 says, *Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts, "Consider your ways!"*

- Ask yourself: How is my speech?
- Be honest in your answer.

- Consider this: *What comes out of our mouth comes from **our heart**.*

- Do a **heart** checkup.
 - ✓ Proverbs 4:23 *Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life.*
 - ✓ Matthew 15:18-20 **But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.**
- Make the changes needed.
 - ✓ Psalm 119: 59-60 *I considered my ways, and turned my feet to Your testimonies. I **hastened** and **did not delay** to keep Your commandments.*

2. Call upon God!

- Psalm 141:3 **Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips.**
- Philippians 2:13 *For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*
- Be filled with the Spirit—Galatians 5:16 *But I say, walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.*

3. Renew your mind!

Ephesians 4:22-24 *that, in reference to your former manner of life, you **lay aside the old self**, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be **renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self**, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.*

Conclusion

- Proverbs 12:22 ***Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who deal faithfully are His delight.***
- I Peter 3:8-10
*To sum up, all of you be **harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing. For, the one who desires life, to love and see good days, must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit.***
- May our prayer constantly be:

***Let the words of my mouth
and the meditation of my
heart be acceptable in Your
sight, O Lord, my rock and
my Redeemer.***

Psalm 19:14