

**Think It Over:** This section is about turning what God is saying to you into action steps. These talking points, questions, and scriptures are designed to help you take your own next step. If you are leading a group through this guide, don't feel like you have to answer every question. Pick out those questions that will stir up conversation and action among your group.

- When was the last time you discovered you were the subject of gossip? How did it make you feel? What were you able to do about it? How long did it take for you to get past it? After thinking about these questions, how does it impact your thoughts and feelings regarding participating in gossip?
- Read Ephesians 4:29-31 MSG. There is almost too much in there. What are your initial take-aways? Do you first think about being on the receiving end of hurtful talk or have you been on the giving end? Talk is more than words but the attitude (feeling) that goes along with them. How is the feeling almost as important as the words? How do you go about recognizing the feeling you create in another person's spirit?
- Review Joseph Stowell's definition. How can one determine whether what they are speaking of is a part of a solution? How have you experienced Brennan Manning's quote? So why do we participate in gossip?
- Review each of gossip's results. Would you add any? Which ones have you experienced? How did they make you feel?
- In what kinds of situations do you find yourself gossiping the most? How can you walk yourself back from gossip when you find yourself participating? How can you make your conversation more helpful than hurtful?
- Review each of the "Transforming Gossip into Healthy Conversations" bullets. Which ones do you need to personally address? Are there times you need to avoid being the recipient of gossip? How can you prepare in advance to turn a conversation that seems to be moving into the area of gossip?
- How have you seen the rise of social media affect gossip? Do you think looking at social media can become a form of receiving and enjoying gossip? How do you determine where that line is?
- Who do you need to speak life-giving words to this week? How and when will you do it?

**Next Steps:** What steps will you take to guard against the sin of gossip? How does Mathew 12:36 create a sense of urgency to take those steps now?

**Changing Your Mind:** *I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, Matthew 12:36 ESV*



If you missed a message, visit [www.scc.website](http://www.scc.website) or request a CD at Guest Services.



## The Option Matrix

Found on a card at Guest Services or on our website:  
<http://senecacommunitychurch.com/optionmatrix>

**Review: 10/30/2022 - Can't Touch This - Part 6: Feeling Lucky**  
 at the 32-minute mark ([bit.ly/OptionMatrix](http://bit.ly/OptionMatrix))

*<sup>29</sup>Watch the way you talk. Let nothing foul or dirty come out of your mouth. Say only what helps, each word a gift. <sup>30</sup>Don't grieve God. Don't break his heart. His Holy Spirit, moving and breathing in you, is the most intimate part of your life, making you fit for himself. Don't take such a gift for granted. <sup>31</sup>Make a clean break with all cutting, backbiting, profane talk. Ephesians 4:29–31 MSG*

People may hear your words,  
 but they feel your attitude. JCM

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

Gossip is sharing damaging information about someone or something with another person who is not a part of the solution. This information may be true or untrue [or not complete].

Joseph Stowell

"In every encounter we either give life or we drain it. There is no neutral exchange."  
 Brennan Manning

➔ The Reasons we Gossip

➔ The Results of Gossip

➤ The Crush of Betrayal

<sup>13</sup>A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret.  
Proverbs 11:13 NIV

➤ The Fuel of Strife

<sup>20</sup>It takes fuel to have a fire—a fire dies down when you run out of fuel. So quarrels disappear when the gossip ends. <sup>21</sup>Add fuel to the fire and the blaze goes on. So add an argumentative [person] to the mix and you'll keep strife alive.  
Proverbs 26:20–21 TPT

➤ The Separation of Friends

... a whisperer separates close friends. Proverbs 16:28 ESV

➤ The Impact on You

→ Your Reputation

<sup>9</sup>...don't betray another person's secret. <sup>10</sup>Others may accuse you of gossip, and you will never regain your good reputation. Proverbs 25:9-10 NLT

<sup>27</sup>Whoever restrains his words (under pressure-TPT) has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding. <sup>28</sup>Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is deemed intelligent.  
Proverbs 17:27–28 ESV

→ Your Relationships

<sup>16</sup>There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: ...<sup>19</sup>a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community. Proverbs 6:16,19 NIV

Transforming Gossip  
into Healthy Conversations

➤ Is my conversation helpful or hurtful?

<sup>29</sup>...Say only what helps, each word a gift. <sup>30</sup>Don't grieve God. Don't break his heart... <sup>31</sup>Make a clean break with all cutting, backbiting, profane talk.  
Ephesians 4:29–31 MSG

➤ Have I talked to them first?

<sup>15</sup>If a fellow believer hurts you, go and tell him—work it out between the two of you. If he listens, you've made a friend. Matthew 18:15 MSG

<sup>13</sup>If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame. <sup>17</sup>The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him.  
Proverbs 18:13,17 ESV

➤ What is going on in my heart?

But what comes out of the mouth gets its start in the heart.  
Matthew 15:18 MSG

➤ Am I making a private matter public?

It is foolish to belittle one's neighbor; a sensible person keeps quiet. <sup>13</sup>A gossip goes around telling secrets, but those who are trustworthy can keep a confidence. Proverbs 11:12-13 NLT

➤ Am I enabling others to gossip?

<sup>4</sup>Wrongdoers eagerly listen to gossip; liars pay close attention to slander.  
Proverbs 17:4 NLT

➤ Is this what I would want done to me?

<sup>12</sup>Here is a simple, rule-of-thumb guide for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you, then grab the initiative and do it for them...  
Matthew 7:12 MSG

Bottom Line:

Our words matter to others, to God,  
and they ought to matter to us.

<sup>36</sup>...people will give account for every careless  
word they speak. Matthew 12:36 ESV

Resources for this message include a message by Craig Groeschel, James Emery White at Mecklenburg Community Church, and Summit Church,

To help you turn what God is saying to you into action steps, consider using the Think It Over section on the back.