

Three glasses of trifle dessert are arranged in a row against a dark background. Each glass is filled with layers of white cream, brown sauce, and nuts. The top of each glass is topped with a dollop of cream, a drizzle of sauce, and several nuts. The glasses are made of clear glass and have a wide base. The overall appearance is that of a rich, indulgent dessert.

# Tasty Trifles

**Proverbs 18:8 - "The words of a talebearer are like tasty trifles, And they go down into the inmost body."**

# Tasty Trifles

- Many people love gossip
  - “If you haven't got anything nice to say about anybody, come sit next to me.” *(Alice Roosevelt Longworth)*
  - “A rumor is a social cancer: it is difficult to contain and it rots the brains of the masses. However, the real danger is that so many people find rumors enjoyable. That part causes the infection.” *(Crissjami)*

# Tasty Trifles

- A weakness for gossip is not different from a weakness for liquor, drugs, porn
  - “Gossip is just a tool to distract people who have nothing better to do from feeling jealous of those few still remaining with noble hearts.” *(Anna Godbersen)*

# What Is Written?

- Lev. 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.”
  - “Talebearer” - Strong's Hebrew #7400 – [rakiyl/raw·keel/] “slander, slanderer, tale bearer, informer.”
- 2Thes. 3:11 - “For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies.”
  - “Busybodies” - Strong's Greek #4020 - [periergazomai /per·ee·er·gad·zom·ahee/] “to bustle about uselessly, to busy one’s self about trifling, needless, useless matters; used apparently of a person officiously inquisitive about other’s affairs.”

# What Is Written?

- Rom. 1:30, 32 - “Backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents... 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.”
  - “Backbiters” - Strong's Greek #2637 - κατάλαλος [katalalos /kat·al·al·os/] “a defamer, evil speaker.”
- Prov. 10:18 - “Whoever hides hatred has lying lips, And whoever spreads slander is a fool.”
  - “Slander” - Strong's Hebrew #1681 - [dibbah /dib·baw/] “whispering, defamation, evil report. 1a whispering. 1b defamation, defaming; evil report, unfavorable saying.”

# What Is Written?

- 2Cor. 12:20 - “For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults”
  - “Backbiting” - Strong’s Greek 2636 καταλαλιά [katalalia/kat·al·al·ee·ah/] “defamation, evil speaking.”
  - “whisperings” - Strong's Greek #5587 [psithurismos /psith·oo·ris·mos/] “a whispering, i.e. secret slandering; of the magical murmuring of a charmer of snakes.”

# What Is Written?

- 1Tim. 6:3-4 - “If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, 4 he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil surmisings”
  - “Evil” - evil - Strong's Greek #4190 - πονηρός [poneros /pon·ay·ros/] “bad, of a bad nature or condition. 2a in a physical sense: diseased or blind; in an ethical sense: evil wicked, bad.”
  - “Surmising” – Strong’s Greek #5283 - [huponoiā] “a surmising; to make a judgment without sufficient evidence”

# What Is Written?

- Prov. 20:19 - “He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; Therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips.”
  - “Reveals” - Strong's Hebrew #1540 – [galah /gaw·law/] “to uncover, remove”
  - “Secrets” - Strong's Hebrew #5475 – [cawd /sode/] “a council of familiar or intimate conversation”
- 1Tim. 5:13 - “And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not.”
  - “Tattlers” - Strong's Greek #5397 - φλύαρος [phluaros /floo·ar·os/] “of persons uttering or doing silly things, garrulous, babbling; of things, foolish, trifling, vain.”



# What Is Written?

- Most of us will quickly agree that gossip is a sin, but may be guilty of redefining what we are saying, making excuses and calling our evil words good?
  - Isa. 5:20 - “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”
- How do we often attempt to justify our tasty trifles?

# The Blatant Denial

- “I don’t mean to gossip, but...”
  - Mal. 3:13-15 - “Your words have been harsh against Me, Says the LORD, Yet you say, What have we spoken against You? 14 You have said, It is useless to serve God; What profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, And that we have walked as mourners Before the LORD of hosts? 15 So now we call the proud blessed, For those who do wickedness are raised up; They even tempt God and go free.”
- Putting a disclaimer on gossip doesn’t change what it is.

# The Secret Pact

- “Promise not to tell anyone... Can you keep a secret?”
- The whisperer does his work in secret because he knows he is doing something shameful and wrong
  - Prov. 16:28 - “A perverse man sows strife, And a whisperer separates the best of friends.”
  - John 3:19-20 - “And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.”

# The Truth Excuse

- “But what I’m saying is true!”
- Even if the tasty trifle is true, there is no justification for spreading it if it will tear someone down, cast evil suspicion, or lead some to revel in the personal problems of others
  - 2Cor. 2:6-8 - “This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man, 7 so that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. 8 Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him.”
  - Matt. 18:15 - “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.”

# The Praise Diversion

- “He’s a nice guy, but did you know?”
- A compliment does not offset gossip. When a compliment is added to gossip to make it more palatable, it is used to deceive.
  - Prov. 20:19 - “He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; Therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips.”
  - Psalm 12:2-3 - “They speak idly everyone with his neighbor; With flattering lips and a double heart they speak. 3 May the LORD cut off all flattering lips, And the tongue that speaks proud things.”

# The Enemy License

- “But he did me wrong! I am only defending myself.”
- Some believe the rules against gossip do not apply to their enemies. God said to repay evil with good.
  - Titus 3:1-2 - “Remind them ... to be ready for every good work, 2 to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.”
  - 1Thes. 5:15 - “See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.”

# The Counselor Privilege

- “I was just seeking counsel. I need your input on dealing with this.”
- A wise man will seek counsel
  - Prov. 11:14 - “Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety.”
- But, when someone comes to you for an advice session, be careful it doesn’t turn into a gossip session

# Tasty Trifles

- “Strong minds discuss ideas, average minds discuss events, weak minds discuss people.” *(Socrates)*
- Luke 16:15 - “And He said to them, You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.”
- Eph. 4:29 - “Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.”