

12. Here Comes the Judge!!!

We all have mouth problems one way or another. Especially when we feel that we were offended by someone, we sure don't hesitate to lash out our tongues to revenge against those. That itself is bad enough, time to time all of us do not hesitate to slander others whether they are fellow Christians or not. And we decide what they are for what they do and we act without much consideration and prayer. In next two verses, we are going to hear the Word of God and examine ourselves so that we may not get into these horrible mess.

The definition of 'SLANDER' is a malicious utterance designed to hurt or defame the person about whom it is uttered. The Scripture frequently warn against it.

Leviticus 19:16 You shall not go about as a talebearer among your people; nor shall you take a stand against the life of your neighbor: I am the Lord.

Psalms 41:6 And if he comes to see me, he speaks lies; His heart gathers iniquity to itself; When he goes out, he tells it.

We talked about gossip in previous study. Not all the gossips are slanders. But this portion of the study is dealing with slander through judging one another exclusively.

A. SLICE AND DICE WITH TONGUE

We may know a few people who would not mind slash other people with their tongues for the sake of their benefit and selfishness. Some people slander others, just because they have such ugly attitude like: "If I cannot have it, nobody can have it!" So they slash it and spit at it. Don't think that only non-Christians do this kind of things. I saw and experienced some of Christians in churches do this. This cannot be, my brothers and sisters! We need to think before we shoot our mouths. The words that once exited our mouths are not reversible. They can hurt people, destroy them or can lift them up from a pit with encouragement by the help of God.

1 Peter 2:1 Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking,

Apostle Peter put 'Slander' in the same category of malice, deceit, hypocrisy, and envy. The people who slander others are selfish, inconsiderate and they are fool.

Proverbs 10:18 Whoever hides hatred has lying lips, And whoever spreads slander is a fool.

B. GOD'S DEFENSE FOR US

But how do we defend ourselves from those slanders against us? Should we go find the source of slanders and nail the guy who started? Should we wait for him to come to a rather isolated area and beat the heck out of him? That would appeal to our flesh very much. Some might say that "Eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, as the Scripture said in Exod 21:24. So the vengeance is ours." First of all, that creed was given to the judges of Israel in OT so that the Israelites may follow the law. God was giving them as a standard to measure crimes. It was not given to individual so that they may do their own revenges.

1 Peter 3:16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evil-doers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.

Also, we have our Great Defender, our Awesome God who is omni-potent and all powerful God (Psalm 68:5, Isaiah 19:20). He says that He will defend us.

King David understood this concept. In 2 Sam 16:5-13, when he was fleeing from his own son Absalom's conspiracy, Shimei, a relative of former king Saul was throwing rocks at David. His trigger happy body guard asked for a permission from David to isolate Shimei's head from his shoulders. But David said to his people, *"Leave him alone; let him curse, for the LORD has told him to. It may be that the LORD will see my distress and repay me with good for the cursing I am receiving today. (v.11-12)"*

Again it is a matter of trusting God's capability for revenge on our behalf. When we are upright in His sight, He will defend us.

C. JUDGING

James 4:11-12 Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?

Being a judge is honorable and takes a lot of wisdom. To see the true fact behind each person's own defense, it would take keen insight in each matter and divine wisdom. As we all know that not every one on the judiciary bench has that divine wisdom. Because they are sinful people just like the rest of us in God's sight, they make mistakes, or become prejudice.

We are not supposed to judge other people's faith. We do not know their minds, hearts, and intentions. But God knows all things. Like they say, we can run, but we can not hide from His eyes. And He is the ultimate Judge. He will judge us, not by one another.

We have a tendency to compare our ways to others. If we see that other are different than us, "WOW!, they are wrong!" NOT always! Because we usually think that we are right and others are wrong, even though it is a matter of opinions and preferences. Say, I like praise chorus music, but you like hymns for they have tremendous great doctrines in them. And a soul bro, next to you, loves Christian Rap music. Just because we have different preferences, should I think that you two are wrong and stepping into a realm of cults? Absolutely not! Don't like somebody's music taste? Keep it to yourself, you don't need to argue about it with that person. God uses whatever styles of music to reach out people in those areas. So let's not despise one another for difference of opinions - I am not talking about the bottom line element for Christianity here.

The Word of Jesus in Luke 6:37 teaches us clearly, *"Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven."*

Some people think that people who go through difficulty in their lives, have not faith, and have unrighteous hearts. That may be true in some cases, but not true all the time. Judgement by outward circumstances can distort the truth.

For an example, Job was declared as upright man by God Himself in Job 1:8. But not very long after that, Job lost everything including his children and fortune. His so-called friends and a rambunctious kid named, "Elihu", condemned him for not

righteous. Hello, when God said Job is righteous, he is righteous. We don't want to argue with someone, like God, who is always right. That means we are WRONG!

Let's make another example, what about Jesus during that kangaroo trials before His crucifixion? Did He do something wrong? Was He not righteous?

If we see one of our brothers & sisters doing something wrong against the Word, instead of judging them and writing them off, why don't we go to them in love and talk to them? In this way, we might be able to stop them from falling further into the trap of satan.

James 2:12-13 So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

D. ARE WE NOT SUPPOSED TO JUDGE ANYTHING AT ALL?

1 Cor 6:2-5 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge? I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren?

Remember that we are allowed to make church disciplines against those who do not repent and obey the Word of God? To do that we must exercise godly judgement. It is one thing for individually judging according to his and her own opinion, but it is completely different thing for a church to exercise church discipline against a person who is causing problems in the body.

Matthew 18:15-20 "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

E. APPLICATION

Before we do a head hunting, let's examine ourselves to see if we have anything we need to repent from. Jesus summed up so well in these verses.

Matthew 7:3-5 And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.