

Maintaining Peace Among Brothers

Our Commitment to Maintaining Peace Among the Brethren by Giving Only Good Reports

Definition of a Bad Report:

"A bad report is using words, tonal patterns or facial expressions to put someone else in a bad light. It is damaging someone else's reputation with information that does not need to be shared. It is encouraging or spreading discontent or discord among others." ? Bill Gothard

Three Scriptural Guidelines Which Guarantee Peace Within a Church:

1. Go directly to those with which you have a problem.
2. Matthew 18:15 ? *"And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private."*
3. You must communicate directly with those who have sinned against you
4. *"Speak the truth in love"* to your brother. This causes both of you to grow (Ephesians 4:15).
5. Go directly to those who have a problem with you.
6. Matthew 5:23-24 ? *"If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go your way; be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering at the altar."*
7. God gets us going and coming. It doesn't matter whether you have the problem with them (Matthew 18:15) or they have the problem with you (Matthew 5:23-24). **YOU** must go.

8. Seek to be positive in speech and remain silent rather than unnecessarily negative.

9. Ephesians 4:29 ? *"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building up others."*

10. Proverbs 17:9 ? *"He who covers an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends."*

God's attitude towards those who give a bad report:

1. Proverbs 6:19 ? *"He who sows discord among the brethren is an abomination to the Lord" (see verses 16-18).*

2. James 1:26 ? *"If anyone thinks himself to be religious and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this own man's religion is worthless."*

3. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 ? *"Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God."*

4. Romans 1:28-32 - *"Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful...Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death..."*

Ways to stop someone else from giving a bad report:

1. Lovingly ask: "Do you feel I am responsible to know about this? I would rather not know about this unless I am directly involved."
2. Lovingly say: "Don't forget about our church covenant of discipleship concerning the steps of Matthew 18:14-17. You need to speak to (name) privately about this matter."
3. Display a sad countenance: "*As the north wind drives away rain, so a friend's countenance drives away a backbiting tongue*" Proverbs 25:23.
4. Avoid them: "*A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid a man who talks too much*" Proverbs 20:19.