

# FLYING CHICKEN FEATHERS

Heather McEwan & Joan Grosser.

## Remarks from GKGW

Heather

- Do you remember the “Chicken feathers story” in Growing Kids?  
A woman went to the wise man in her village to ask him what she could do to restore the reputation of a neighbour whom she had slandered. The wise man told her to go to the market and buy a chook, to pluck it as she walked home and just let the feathers go. She did this and then returned to the wise man the next day as instructed. He then told her to go and pick up all of the chicken feathers she had dropped the day before.

The whole point of this story is to illustrate the impossibility of such a task. Likewise - the impossibility of restoring the reputation of someone about whom we may have gossiped or slandered. No way to restore the damage done by words spoken too freely. The moral? Don't say it in the first place!

Not only that, but when we sin (as gossip and slander certainly are) we open the door to the devil. Our speech can be one way that WE open the door and give him legal entry.

- Loyalty to the absent.  
Can we honestly say that we are always (multiple choice: often, sometimes, never!!) loyal to the person not present?

## Respect /Honour / Honesty

Joan

Challenges Christians often face that may lead to gossip and slander are:

- The desire to be REAL about ourselves and others that leads us to say too much
- Criticism and judgment.

Respect /Honour / Honesty are words that come from the Character development chapter in GKGW. Gary says that the quality of your character and that of your children is best exemplified by the presence or absence of three attributes - Respect /Honour / Honesty. These are the concrete things by which people see the quality of our character.

Bill and I recently went to a friend's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. In the wife's speech one of the things she said was that if one word had to describe her husband it would be the word integrity. What an amazing summation.

As we work through this message trying to figure out what is and what isn't gossip and slander, can we ask the Holy Spirit to help us – that the values of respect, honour and honesty be improved in quality and be able to flow through to our children.

Many of us have relationships that are broken because of gossip – it's awful. Some can never be fully restored even if they are forgiven. It's like eating too many lollies and having to get a filling in a tooth - we can live the rest of our lives with a functional but imperfect tooth. It functions OK but it is not a whole tooth. Let's all learn how we can halt the decay!

## DEFINITIONS

Heather

This session was born out of hurt but as we have prepared for this God has brought my own guilt before my eyes - so I share this with you not as someone without sin, but as someone forgiven who through the experience of pain has resolved not to inflict that on others.

### Gossip:

- Anything to anyone that is not a part of the solution
- Anything that you wouldn't say to the person's face
- Idle talk especially about the affairs of others
- Light, familiar talk or writing
- To go about tattling (children!!!)
- The passing of information about someone not there to someone who can't help.

Slander

- Defamation
- Malicious, false, and defamatory statement or report

Slanderer (Vines)

- One who accuses falsely
- Fault finding in the demeanour and conduct of others and spreading their innuendo's and criticisms in the church.

NB The word used here for slanderer is DIABLOS. The same word accuser that is used 34 times in the Bible as a title for Satan.

What is the difference between the two words?

- **Gossip** is / may be true
- **Slander** is more likely untrue. Just because you don't know it's not true does not mean it is not slander. (Conjecture, conclusions, innuendo, Chinese whispers.)  
eg. I caught myself saying to someone recently that as we had not seen a particular couple together in recent weeks we wondered if they had separated. This was pure conjecture on my part that could have been built upon by the next person in line as fact! We can perpetrate this stuff so easily!

Scripture Base

- Proverbs 16:2 **All a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the Lord.**
- Proverbs 21:2 **All a man's ways seem right to him, but the Lord weighs his heart.**
- Proverbs 18: 8 **A fool's mouth is his undoing and his lips are a snare to his soul. The words of gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to a man's inmost parts.**

The key words here are – Heart, Motive and Inmost Parts. There is something very appealing about hushed information. As the tone of conversation changes we lean in, the tones quieten with concern and indignation we listen to the most private details of others lives without so much as a blush.

**GOSSIP IS DECEITFUL**

**Joan**

Gossip is insidious. It seeps in, revealing what is in our hearts.

**What things lie at the heart of man?**

Our birthday present was a sinful heart! These things are in there and we will live with it until the day we die! We do however have every opportunity to change and grow in God.

Negative

- Pride – Why is it that we speak of others? To elevate ourselves and feel superior?
- Rebellion – Why should they..?
- Criticism & Judgement

Positive

- The trained moral conscience – the trained moral conscience will prompt us, confirming and encouraging.
- Desires of the heart – when the Spirit of God is working in our heart, our desires will be His.
- Requirements of the law are written on their hearts. Romans 2:15 – Motivating to do right.

**Gossip masquerades as:**

- Concern
- News
- Prayer needs

**How We Feed Gossip**

Anger	Comparison	Jealousy	Bitterness
Hurt	Avoidance	Contempt	Lack of regard
Lack of self control			

Strangely, these are all results of gossip also.





### How Gossip Feeds Us

Proverbs 29:18a

*Where there is no revelation the people cast off restraint.*

Without understanding God's ways we rush ahead in our own feelings and strength. So often when something happens our first thought is to wonder "who can I talk to" rather than going before God and talking to Him. If the problem being discussed is *our own*, then what are the reasons we prefer to speak to a friend than go to God first?

- Because we get INSTANT answers from a friend. (We probably have to wait for answers if we go to God)
- Desperation and loneliness. What is the motive? To get real honest answers or comforting lies?
- It is EASIER than going to God. (We don't like to wait)
- You don't have to be as honest with a friend as with God. After all... they only know what YOU choose to tell them.
- Friends will comfort, telling us what we want to hear in order to make us FEEL better.
- We prefer to let off steam than go through the discomfort of dealing with the subject properly.

What is the talk feeding in us if the situation being discussed is not our own,

- Feeds our pride/rebellion etc. (Heart of man)
- We feel good to be confided in.
- We feel good letting others know we have been confided in.
- It affirms our own prejudices/ feelings / dislikes of another.
- We would usually only discuss the faults of another that we ourselves do not hold. This is comparing the weakness of another to a strength (*or untested area*) of our own. By deflating another we inflate ourselves

Romans 12:3

*Do not think of yourselves more highly than you ought.*

### GOSSIP AND THE LISTENER

Heather

Spiritual babies require others to fix / supply their 'needs'.

1 Cor 3:1-4

*Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly.- mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarrelling among you are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?*

Ladies it's time to grow up. It's time to put away some childish things. Lets move on to the meat of the word and stop merely craving the milk.

What are we to do when others come to us to gossip?

#### A listener can be just as bad.

- Proverbs 17:4 A wicked man listens to evil lips; **a liar pays attention** to a malicious tongue. Why does scripture call a listener a liar? Because there is falsehood going on inside the heart and lying to yourself.
- Proverbs 18: 8 A fool's mouth is his undoing and his lips are a snare to his soul. **The words of gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to a man's inmost parts.**
- Proverbs 18:17 **The first to present his case seems right**, till another comes along and questions him.

If you've ever watched a movie with a court scene where the lawyers are presenting their final arguments you'll understand this scripture right away. The first to speak seems so convincing you have no idea what the other lawyer could possibly say to change the minds of the jury. Also we see this principle in action every day with our children. One comes running with a story to tell – I'll hazard a guess that there have been many children wrongly chastised when parents did not seek the other side of the story!

This is indeed what happens when we listen to gossip. We make judgements about people that affects the way we work out our relationship with them.

Sometimes we think we've done someone a favour by giving them a listening ear. BUT, what is the motive for listening?

Is it to be "in the know"?

If we are listening without hearing the 'other side' our perceptions, opinions and in the end our manner towards the other will be affected.

- 1 Tim 5:4 *Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses.*
- Proverbs 18:15 *The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge, the ears of the wise seek it out.*
- Proverbs 18:17 ***The first to present his case seems right, till another comes along and questions him.***

We had a situation where our family was the subject of some gossip some time ago. While we were aware of several involved, only one individual ever contacted us to hear what we actually had to say on the matter. To this day relationships are affected (like the filled in tooth) because of information people *think* they have.

So, don't assume you KNOW something because you have heard one side of it.

### Triangling

**Joan**

Be very careful about being brought in as the third (or seventh or twelfth) party asked to solve an issue that did not involve you. Send the information back down the line to the origin. We must go directly to the brother concerned.

### The Accuracy of Information?

**Heather**

- Chinese whispers
- Perspectives – you can make a totally innocent remark that someone else will filter through their own understanding changing the meaning or intent of what you actually said. Now you can't be expected to mind read, but it is a caution to make every effort to communicate and understand clearly.
- Truth is not one side or the other, but a meshing of the two. (like the warp and weft threads of fabric woven together)

Ps 34:13

*Keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from speaking lies.*

1 Peter 3:9-12

*Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, for to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. For, Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.*

Don't we all want the Lord's face turned towards us?

Evil is evil and lies are lies whether you knew it or not when you said it. The issue is less the knowledge of accuracy and more the passing on of information or hearsay.

### THE RESULTS

**Joan**

#### The results of perverse talk (All Biblical)

- Pride
- Offence
- Loss of reputation
- Jealousies
- Anger
- Strife
- Factions
- Dissention
- Loss of trust
- Broken friendships
- Betrayal
- Cut off from God.





We live in an evil age. Just listening to the nightly news is defiling. We get the indiscretions of politicians and sports stars in minute detail and we are being worn down by it. We are enticed away from the holiness of God. We do not even recognise the perversity around us. Why do we even need to know half of this stuff??? Our nation looks good on the outside but we are sick on the inside. I am not saying that we approve of the things that happen.

*For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.* 1 Peter 3

We align ourselves with evil when we get involved with this kind of talk.

All of these can also be motivators of perverse talk. There is a cyclic cause and effect.

Proverbs 6:16-19

*There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies **and a man who stirs up dissention among brothers.***

Proverbs 16:28      ***A perverse man stirs up dissention and a gossip separates close friends.***

Proverbs 20: 19      *A gossip betrays a **confidence**, so avoid a man who talks too much.*

#### Defenition of Confidence

- Full trust. Belief in the trustworthiness or reliability of the person or thing.
- A secret or private matter, not to be divulged to others
- Certitude or assured expectation

#### Lying

If lying as a child was an issue for you, it may still be so now. If we just even give the tone or implication a tweak, we lie.

### **SPECIFICALLY CHILDREN**

**Heather**

In preparing for this session I debated whether or not to say some of the things I have done regarding the effects in my own life of being gossiped about. I decided I would go ahead to serve as an illustration to you. Some of you by now are no doubt wondering what it was all about... This is my point precisely! There is something appealing in the possibility of some unknown juicy bits isn't there?

- Being real about our kids but granting them dignity.

As we go about building relationships with people that really count for something, we do try to be real and authentic with each other. (Or we should.) By no means do I desire to create the impression for you that I or my family am perfect – firstly 'coz it's just not true and it only serves to make you uncomfortable with me, totally conflicting with the goal of relationship. When we are real with one another about our struggles it keeps us accessible and a lot less scary to others! Sometimes however we are called to make a choice. And the choice to honour rises above using our fallen human nature and the reality of our difficulties as a means to build relationship. I'm not saying we can never talk about our struggles – just to be careful! For instance, if there is a decision that you have made as a couple that is going to put you in a bad light with somebody else, it is a very easy thing to blame your husband! "*Well Rod decided such and such...*" keeps me in a better light but it is not honouring to him! It's not even truthful! So we have to weigh the priorities. We need to honour our husbands over the need to 'stay in good' with a friend.

Sure we need to be real about our kids failings but we also need to leave them with some dignity. We don't need to leave them stripped totally bare in front of other people.

- Criticism of the children of others will bring the spotlight back on yours.

This is something that as course facilitators Rod and I have heard a lot! People get a bit of knowledge and understanding about family dynamics and children's behaviour and then want to spread their knowledge to those concerned. People really labour over 'should I say anything?? Should I not??' Over and over Gary says to just

let your family be the witness. If people ask you, you can say, but we are not to be the parent police! Even if you think *you* can handle criticism, your children shouldn't have to. People will be waiting for them to fail in order to counter your criticism of their children.

- Speaking of your child's faults with an unwisely chosen person can have the same result. You build a negative expectation of your child that the other will be quick to notice. I have made a personal decision not to discuss difficulties with our own children with my own peers who have children of same age. Why? Because I want the advice of someone further down the road than me. Plus I don't want to have confided in someone who will naturally assume the worst of my child if an issue arises between mine and their child. Of course there are qualifiers to these statements. There may be someone younger in years who had demonstrated trustworthiness and maturity that you might go to! I just offer these as thoughts to help you think through this area. Also my dear Auntie Jenny once gave me a bit of advice on this front. It was simply never to discuss your child's issues with someone who can't or doesn't love them. Phew, I wish I'd known that one years ago.
- Children also gossip. We must be diligent to teach them discretion.
  - \* They can be gossiping when running to you to tell on siblings. Ask them "have you talked about it with ..... yet? Refuse to be drawn in. If they go and fail, be their witness and go with them.
  - \* Don't permit gossip of school friends. They are not present to defend themselves. Hear what is needed and learn to discern when to stop their chatter.
  - \* Tales from school in front of siblings should be discouraged.

### **WHAT THEN SHOULD WE DO?**

By now, we should all agree that many of the ways we have been used in communicating are sinful. So what are we to do with *knowledge that does need action*, or for godly counsel for ourselves.

There is a Biblical model to follow.

First be sure of your *motive*. Are you just wanting to "let off steam"? Do you genuinely want counsel? Are you prepared that the counsel may not be pleasing to you?

Do you genuinely want prayer or just a platform to speak from? James 5:16 says to confess our faults one to another so that you can pray.

- We confess OUR OWN faults
- We confess for the purpose of PRAYER. Why? For accountability sake and agreement in prayer (Matthew 18:19)

When we do speak we must keep the issue separate from the person. Remembering the principles of:

- Speaking truth in love.
- Loving the sinner but hating the sin.
- Enquiring rather than accusing. And keeping the confidences of others all the while

Prov 25:7b-10 *What you have seen with your own eyes do not bring hastily to court for what will you do in the end if your neighbour puts you to shame? If you argue your case with a neighbour, do not betray another man's confidence or he who hears it may shame you and you will never lose your bad reputation.*

#### Go to Your Brother

Gossip is NOT LEGITIMISED by you having been wronged.

Biblical model.

- Mathew 5:24 *Therefore if you are offering your gift at the altar and you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.*
- Matthew 18:15 *If your brother sins against you go and show him his fault... (it's worth reading the rest!)*

Regardless of where the perceived fault lies, all members of Christ's body are responsible before God to be active in maintaining, promoting and pursuing peace.





If beyond this, counsel is still required consider the following.

- Speak to a believer rather than an unbeliever. See 2 Cor 6:14 For what fellowship can light have with darkness?
- The older women in Titus 2 are instructed to teach the younger women to love their husbands and children. Choose someone further down the road than you in terms of faith, wisdom and/or experience.
- Choose someone whose esteem of the other party will not be affected or changed. Someone unknown to the other party or someone with proven honour.

If a friend fits these descriptions, remember she is one with her husband - not you. Don't require her to keep secrets from him for you. If this stops you from sharing with her...so be it. Choose someone else whose husband fits the Titus model also.

Prov 17:3 (AMPLIFIED)

*Roll your works upon the Lord (commit and trust them wholly to Him; He will cause your thoughts to become agreeable to His will, and) so shall your plans be established and succeed.*

Ask God to show you who to speak to!

### **So You've Messed Up?**

Well join the club!

- Repentance - Get before God
- Forgiveness - Get before the right people
- Restoration -

Proverbs: 16:6-7 **Through love and faithfulness sin is atoned for; through the fear of the Lord a man avoids evil. When a man's ways are pleasing to the Lord, he makes even his enemies live at peace with him.**

Proverbs: 30:32-33 **If you have played the fool and exalted yourself, or if you have planned evil, clap your hand over your mouth!**

### **How can we avoid gossip in the future?**

- Stay Busy!  
Proverbs 10: 18-19 He who conceals his hatred has lying lips and whoever spreads slander is a fool.  
**When words are many, sin is not absent**, but he who holds his tongue is wise.
- Proverbs 31:26-27 She speaks with wisdom and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household **and does not eat the bread of idleness.**
- Be proactive. Talk to those with whom you have unhealthy patterns away from a time of potential conflict. The spirit of a friendship doesn't usually change...that means that whatever foundation you built a friendship upon, that is likely to remain the same unless you take active steps to make it different
- Don't pry. Be content not to know. And don't mistake the prying for genuine concern for you!!!
- Don't discuss 'anonymous' friends. Or those not known to each other. You never know...they may meet one day!
- Go to the source and check it out.

### **Wounded people**

There are many wounded people among us. Wounded from some major life issues. There are people whose lives have become coffee table conversation due to separation, divorce, adultery etc. They are tender and raw. Their or their partners most intimate details disclosed and displayed. We need to treat these emotionally wounded people with the same care as the physically wounded. Let them heal.

### **Being "Real" but honouring too**

- It is mostly possible to do both. I didn't say it was easy. Learn how to keep quiet when asked for inappropriate information.

- For the times that we cannot do both, we must make a choice in priorities. Will we obey the command to honour or not? We may still build relationships with others, refraining from a story or two because we choose God over others.
- If you are hurting, but disclosure would hurt another, you can say something like “Thanks for asking, no I’m not OK. I’m not free to talk about it but please pray for me.”
- We must honour our husbands away from their presence as much as in it. Does the way you speak of him to your friends honour him?

### When Restoration is not possible

You just keep doing what you know to do before God.

1 Peter 2:12 *Live such good lives among the pagans, that though they accuse you of doing wrong they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.*

The following verse is not to be used as an excuse for not wanting to restore relationships! However, sometimes restoration is either not possible or not possible in our time table.

Romans 12:17 *Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. “*

There are also people God actually tells us not to have anything to do with.

- Prov 12:26 *A righteous man is cautious in friendship, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.*
- Prov 13:20 *He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.*
- Prov 14:7 *Stay away from a foolish man, for you will not find knowledge on his lips.*
- Prov 20:19 ***A gossip betrays a confidence, so avoid a man who talks too much.***
- Prov 18:24 *A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.*
- Prov 22:10 *Drive out the mocker, and out goes strife; quarrels and insults are ended.*
- Prov 22: 24-25 ***Do not make friends with a hot tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered, or you may learn his ways and get yourself ensnared.***
- 2 Tim 3:3-5 *People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God-- having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.*

### CONCLUSION

Joan

Prov 24:3-4 *By wisdom a house is built and through understanding it is established. Through knowledge it's rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures.*

Prov 24:14 *Know also that wisdom is sweet to your soul; if you find it there is a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.*

Gossip cuts us off from relationship. Lets go after lady wisdom which is sweet to the soul. Let's make the choices that lead down the road of peace.

Heavenly Father we thank you  
 that Jesus has set the example for us  
 and that you love us with an everlasting love.  
 We pray that wisdom in our souls  
 will help us build homes filled with beautiful treasures,  
 - homes with a hope and a future.  
 Father we commit ourselves to you.  
 Please remind us how dependant we are on you.  
 Amen!



### Commitment

Spend a few minutes recording the specific areas you will endeavour to change.  
Or... review and renew your previous commitment. Is God stretching you in a new area?

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### Word Meanings

#### Gossip:

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- Anything that you wouldn't say to the person's face
- Idle talk especially about the affairs of others
- Light, familiar talk or writing
- To go about tattling (children!!!)
- The passing of information about someone not there to someone who can't help.

#### Slander

- Defamation
- Malicious, false, and defamatory statement or report

#### Slanderer (Vines)

- One who accuses falsely
- Fault finding in the demeanour and conduct of others and spreading their innuendo's and criticisms in the church.

NB The word used here for slanderer is DIABLOS. The same word accuser that is used 34 times in the Bible as a title for Satan.

#### Difference between the two words.

- **Gossip** is/may be true
- **Slander** is more likely untrue. (Conjecture, conclusions, innuendo.)

#### Perverse

- Willfully determined or disposed to go counter to what is expected or desired.
- Contrary
- Wayward, cantankerous
- Persistent or obstinate in what is wrong
- Turned away from what is right, good , proper.
- Wicked

#### Loyalty. (Truth and love in action)

- Faithful adherence

#### Honour

- High public esteem
- High respect as for worth, merit, rank.
- To hold in honour, high respect. revere.
- To show a courteous regard for

#### Confidence

- Full trust. Belief in the trustworthiness or reliability of the person or thing.
- A secret or private matter, not to be divulged to others
- Certitude or assured expectation

#### Malice

- desire to inflict injury or suffering on another

## Proverbs on Gossip.

- 4:24 Put away perversity from your mouth. Keep corrupt talk far from your lips.
- 6:12-14 A scoundrel and a villain, who goes about with a corrupt mouth, who winks with his eye, signals with his feet and motions with his fingers, who plots evil with deceit in his heart - he always stirs up dissention.
- 6:16-19 There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies **and a man who stirs up dissention among brothers.**
- 8: 13 To fear the Lord is to hate evil. I hate pride and arrogance, evil behaviour and perverse speech.
- 9:12-13 If you are wise, your wisdom will reward you; if you are a mocker, you alone will suffer. The woman Folly is loud; she is undisciplined and without knowledge.
- 10:12-13 Hatred stirs up dissention but love covers over all wrongs. Wisdom is found on the lips of the discerning but a rod is for the back of him who lacks judgement.
- 10: 18-19 He who conceals his hatred has lying lips and whoever spreads slander is a fool. **When words are many, sin is not absent**, but he who holds his tongue is wise.
- 11: 12-13 A man who lacks judgement derides his neighbour, but a man of understanding holds his tongue. A gossip betrays a **confidence**, but a trustworthy man keeps a secret.
- 12:13 An evil man is trapped by his sinful talk, but a righteous man escapes trouble.
- 12:22-23 The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful. A prudent man keeps his knowledge to himself, but the heart of fools blurt out folly.
- 13:3 He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly comes to ruin.
- 14:1 **The wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands, the foolish one tears hers down.**
- 15:4 The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.
- 16:2 **All a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the Lord.**
- 16: 25 **There is a way that seems right to a man but in the end it leads to death.**
- 16:6-7 **Through love and faithfulness sin is atoned for; through the fear of the Lord a man avoids evil. When a man's ways are pleasing to the Lord, he makes even his enemies live at peace with him.**
- 16:28 **A perverse man stirs up dissention and a gossip separates close friends.**
- 17:3 (AMP) Roll your works upon the Lord (commit and trust them wholly to Him; He will cause your thoughts to become agreeable to His will, and) so shall your plans be established and succeed.
- 17:4 **A wicked man listens to evil lips; a liar pays attention to a malicious tongue.**
- 17:9 **He who covers over an offence promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.**
- 17:14 Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.
- 17:17 A friend loves at all times and a brother is born for adversity.
- 17:20 A man of perverse heart does not prosper, he whose tongue is deceitful falls into trouble.
- 17:27-28 A man of knowledge uses words with restraint, and a man of understanding is even tempered. Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue.
- 18: 8 A fool's mouth is his undoing and his lips are a snare to his soul. **The words of gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to a man's inmost parts.**
- 18:15 The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge, the ears of the wise seek it out.
- 18:17 **The first to present his case seems right, till another comes along and questions him.**
- 18:21 The tongue has the power of life and death, those who love it will eat its fruit.
- 19:5 A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who pours out lies will not go free.
- 20: 19 A gossip betrays a confidence, so avoid a man who talks too much.
- 21:2 **All a man's ways seem right to him, but the Lord weighs his heart.**
- 21:4 Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, are sin!
- 21:23 He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from calamity
- 21:28 **A false witness will perish, and whoever listens to him will be destroyed for ever.**
- 22:24-25 Do not make friends with a hot tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered, or you may learn his ways and get yourself ensnared.
- 24:3-4 By wisdom a house is built and through understanding it is established. Through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures.
- 24:14 Know also that wisdom is sweet to your soul; if you find it there is a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.
- 25:7b-10 What you have seen with your own eyes do not bring hastily to court for what will you do in the end if your neighbour puts you to shame? If you argue your case with a neighbour, do not betray another man's confidence or he who hears it may shame you and you will never lose your bad reputation.

- 25:24 Better to live on a corner of a roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife.
- 25:28 Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self control.
- 26:17-26 Like one who seizes a dog by the ears is a passer by who meddles in a quarrel not his own. Like a madman shooting firebrands or deadly arrows is a man who deceives his neighbour and says "I was only joking!" Without wood a fire goes out, without gossip a quarrel dies down. As charcoal to embers and as wood to fire, so is a quarrelsome man for kindling strife. The words of gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to a man's inmost parts. Like a coating of glaze over earthenware are fervent lips with an evil heart. A malicious man disguises himself with his lips, but in his heart he harbours deceit. Though his speech is charming do not believe him, for seven abominations fill his heart. His malice may be concealed by deception, but his wickedness will be exposed in the assembly.
- 27:4 Anger is cruel and fury overwhelming but who can stand before jealousy?
- 27:6 Wounds from a friend can be trusted but an enemy multiplies kisses.
- 27:11-16 A quarrelsome wife is like a constant dripping on a rainy day; restraining her is like restraining the wind or grasping oil with the hand.
- 29:8 Mockers stir up a city, but wise men turn away anger.
- 29:18a Where there is no revelation the people cast off restraint
- 29:22 An angry man stirs up dissention and a hot tempered one commits many sins.
- 30:10 Do not slander a servant to his master, or he will curse you and you will pay for it.
- 30:32-33 **If you have played the fool and exalted yourself, or if you have planned evil, clap your hand over your mouth!** For as churning the milk produces butter, and as twisting the nose produces blood, so stirring up anger produces strife.
- 31:10-12 The wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life.
- 31:26-27 She speaks with wisdom and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household **and does not eat the bread of idleness.**
- 31:30-31 Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

### **OTHER KEY SCRIPTURES**

- 1 Tim 3:11 In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything
- 2 Tim 3:1-5 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self control, brutal, not lovers of good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God- having a form of godliness but denying it's power. Have nothing to do with them.
- Romans 12:3 Do not think of yourselves more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgement, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.
- Romans 2:15 ...the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness...
- 1 Cor 3:1-4 Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly.- mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarrelling among you are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?
- 1 Tim 5:4 Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses.
- 1 Peter 2:12 Live such good lives among the pagans, that though they accuse you of doing wrong they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.
- Ps 34:13 Keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from speaking lies.
- 1 Peter 3:9-12 Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, for to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. For, whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.

