

Do you gossip?

What is gossip:

The habitual spreading of personal information about others (sometimes true and sometimes not).

Scripture:

Galatians 5:15 "If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other."

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

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

1. Your friends and classmates:
 - a. Feel comfortable telling you anything personal because they know you won't spread it around to everyone
 - b. Are learning to trust you so they let you in on a few personal things from time to time
 - c. Will tell you some things but never anything that's really personal to them because they worry that you won't keep that information safe
 - d. Don't tell you things anymore because they don't trust you
2. The first thing you do when you find out something interesting about someone is:
 - a. Treat it as anything else a friend would tell you in confidence and keep it to yourself
 - b. Write it in your diary
 - c. Tell your best friend
 - d. Tell your friends as you see them throughout the rest of the day
3. When something major happens, you:
 - a. Eventually forget about it
 - b. Make a note to remind yourself to tell your friends later
 - c. Call your friends after school
 - d. Text message or pass notes to your friends immediately
4. When you hear something about someone but aren't sure if it's true or not, you:
 - a. Keep it to yourself
 - b. Tell that person what you heard and ask if it's true or not
 - c. Ask your best friend what they know

- about the subject
- d. Ask a few of your friends if they've heard the same thing and what they think of it
5. Your friend is going through a difficult time. You:
 - a. Pray for her
 - b. Tell your parents
 - c. Tell your youth leaders
 - d. Tell the rest of your friends
 6. You thrive on juicy news that's:
 - a. About current events you've just learned about
 - b. About celebrities
 - c. About a dramatic situation involving people you know
 - d. About other people and their problems
 7. When you get together with your friends, you usually talk about:
 - a. What's going on in your lives and fun things coming up
 - b. Issues you're struggling with
 - c. Things that bother you
 - d. Other people you know from school and church
 8. You find yourself gossiping:
 - a. Never
 - b. Rarely
 - c. At least once a day
 - d. A few times a day

A little
birdie told me ...



Results

Mostly As: Gossip is not really a problem for you. You take the information you hear about other people seriously and don't want to damage their reputation by spreading information around to other people. People can trust you when they talk to you and know that you will pray for them when they go through a hard time instead of talk to other people around it.

Mostly Bs: You have a pretty good handle on gossip. Every once in a while you might share something you heard, but for the most part you don't seem to search out juicy news and you don't seem to have the reputation of being a gossip. On the other hand, there's room for improvement!

Mostly Cs: Gossip is a bit of a challenge for you. You love to find things out but sometimes you have a hard time keeping them to yourself. You need to be careful because you might be developing a reputation of being a gossip. Consider working on keeping your mouth shut instead of being so quick to share the latest news.

Mostly Ds: People might consider you a gossip. You have a way of finding out information on people and situations and seem to enjoy being the one who can let other people in on the news. People don't feel like they can tell you things or speak comfortably with you around because they are scared that you'll talk about them later.

Here's a great Bible verse to memorize that talks about gossip. "Watch your tongue and keep your mouth shut, and you will stay out of trouble" (Proverbs 21:23, NLT).

Things to think about:

1. Do I thrive on knowing personal information about other people?
2. What one thing could I do today to show others they can trust me with personal information?
3. Have I lost a friend because of gossiping?
4. How do I want my friends to treat my secrets or personal information?

Actions Steps:

1. **Work on keeping things to yourself.** This can be really hard when others may be gossiping around you. When you are in these circumstances think about what you are saying before you speak. Is there any benefit to anyone for sharing the juicy details you have? If the answer is no, then you probably need to keep it to yourself. (Note: saying that others can pray for them isn't an excuse, if your friend wants them to pray for her, it is her information to share, not yours.)
2. **Don't take part when others are gossiping.** If you have been know to share juicy news in the past, others will notice when you no longer take part in their gossip session. Try to keep things positive and/or change the subject. You may also want to reconsider who you hang out with if your current friends make a habit of talking about others. Remember if someone is willing to gossip with you, they will also gossip about you.
3. **Ask for forgiveness:** Admitting you are wrong is not an easy thing. We all have times that we wish we would have done things differently. Ask the Lord to forgive you and to help you to guard your mouth. Then apologize to your friend. Be patient though, it will probably take time for her to trust you with personal information in the future.
4. **Treat others the way you want to be treated.** Matthew 7:12 says, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you." Remember this before you speak.