

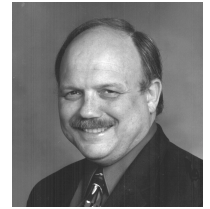


Church Restoration

Part 4

Evil Reports and the Destruction They Create

Rev. Dr. Jonathan Hansen
Founder & President



This six-part series on reconciliation between believers is extremely important as I believe gossip, murmuring, backbiting, complaining, tale bearing, a whisperer and slandering describes sins of Christians. I believe these classifications of sins and the people committing them are the number one tool of the enemy in separating the saints, causing a dysfunctional church.

Dr. Sedler teaches in his book how violating Scriptural protocol renders the person guilty of becoming "evil reporters." He also warns us how we are accountable for listening to gossip and not stopping it. Many times today in churches the guilty party who has engaged in spreading "evil reports" causing much dissension in the body of Christ until church leadership finds it necessary to expose the person becomes the poor innocent victim as believers not recognizing the seriousness of the offense nor the details sympathize with this rebel. They do not comprehend that God holds them responsible for listening to this trouble maker and sympathizing with him. God expects the listener to instead stop the person from spreading his evil report by rebuking the gossipier and walking away if the person does not repent.

Dr. Sedler continues, "Noah Webster's 1828 edition, states that the word evil means, 'having bad qualities of a moral kind: wicked; corrupt; perverse; producing sorrow, distress, injury or calamity.' Thus, an evil report is not only what is said, but how it is said. It involves our attitudes and even the condition of our hearts...Evil report: When an individual maliciously injures, damages, or discredits another's reputation or character through the use of words or attitude...Ungodly, damaging conversations. How often our words ramble casually and carelessly without any thought as to the repercussions in another person's life! Comments such as, 'Did you hear what Tom said to me?' or 'I am really offended at Sally. Do you know what she did?' not only hurt but also cause separation. If we are tempted to think that this does not harm the Body of Christ, then we can put ourselves in the positions of Tom or Sally. It is not likely that they would desire to be 'blessed' like that again! Unchecked, this type of speech pattern continues to degrade people; eventually creating an atmosphere that provokes others to move into serious sin...In so many of these situations, people were misunderstood, injured and suffered emotionally. How

can I be a light to the world when I am speaking and listening to darkness? God holds us accountable for the words we say to one another. Our careless ways of speaking cannot be chalked up to 'I didn't know better' or 'I was only kidding.' To be Christlike is to walk a path of integrity, purity and commitment in all our relationships and interactions. In fact, I could believe that this offense is serious enough to disqualify individuals from ministry opportunities. Proverbs 10:18 says that 'whoever spreads slander is a fool'" (pg 15-16).

Ladies and gentlemen, I could tell you of one horror story after another of leaders listening to guilty people spreading evil reports about me and other leaders lacking the integrity and maturity to check it out with me. Instead I am tried and convicted without a trial by these so called 'church leaders.'

Dwight Carlson, M.D., in his book, *OVERCOMING HURTS & ANGER*, states, "Ultimately, the goals to achieve in constructive communication are as follows: '...To understand each other clearly and to have both parties feel heard'" (pg 145). The reason for confrontation is for reconciliation to take place; for the relationship to be restored. Carlson warns against using "Blaming You Messages." "Blaming you messages usually begin with the word 'you' and include an accusation. They frequently assume to know the intent, motivation, or feelings of the other person...it is usually difficult to defend. Such messages come off as being judgmental, critical, attacking, and final, giving no room for the other person to respond or provide clarification. They tend to raise the hostilities and defenses of the other person. Only the extremely mature person can receive a 'blaming you' message and turn it into a constructive interaction" (pg 89).

Dr. Carlson writes, "Avoid put-downs: A sweeping judgment or putdown is highly destructive. You need to refrain from ridicule, shaming, judging, criticizing, and faultfinding. Devaluing body language such as eye-rolling, grimaces, or groans should be avoided. Avoid all-inclusive statements: Avoid using words such as never or always when you make a point. To do so is to make sweeping generalizations, and typically what happens is that you end up arguing about whether or not the all-inclusive statement is

true. Thus you have left the original discussion and are accomplishing nothing" (Pg 143). "Don't interrupt: Make it a rule that whoever is speaking has the right to complete his or her thoughts without interruption. Speak from your own perspective: It is crucial that you speak from your own perspective and allow the other person the right to a differing view. Seldom, if ever, does either party have the absolute truth on a given issue. Two individuals witnessing the same automobile accident often see it differently. Even if you fully believe you are in the right, if you state it in such a way as to give the other person some room, you are facilitating dialogue. For instance, instead of saying, 'That is not what happened,' instead say something like, 'From my perspective it appears...'" (pg 142).

If you go to another person and just accuse him and label your perceptions as overt sins without giving that person the courtesy or right to explain himself, then your reason for confrontation is suspect. If, when the person tries to talk, you interrupt him with sarcasm both in words and body language; that is not a spirit of reconciliation. If you bring accusations against another and you initially did it out of scriptural order by bringing another party along for moral support that is not reconciliation. If you accuse somebody and you fail to be patient and allow that person to explain himself but instead you demand by your impatience, tone and demeanor that the person acquiesce to your allegations and demands or you will leave the relationship, that is not reconciliation. In this, you multiply the offenses if you fail to follow scripture and refuse now to meet with church leadership over your charges. This, again, is not reconciliation. If you confront others in such ways you will seldom promote or come to reconciliation. Thus, the goal is not achieved and frustration and anger may increase and you will be tempted to leave the relationship. God certainly did not speak to you to leave the relationship. God's will and order for reconciliation including the attitude and sequence it is suppose to be conducted in is very clear. Failing to follow proper steps with a spirit of reconciliation and attitude has to be recognized is nothing short of pride and rebellion. This act is caused from a lack of agape love replaced instead by anger and unforgiveness.

Jas 4:11-12 reads, "Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?"

Col 3:12-14 describes the attitude that the accuser is supposed to confront the offender. "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

Eph 4:32 reads, "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

1 Pet 4:8 states, "And above all things have fervent charity (love) among yourselves: for charity (love) shall cover the multitude of sins."

These verses are so important for relationships whether it be towards our spouse, parents, children or staff. We are not to try and play God or the Holy Spirit and nit-pick the Fruit of the Holy Spirit's development in another person. If we feel a need to confront someone about what we feel is a lack of love in a fellow believer's life, it has to be done very carefully and gently to help that person grow in the Spirit of God. The confrontation cannot be critical, condemning or judgmental. We must always confront in true love and it must be done privately. We cannot speak in judgment as a Pharisee without allowing the person all the time necessary to express his beliefs. Also, we must be willing to continue to work with the person or our verbiage of love becomes meaningless. Without this true divine love, our conditional love appears to be nothing more than Judas kissing Jesus in the midst of betrayal; sheer hypocrisy. There is nothing more disdainful than someone hugging you and saying they love you and then refusing to stand beside you in service.

Matt 7:1-5, warns against mote hunting. "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

Dake's Annotated Reference Bible, explains that we are not suppose to focus on another's lack of sanctification but rather we need to concentrate on our own imperfection; our own lack of agape love. "Do not find fault with anyone except self or you will expose your own criminal tendencies and disposition...Why concentrate upon the splinter in your brother's eye, if you are blind to the log in your own eye?" (pg 6).

We need to be extremely careful before we start to play the part of the Holy Spirit in trying to correct people in the area of their sanctification process of growing in the fruit of the Holy Spirit (love, joy, peace, longsuffering, temperance, meekness, kindness, self-control, etc.). We can confront a person over their immaturity if we are sure God is really asking us to do so but it must be done privately in a true spirit of gentle love. We are supposedly doing it to help them grow in agape love not hurt or desert them with betrayal and rejection.

Prov 11:9 reads, "An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered." Proverbs 11:12 warns, "He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace."

Prov 11:13 states, "A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter."

Prov 19: 11 records, "A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense."

Jas 1:19 tells us, "My dear brothers, take not of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry."

The Bible is very clear on the purpose for confrontation which is always for reconciliation. God is also very clear on the method (privately) and the attitude (gentleness, meekness and patience). Again, the goal is for restoration. It is for the relationship to be renewed. The reason for confrontation is always for reconciliation. It is always to help the person become more secure in God and each other's relationship.

Eph 4:29 reads, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

These articles on "Church Restoration" are very important because the reputations of innocent people are being tarnished by immature people. Also, even more importantly, the bride of Christ is being hurt, confused and increasingly dysfunctional. Servants of God who are only human, sinners saved by grace, working out their salvation daily as they grow in the fruit of the Holy Spirit and agape love, are needlessly attacked because some other person with less agape love becomes a tool in Satan's arsenal to separate the brethren.

Rev. Jack Frost stated during the lecture of the class *Resolving Conflict And Anger God's Way: BICC520*, that pastors are betrayed approximately once per month. With this type of constant, often unmerited, accusations against church leadership one would think that pastors would be very careful to follow the protocol established by Jesus Christ in Matt 18:15-17. But, I have not found this to be true as I have mentioned earlier. I believe the reasons for this violation of protocol are multi faceted. The church to some degree has become very carnal and business oriented. Humanism is flooded in the fabric of the minds of Christians thus they nor their leaders think spiritually. Even though the leaders themselves have been victims to numerous malicious accusations they still think and respond carnally. For this reason the churches are dysfunctional lacking a unified body to attack the wiles and devices of Satan in the community but instead many members of congregations and Pastors themselves become tools of the enemy to further divide, separate and mutilate the body of Christ into a frustrated, hurt and humiliated force.

Brothers and sisters, if we become Pharisees then there will be no one left to preach the gospel in our pulpits because growing in agape love is a life long process. I am not excusing real sin which has already been classified earlier in this article (Gal 5:19-21 and Rom 1:29-32). Real sin which disqualifies a person from ministry

until repented from must be dealt with in loving discipline. But there is a huge difference between disciplinary sin issues and a life long process of growing in components of sanctification called agape love (the fruits of the Holy Spirit).

In 1972 I was a Youth Pastor on a Pastoral Staff. I have served officially under a Senior Pastor on his staff as an assistant pastor in two different churches. I have also served as a presbyter with the Kenya Assemblies of God for three years under a District Superintendent as well as a General Superintendent. In Uganda; I served on The Spiritual Ministry Council (which was the Executive Council of the Uganda Assemblies of God) for three years. I have served as the Assistant Regional Missionary Overseer for Africa under Calvary Charismatic Centre; Singapore A/G and currently serve on the Missions Committee and the Board of Beacon University under the leadership of the Missions Chairman and the President of Beacon University. I could go on listing my credentials—how I have served as a minister of the gospel officially, but I have mentioned enough to make my point. In each of these areas of ministry I have had to follow Jesus' protocol found in Matt 18:15 explicitly or I would have needed to resign or be reprimanded as causing dissention, strife and discord amongst the brethren. There is Godly government and authority in homes, schools, businesses and churches. It is not just "Jesus and Me." When a person has a difference with their pastor there is never any justification to air that grievance to anyone else. I have served under many church leaders and have never agreed with everything they did or initiated into policy, but that does not allow me to voice my difference of opinion of leadership to another soul. There is absolutely no justification or excuse that allows an assistant pastor to break scriptural protocol and talk with another person about a perceived complaint against their Senior Pastor, Presbyter, District or General Superintendent, Bishop, Chairman of the Board, etc., without first going alone to that person in a true spirit of reconciliation. Meaning, they must be willing to express their lack of understanding for how he leads, how they perceive the leader having a lack love or whatever the case may be. Any violation of this first step immediately identifies an impure heart, motive and intent in the complainer.

Jer 17:9-10, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to the fruit of his doings."

Psa 139:23, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

The Scriptures give so many clear warnings to judge ourselves as well as many warnings to be very careful in criticizing another person.

We will continue with Part 5 of Church Restoration.

Jonathan Hansen



WORLD MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL
PO BOX 277
STANWOOD, WA 98292
OFFICE PHONE: (360) 629-5248
OFFICE FAX: (360) 629-6750
EMAIL: warning@worldministries.org
WEB SITE: www.worldministries.org

Church Restoration is an extremely important responsibility in the Body of Christ. I believe the reason why the church is so very weak in this area is because most congregations are not being taught how to confront sin or restore relationships through the Scriptures and neither do they watch personal role modeling by their pastors or other leaders in their lives. Proper confrontation is a mandate by God whereas improper discussion of the problem and subject is a sin often committed both by church leadership as well as their congregations. This is a primary tool of the enemy to cause a church split or create an ineffective body of believers. Proverbs 17:9 warns, "He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends" (KJV). "He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends" (NIV). Most people do not seem to care about the feelings of other people or the reputations of other leaders. They spread "hearsay information" without having the love or courage to go to the person in question first, and they give all the excuses which these articles explain to justify their disobedience to the Scriptures. Once again, church leadership is as guilty, if not more guilty than most of their parishioners and they wonder why there are problems in the church. They fail to understand the laws of "sowing and reaping."

This is an apostolic ministry that is doing *real warfare*, not just talking about it. Our television and radio broadcasts, along with our newsletters, tapes and CDs, are not intended to tickle your ears, or put you into a spiritual slumber; instead, they will often challenge your carnal nature, and are designed to bring uncompromised truth. These teachings are based solely on the anointed, inspired Word of God. They should increase your conviction and motivation to join in this great battle.

Please pass this article on to other people whom you feel would support me with their prayers, and will become one of my Tape or Video of the Month Partners. Through this partnership, they too can be strengthened by receiving monthly anointed, Word-based articles and radio or television programs that will equip them to better serve our Lord in the coming days of trials and testing. Together we can "**sound the alarm**" and save many people in nations that will listen to the warning while there is still time and freedom to do so before Jesus returns to rule and reign! PLEASE JOIN ME TODAY AND LET US SOUND THE ALARM! PTL!!!!

Dr. Jonathan Hansen