


“Loose Lips Sink Ships”

The military coined the phrase “loose lips sink ships” years ago in an attempt to keep secret the placements of ships, personnel, etc. so the enemy would not know their locations. This phrase has regained its prominence over the last few weeks during our present crisis. It is a good policy to enact, though, because it is one that ensures the safety of those who are serving in the Armed Forces. However, one slip of the tongue or one statement of the whereabouts of military placements could mean death or destruction for those who would be targeted. As Christians, we need to realize that we too have an obligation to not have “loose lips.” James said that the tongue is one of the hardest aspects of our bodies to tame (James 3:5-6,8) and therefore something we must carefully watch. Note with me some ways, that if we’re not careful, we can sink “ships.”

Gossip. A gossip is one who is defined as being a babbler. It carries the idea that the person simply can’t keep their mouth shut. They have an incessant need to tell the secrets or stories told to them by someone else. Their work is one of great destruction. Proverbs 20:19 says, *“He who goes about as a slanderer reveals secrets, therefore do not associate with a gossip”* and again in 13:3, *“The one who guards his mouth preserves his life; The one who opens wide his lips comes to ruin.”* It was Paul’s admonition to the young widows not to behave in that manner (I Timothy 5:14). Gossip benefits no one, but only condemns our soul to hell.

Slander. Slander is that which defames a person. It is not just saying mean things about people. It becomes slander when the intent is to hurt or inflict pain upon the person we’re talking about. This, too, is sinful behavior. The Psalmist says, *“Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy; No one who has a haughty look and an arrogant heart will I endure” (Psalm 101:5).* Proverbs 10:18 says, *“He who conceals hatred has lying lips, And he who spreads slander is a fool.”* When we participate in gossip or slander we are no better than those whom we’re talking about.

Lying. Proverbs 19:9 says, *“A false witness will not go unpunished, And he who tells lies will perish.”* God has always expected His people to tell the truth. He expected the Israelites to be truthful and He continues to expect the same from Christians. Speaking the truth is the one trait you expect a Christian to possess, but sadly many fail. Paul wrote, *“Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil*



practices” (Colossians 3:9). Telling “white lies” might not seem like a big deal to you and I, but its eternal consequences should cause us to fully understand just how serious it is (Revelation 21:8).

As Christians, let us live the words spoken of by Paul to the brethren at Colossae, *“Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on the earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:2-3)*, and be careful not to sink any ships. In word or deed, let us strive to uphold our Lord in our life and serve as the beacon of hope to a lost and dying world. Also, be careful not to sink any ships. May God bless you as you strive to faithfully serve Him.

Kipp Campbell
Clarksville church of Christ