

No App For That

Life Group Lesson - Week of March 12

It is a horrible thing to be lied to, and perhaps even more devastating to be lied about. The ninth commandment is to not bear false witness toward our neighbor (see Exodus 20:16). Why is it then that we are so prone to slander one another, to speak vicious words with no thought of going to the person and substantiating the information? Too often even church people have a reputation for gossip. Spreading half-truths – even boldface lies – toward our brothers and sisters in the faith is not something the Lord takes lightly.

When the Lord chooses a spiritual leader, as He did with Moses, God does so for His own good reasons. We may not understand why the Lord chooses whom He does, but we should still respect the spiritual authority He places in our lives (see Hebrews 13:7). This does not mean we cannot ask our spiritual leaders questions or receive clarification on various issues. But do we do so respectfully and in the fear of the Lord?

In the wilderness the people of Israel grew weary and began complaining. Many of them longed to go back to Egypt. Instead of being grateful for their freedom, they began to recall the things they had. They were slaves, yes, but at least they had more to eat than manna. Soon a rebellion is incited against Moses, questioning his motive and accusing both he and Aaron of being unfit to lead God's people. Two hundred fifty men join the rebellion, and eventually stir up the entire community against Moses and Aaron. God shows up and what happens is a lesson for us today.

Read Numbers 16:1-4, 16-50

The LORD had given Korah and his fellow Levites the special assignment of assisting the priests (Aaron and his sons). Moses asked, "Are you now demanding the priesthood as well? The LORD is the one you and your followers are really revolting against!" (Numbers 16:10b,11a)

1. When we speak against God's anointed, we are really speaking against God. Why does God not take this lightly?

According to 1 Timothy 2:1-6, what attitude should we have toward those in positions of leadership?

Just as the LORD sent Moses to lead His people (Numbers 16:28), God sent His Son to lead humanity out of bondage to sin. Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man on the cross, then you will understand that I AM he. I do nothing on my own but say only what the Father taught me. And the one who sent me is with me—He has not deserted me. For I always do what pleases Him" (John 8:28-29). Israel in the wilderness could not see God's bigger plan, so they began to blame the leader. When the religious leaders in Jesus' day refused to humble themselves and try to see God's bigger purpose, they began to demonize God's own Son.

2. What do you learn about a good (godly) leader from Jesus' words in the reference above, John 8:28-29?

Ultimately, Jesus came to bring about positive change among negative people and hostile environments. How does He call His followers to do the same?

When leaders lead and are willing to go against the status quo, there will always be scrutiny to follow. Jesus knows what it is like to be lied about. Notice what He says in Matthew 5:10-12: "God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way."

3. Instead of retaliating, good leaders can learn a lesson from Moses and Aaron. According to Numbers 16:4, 22, 43-44 how do Moses and Aaron respond to the rebellion?

The Lord's anger blazes forth in a plague and Moses tells Aaron to run out among the people to save them. What does Aaron do according to vv47-48?

We live in a world where there is great negativity and hostility toward the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It's often difficult to know how to share our faith in our day-to-day living, but the Bible says love – unconditional, fall-on-your-face-before God kind of love – covers a multitude of sin (1Peter 4:8). Are you willing to stand in the gap for lost people around you? Are you willing to stand between the dead and the living until the plague (the ravishing effects of sin and rebellion) has come to an end?

The Bible is full of examples of real-life people who were willing to stand in the gap. Although some were not so willing at first, they rose to the task by catching a glimpse of God's hand at work and the Lord's bigger purpose for the world around them *through* their obedience. Sometimes they needed brothers and sisters to come along beside them and help them understand their divine purpose.

4. Perhaps you know a leader (or a leader-in-the-making) and you sense their need for encouragement. How is the Lord calling you to help someone else see the Lord's bigger purpose for them and *through* them?

There is no app for helping us stand in the gap. It's up to you to act in a Christ-like way when you hear gossip, half-truths, or slander toward another person. In the space below, write down some ways you can respond with maturity, truth, and civility when vicious words are hurled against you or someone you know.

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Text: Numbers 16:41-50

1. _____ : Complaining and _____
2. Esther: _____
3. Moses: _____

The Plain Truth

_____ Christians _____ in the gap
between _____ and _____.

One Year Bible Readings

Mar. 12: Numbers 16:41-18:32, Mark 16:1-20, Psalm 55:1-23, Proverbs 11:7
Mar. 13: Numbers 19:1-20:29, Luke 1:1-25, Psalm 56:1-13, Proverbs 11:8
Mar. 14: Numbers 21:1-22:20, Luke 1:26-56, Psalm 57:1-11, Proverbs 11:9-11
Mar. 15: Numbers 22:21-23:30, Luke 1:57-80, Psalm 58:1-11, Proverbs 11:12-13
Mar. 16: Numbers 24:1-25:18, Luke 2:1-35, Psalm 59:1-17, Proverbs 11:14
Mar. 17: Numbers 26:1-51, Luke 2:36-52, Psalm 60:1-12, Proverbs 11:15
Mar. 18: Numbers 26:52-28:15, Luke 3:1-22, Psalm 61:1-8, Proverbs 11:16-17