

Assuming Way Too Much

Compiled by Paul R. Blake from Internet Sources

Introduction:

- A. We are all repulsed by the sin of gossip; it has been that way since Creation
 1. Lev. 19:16; Psalm 50:20; Ez. 22:9
 2. The sin of assumption carries the same credentials as gossip.
 3. Assumption is the mother of gossip, and malice is the father
- B. Defining assumption: "An assumption is something that we take for granted without bothering to find proof to support it."
 1. "Assumptions are the termites of relationships." (Henry Winkler)
 2. "Begin challenging your assumptions. Your assumptions are the windows on the world. Scrub them off every once in a while or the light won't come in." (Isaac Asimov)
 3. "If others tell us something, we make assumptions, and if they don't tell us something, we make assumptions to fulfill our need to know and to replace the need to communicate. Even if we hear something and we don't understand, we make assumptions about what it means and then believe the assumptions. We make all sorts of assumptions because we don't have the courage to ask questions." (Miguel Ruiz)
 4. "Thus we use our supposed 'knowledge' of others to speak on their behalf, and condemn them for their words we ourselves put into their silent mouths." (Margaret George)
 5. "The power of generalizing and the ability to make assumptions gives men so much more superiority over dumb animals when it comes to making mistakes." (George Eliot)
- C. Assumptions are necessary. We have to assume many things to go about our daily lives, because we do not have the time and energy to challenge or to worry about every matter that comes our way.
- D. What assumptions can do:
 1. Stifle growth and development
 - a. Food or a book or a place does not appeal at first glance; person doesn't seem to be someone we want to know
 - b. If you dismiss things before learning about them or trying it out for yourself, you will miss many chances to become a better person or to enjoy life's blessings
 2. Hinder creativity
 - a. When we make assumptions, we place limits on our imagination and options. We assume that we must do certain things in a certain manner without asking why.
 - b. What we end up doing is merely repackaging old, unhelpful methods. We remain in our comfort zone and have difficulty coming up with fresh ideas.
 3. Cause opportunities to be missed
 - a. Prospects, places to go, Projects in Warren - four baptisms
 - b. If we assume too many things instead of trying it out for ourselves, we will miss opportunities.

4. Cause erring beliefs
 - a. Old wives' tale that eating carrots can help you to improve your vision? Getting wet from the rain could cause you to catch a cold? Send this email to ten people immediately and Bill Gates will give you a million dollars?
 - b. What will old assumptions keep us from learning about the word of God?
 5. Cause errors in judgment and action
 - a. Up until the 1800s, doctors believed that bloodletting was good for treating any type of ailment. Based on this faulty assumption, many doctors bled their patients to death instead of curing them. If the patient managed to survive, his body had to work doubly hard against the ailment and the loss of blood.
 - b. When we persist in wrong assumptions, we view events from a flawed perspective and make errors that can end up causing harm to others and ourselves
 6. Cause misunderstandings
 - a. We have a tendency to make assumptions about everything. The problem with assumptions is that we believe they are truth
 - b. We make assumptions about what others are doing or thinking, we take it personally, and then we blame them and react to what we have imagined they said or think
 - c. We often see only what we want to see and hear only what we want to hear. We don't perceive things the way they are; we literally dream things up in our imagination. Because we are afraid to ask for clarification, we make assumptions and then defend our assumptions vehemently
 - d. Making assumptions in our relationships is asking for problems.
 - e. The way to keep from making harmful assumptions is to ask questions. Have the courage to ask questions until your understanding is clear.
 - f. Once you hear the answer, you will not have to make assumptions because you will know the truth.
- E. Not all assumption is sin
1. Dangerous situations
 2. Routine business transactions
 3. Unimportant matters unrelated to relationships, the word of God, safety, business, laws civil and natural

I. SINFUL ASSUMPTION

- A. Dogmatic conclusions without facts in evidence - Prov. 29:1; Heb. 3:8-11
- B. Pointless assumption - Prov. 18:13; Judges 15:1-2
- C. Prideful assumption - 2Kings 5:9-14
- D. Assumption based on weak or malicious character - Gen. 45:3-5; Psalm 50:21
- E. Assumption of outcome without the Lord - Luke 12:16-20; James 4:13-15

II. THREE CHARACTERISTICS OF SINFUL ASSUMPTION

- A. Sinful assumption claims godhood (omniscience)
- B. Sinful assumption exalts the self by measuring himself against others' imagined faults.
- C. Sinful assumption claims God's prerogative of knowing the mind of another

III. HOW TO OVERCOME SINFUL ASSUMPTION

- A. Realize it is sin: Repent, confess, and pray for forgiveness - 1John 1:6-10
- B. Remember that God is all-knowing and you are not
 - 1. Leave knowing the minds of others to Him
 - 2. If you cannot resist the urge to assume what others are thinking, get help from a mental health professional
 - 3. When an assumption pops up in your mind, recognize it for what it is: a gossip seed
- C. Renew your mind through God's word daily - Phil. 4:6-9
- D. Remember that others are learning and growing in the faith just like you; be as compassionate toward them as you want them to be toward you
 - 1. Matt. 7:12; Gal. 5:13-15

Conclusion:

A. We can get sidetracked thinking and talking about the physical descriptions of Hell, a place where physical things do not exist. Instead our time would be well served thinking about the things that won't be there. If I persist in the sin of assumption, I will be there, but my brethren about whom I made assumptions will not. And the tragic irony is that I my heart will ache to the breaking point missing them. I will remember all of the endearing things about them, and my speculations about what they were thinking or saying will be viewed as the second greatest mistake of my life. I will spend eternity mourning the loss of fellowship with same people I thought in life was out to get me.

B. What makes more sense: to believe evil things about my brothers and sisters who have given me more than enough proof of their love, or tell the Adversary who is whispering in my ear to Shut up and get out!?