

The Defilement of an Evil Report

I. WHAT IS AN EVIL REPORT?

- A. An evil report involves distortion of facts, incomplete facts or false information. It is given with wrong motivations and causes the **hearer** to come to inaccurate conclusions and to respond with unscriptural solutions.
- B. Evil reports are so destructive they destroy long-lasting and close friendships: Prov. 16:28, "A whisperer separateth chief friends."
- C. Wrong doing should not be covered up, but brought to the attention of the wrong doer. Matt. 18:15f.
- D. This spiritual problem is compared to a disease and its stages of development within a body:
 - 1. IGNORANCE of "preventive" measures to avoid it.
 - 2. EXPOSURE to the one who is already "infected."
 - 3. CONTAMINATION (defilement) by the "germs" coming into our system.
 - 4. INFECTION as the "germs" overcome our normal defenses.
 - 5. DISEASE when the infection destroys vital life-support functions.

II. STAGES OF SPIRITUAL DEFILEMENT

- A. IGNORANCE: satan gains advantage over us if we are ignorant of his devices.
 - 1. Jas. 3:6, "the tongue...defileth the whole body..."
 - 2. Prov. 18:21, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue."
 - 3. How words destroy friendships, Prov. 17:19, 15:4.
 - 4. How the unclean defiles the clean, Hag. 2:11-14.
 - 5. Of what an evil report is: An unauthorized, distorted or false report, which causes us to form an evil opinion about another person.
 - 6. As to how they are communicated: Words, facial expressions, gestures and tonal patterns.
 - 7. Of who gives an evil report:
 - a. BUSYBODY: One who digs up or takes on the job to spread evil reports, IPet. 4:15.
 - b. WHISPERER: One who secretly passes on evil reports, Psa. 41:7.
 - c. GOSSIP: One who magnifies and sensationalizes rumors and partial information.
 - d. SLANDERER: One who seeks to destroy another's credibility or reputation with damaging facts, distortions of acts or evil suspicions, Num. 14:36.
 - 8. Of what motivates evil reports:

- a. BITTERNESS: Reacting because of personal hurts.
 - b. REBELLION: Justifying an independent spirit.
 - c. DECEPTION: Believing that evil reports are right.
 - d. PRIDE: Wanting to exalt self.
 - e. GUILT: Justifying past actions or attitudes.
 - f. ENVY: Desiring what another has.
9. Ignorance of how susceptible we are to evil reports:
- a. We enjoy hearing them because they exalt us.
 - b. They bring down or hurt someone we dislike.
 - c. We desire to know everything, [curiosity].
10. Ignorance as to how satan uses evil reports:
- a. To discredit spiritual leadership.
 - b. To cause Christians to close their spirit toward each other.
 - c. To multiply conflicts and produce more ungodliness.
 - d. To prompt unbelievers to mock Christianity and reject Christ.
- B. EXPOSURE: "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on and are punished," Prov. 27:12. Exposure is entering into conversation with a person who is a carrier of an evil report.
1. How does God want us to **respond**? Rom. 16:17, Eph. 5:10-12, Psa. 101:5.
- a. Stay in the Holy Spirit, Eph. 5:18.
2. How to **detect** a carrier of an evil report:
- a. He will TEST YOUR SPIRIT before giving it.
 - (1) Any evidence of a compatible spirit in you will encourage him to give it.
 - b. He will CHECK YOUR ACCEPTANCE of his report before giving it.
 - (1) By asking your opinion about this person.
 - (2) By dropping a negative remark and observing your response to it.
 - c. He will get YOU TO ASK for the evil report, by creating **curiosity** within you.
 - (1) "Have you heard...?"
 - d. He may SEEK YOUR COUNSEL so as to drop the evil report as sharing a common concern about someone.
 - e. He may drop an evil report just to GET YOU TO ADMIRE him for his inside information.
 - f. He usually EVOKES VIVID DETAILS of an evil report.

3. How to **detect** an EVIL REPORT: Five (5) questions to ask before listening to a carrier.
 - a. What is your reason for telling me this?
 - b. Where did you get your information?
 - c. Have you gone to those directly involved?
 - d. Have you personally checked out the facts?
 - e. Can I quote you after I check this out?

- C. DEFILEMENT: Prov. 26:22, defilement is receiving an evil report and believing it is true.
 1. Heb. 12:15, "Lest any root of bitterness springing up may trouble you, and thereby MANY BE DEFILED."
 2. Spirit of Absalom: II Sam. 15:1-6

- D. INFECTION: Prov. 14:15, 26:21
 1. If an evil report is not cleansed, [Matt. 18:15-20], it will cause sickness in the Body of Christ.
 2. Symptoms of infection:
 - a. Believing the evil report is true, Prov. 17:4.
 - b. Focusing on the negative aspects of the person involved.
 - c. Forming negative opinions based upon the report.
 - d. Interpreting the person's words and actions as supporting the evidence.
 - e. Judging motives based upon evil reports.
 - f. Backing away from the person in your spirit.
 - g. Telling the report to others.

- E. DISEASE: Being mentally and emotionally controlled by the evil report, Prov. 26:24-25, Lev. 19:16.
 1. A **diseased** Christian has grieved and quenched the Holy Spirit by taking up the offenses of others, making them his own and adding to them.
 2. Symptoms of Disease:
 - a. Developing bitterness and/or rebellion, even though the person involved does not directly offend us.
 - b. Setting ourselves up as judge and recruiting others to help you.
 - c. Searching out evil reports, Prov. 16:27.
 - d. Believing that such actions are God's Will.
 3. No restoration is possible until the evil report is first dealt with and solved.

III. HOW TO CLEANSE OUR MINDS FROM AN EVIL REPORT

- A. Ask God to cleanse your mind.
- B. Pray for God to give you genuine love for all involved.
- C. Renew your mind with Scripture:
 - 1. Prov. 14:15, Psa. 19:13, Prov. 15:4, Rom. 2:1, Eph. 4:29, Prov. 11:13, Prov. 17:9.
- D. How do I know my Heart is clean?
 - 1. When I lose the urge to speak evil reports.
 - 2. When I grieve over evil reports given.
 - 3. When I am ready to act on restoration, Matt. 18:15f.
 - 4. Once I inform someone as to their doing, I am no longer responsible, except to pray.