

2 Timothy 2:16-17a - Steer clear of foolish discussions that lead people into the sin of anger with each other. Things will be said that will burn and hurt for a long time to come.

***How well are you controlling the conversations in your organization?
What policy have you put in place to stop foolish discussions?***

Do foolish discussions, babble, gossip, and pointless talking happen in the workplace? Yes, you know they do. Think how much more could be done if it were not so.

- *Proverbs 26:18-19 (NLT) - Just as damaging as a madman shooting a deadly weapon is someone who lies to a friend and then says, "I was only joking."*

This is not the first place that the Bible instructs you to stop talking when there is no profit to the discussion. God's wants you and those around you to stay away from foolish, godless, and irreverent discussions. Not only are they bad for business, but those discussions have a tendency to lead people into sin. That is a strong statement and speaks directly to how when people start on a mental path of lying, arrogance, deceit, and backbiting, they tend to one-upmanship the other which will eventually lead to sin.

- *Ephesians 4:29 (NIV) - Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.*
- *Proverbs 10:14 (NLT) - Wise people treasure knowledge, but the babbling of a fool invites disaster.*
- *Proverbs 18:7-8 (NLT) - The mouths of fools are their ruin; they trap themselves with their lips. Rumors are dainty morsels that sink deep into one's heart.*

The different interpretations of this verse call it, godless chatter, foolish discussions, worthless talk, irreverent babble, worldly and empty chatter, profane and idle babblings, irreverent and empty speech, pointless discussions, empty words, irreligious and frivolous talk. All of those descriptions help to give a flavor to the words that people in your organization might use and they are all bad for business. As God's leader you should identify it when it happens and stop it as quickly as possible.

I consider looseness with words no less of a defect than looseness of the bowels. ~ John Calvin

There are so many good things to talk about. God provided many wonderful things and his blessing are greater than people tend to appreciate. But the systems of the world will consistently encourage people to be envious, selfish, hurtful and lustful. That leads to people talking about others in ways that are not very flattering. It has been said, "You can get enough hate in a minute, but you can't get enough love in a lifetime." That might be reworded in this context as, "You can ruin someone's life in a few moments with gossip and inuendo, but you'll never reach the end of giving them verbal support." Ridding the workplace of the useless stories, idle chatter, and irreverent talk will improve the culture of your business. You will do well by setting the expectations first by modeling what is right and secondly by setting policy to foolish discussion or workplace storytelling.

- *Ephesians 5:4 - Dirty stories, foul talk, and coarse jokes—these are not for you. Instead, remind each other of God's goodness, and be thankful.*

Every word that is said by every person throughout all of history has being recorded by God. It is such a huge misunderstanding when people think they can do or say anything they want and there are no consequences. There are consequences for everything – good and bad. Sometimes

those consequences are now and many times those consequences will become apparent when each person gives an account of their life on the Judgement Day.

- *Matthew 12:35-37 - A good man's speech reveals the rich treasures within him. An evil-hearted man is filled with venom, and his speech reveals it. And I tell you this, that you must give account on Judgment Day for every idle word you speak. Your words now reflect your fate then: either you will be justified by them or you will be condemned.*"

There has always been a group of people in every civilization who considers themselves so very clever with their idle, hurtful, profane and foolish words. They tend to talk all the time and truly believe that what they have to say is of major importance. They may call themselves advisors, pundits, politicians, news anchors, or talk show hosts but in reality, the Bible calls them fools. They are extremely good at talking and generally say nothing of worth. They are in love with themselves and their words.

- *Proverbs 10:19 (ESV) - When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but whoever restrains his lips is prudent.*
- *Proverbs 18:2 (NLT) - Fools have no interest in understanding; they only want to air their own opinions.*

Wise men speak because they have something to say; Fools because they have to say something. ~ Plato

Have you noticed there are always individuals who feel compelled to talk all the time? They are generally not the first person at work but when they arrive, they make their way around the workplace to talk to someone or several people. They are often found with others at the coffee pot, kitchen, water cooler, break room, or anywhere they can find someone who will listen to their stories. They might start talking about insignificant things like sports scores, recipes, kids or something in the news but it always generates to something or someone else. Their words have an edge of hurt, irreverence, or secret gossip. "*Shhh, don't tell anyone else this, but I heard...*"

- *Job 11:2-3 - Shouldn't someone stem this torrent of words? Is a man proved right by all this talk? Should I remain silent while you boast? When you mock God, shouldn't someone make you ashamed?*
- *Isaiah 32:6 - For the fool speaks folly, and his heart is busy with iniquity, to practice ungodliness, to utter error concerning the LORD, to leave the craving of the hungry unsatisfied, and to deprive the thirsty of drink.*

This is not to say that you shouldn't be interested in what others have to say or for you to get around and personally checking in with people at work. You want to show that you care or when you have something important to say – that you say it. It is to be on the lookout for individuals who would rather be talking, joking, rumoring, gossiping, or spreading false ideas in such a way that it hurts the culture of your business. Be on the lookout for people whose words spread like a disease and that infects others to the point of causing emotional and spiritual illness. They are pawns of Satan and if you allow them to spew their infection throughout your organization, they will eventually destroy things in their path.

- *Proverbs 18:21 - Those who love to talk will suffer the consequences. Men have died for saying the wrong thing!*
- *Matthew 12:34 - You brood of snakes! How could evil men like you speak what is good and right? For a man's heart determines his speech.*

God designed the brain to use stories as means to convey greater truths. Some people use that ability for evil instead of good. As God's leader you train your brain to hold onto that which is good, while you shun evil thoughts and conversations that have no merit or worth. And because you are God's leader, you are unique in this world because you can understand the importance of

words – spoken and written. As God's leaders you have sound thoughts when so many others throughout the world are incapable of soundness of mind, thought, and word.

- *Romans 12:2 - Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world but be a new and different person with a fresh newness in all you do and think. Then you will learn from your own experience how his ways will really satisfy you.*

God gave you the ability to focus your mind on what you have to say so you can say it well. It is called metacognition and it is a skill that God gave you that is practiced when you read the Bible regularly. God has given you the ability to weigh your words before you say them because words have meaning and using them idly is of no profit. Remember, God's words have inherent power so when you use his words then your words have power and that is a truly great thing to do.

- *Hebrews 4:12 (KJV) - For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

Words can hurt, maim, kill, and destroy when they are used in the wrong way. Satan uses words all the time to build his arguments against the truth of God. So, if you are not putting God's words in your mind and heart, you may not recognize the evil in the words that others use. Keep your organization free from words and conversations that lead to nothing or evil. Do not allow your work culture to become infected by people who use their words like a contagious disease. Rid your culture of worldly and empty chatter, profane and idle babblings, irreverent and empty speech, pointless discussions and frivolous talk. God expects you to be a wise leader and that means to be wise about the words used around you and others that you care about.

- *Ecclesiastes 5:2 (ESV) - Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore, let your words be few.*