

indifferent.

Am I becoming more like Jesus
or more like the world?

Part 2: Gossip

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1 Samuel 16:7

The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.

When we spend all our energy talking about what people do,
we're left with no energy to proclaim who people are.

"Words create worlds." — Abraham Joshua Heschel

Words are more tangible than we realize.

Genesis 1:1-3

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

God uses words to create.

Proverbs 10:11

The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but violence overwhelms the mouth of the wicked.

Proverbs 12:18

The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Proverbs 18:21

The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

Words have the power of life and death.

James 3:4-6, 9-10

Take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. Likewise, the tongue is a small part of our body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell...

With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be.

God doesn't call us to find imperfections in people.

God calls us to find his likeness in people.

Matthew 7:13-14

¹³ "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. ¹⁴ But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

The narrow road is an invitation that's always in front of us.

**We need to remind one another who we are,
so we don't believe the lies about what we're not.**

Small Group Questions

- 1) Is there a book, poem, or some other written work whose words created a vivid mental picture for you? Tell us a little about that.
- 2) Have you ever had something (positive or negative) said to you that stuck with you through the years? What is it? How did it affect you?
- 3) What do you think is the most harmful outcome of gossip?
- 4) What kind of world are you creating? Is it a world where people are empowered and reminded of their identity in Christ, or is it a world where people are torn down?
- 5) Who is someone you can build up this week? What might that look like?
- 6) How can we pray for you right now and throughout the week?