

Words Matter – Day Two

Guard Your Ears

“A troublemaker plants seeds of strife; gossip separates the best of friends.” — Proverbs 16:28 (NLT)

Yesterday we talked about how our words can start fires. Today, let's look at something just as important—what we *listen to*.

It's easy to think gossip is only a problem for the person doing the talking. But Scripture makes it clear: listening to gossip is just as dangerous. Every time we lean in, nod along, or stay silent while someone tears another person down, we're helping that fire spread.

Think about a real-life moment. You're at work, church, or even standing in the grocery store line here in town, and someone says, “Did you hear about so-and-so?” Right there, you have a choice. You can either fuel the conversation or stop it.

Proverbs tells us that gossip separates close friends. It drives wedges where there used to be trust. And many times, the damage doesn't come from what we *say*, but from what we *allow*.

So how do we guard our ears?

Sometimes it's as simple as asking a question:

- “Have you talked to them about this?”
- “Maybe we should pray for them instead.”

Other times, it means gently changing the subject or even walking away. That might feel uncomfortable in the moment, but it protects your heart—and it honors God.

Jesus gave us a clear model in Matthew 18:15: if there's an issue, go directly to the person involved. Not around them. Not behind them. Straight to them in love.

If you're going to live the kind of life you've been writing about in your devotionals—one that leaves a legacy and reflects Christ—then what you allow into your ears matters just as much as what comes out of your mouth.

Prayer

Lord, help me to guard what I listen to today. Give me the courage to walk away from gossip and the wisdom to respond in a way that brings peace instead of division. Let my heart stay clean and focused on what is good. In Jesus Name We Pray, Amen.

Today's Thought:

You don't have to repeat gossip to participate in it—sometimes just listening is enough. Choose to guard your ears.