

# Plain Path

Weekly newsletter of the Fry Road church of Christ

Sunday, March 30, 2014

Volume 19, Number 13

“Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path... Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart” (Psalm 27:11-14)

## THE ART OF WHISPERING

by Bob Pulliam

This isn't about becoming a “horse whisperer”, or a “dog whisperer”, or even a “ghost whisperer” (Oh brother!). We're going to study the subject of gossip, which the Bible sometimes calls “whispering” (e.g. Prov 16:28; 18:8). In what way might we call it an “art”? Certainly not in the same way we might praise fine music, or masterpieces hanging in an art gallery.

No, I'm using the word *art* in the sense of a developed skill. And many have developed this skill quite effectively. I suspect that they have been working on it since their days on the school playground many years ago. What is most alarming about this is that people who are supposed to be developing the fruit of the Spirit in their lives (Gal 5:22-26) engage in it. We expect this be-

havior from those who live according to the flesh. The carnally minded indulge in carnal warfare, destroying others with words, seeking their own benefit.

What *skill* might the gossip employ in whispering about others? These techniques, although very subtle at times, can be very effective at masking the true heart of the talebearer.

**The Reliable Source** is a means of justification for many tales. We're supposed to conclude that this isn't gossip because the source is reliable. That is wishful thinking. Like a child trying to justify wrong, we reason that the reliability of the source changes gossip into “news”. However, it wouldn't matter how reliable the source was. In fact, it doesn't matter whether the juicy tidbits are true. Gossip is the act of repeating idle talk and rumors. Whether or not they are true isn't the point. How is it that we miss that?

Ask yourself this: If the tale  
(Whispering, *continued on pg 2...*)

## Gospel Meeting

April 13 - 16

- Sunday:** 9:30 AM - What Happened to the Church Jesus Built (Mt 16)  
10:30 AM - Jesus Is the Head of What?!  
6:00 PM - WWJD? or WDJS?
- Monday:** 7:30 pm - How Do We Know What Jesus Wants Us to Do?
- Tuesday:** 10:00 am - Does Jesus Care How We Worship Him?  
7:30 pm - What Kind of Church Did Jesus Build?
- Wednesday:** 7:30 pm - The Un-Denomination

Our speaker will be Steve Wolfgang

Church of Christ • 2510 Fry Road • Houston, Texas 77084 - 5817

PHONE (281) 578-1897 • FAX (281) 578-2478 • E-MAIL: church@fryroad.org

WEB SITE: [www.fryroad.org](http://www.fryroad.org)

(Whispering, *continued from pg 1...*)

is true, what possible benefit could possibly be derived from talking about this with anyone other than the sinner? No one can repent for them. And, in some cases, they have repented and the talk remains. Now they are being alienated. Did they sin against you? Then you should have forgiven them! (Mt 18:21-22) If you are spreading it, then you didn't forgive them. Where does that leave you? Unforgiven before God! (Mt 6:14-15)

You might protest: "But I'm warning others about so-and-so's character, so they don't get hurt too." No you're not. You are a bitter, unforgiving person who is bent on revenge (or just seeing others hurt more than you hurt). Truth be known, you are lost, and

are trying to drag as many people to the pit with you as you possibly can.

**He/She Needs Our Prayers** is a way to make gossip look like a noble concern for someone's well being. Did someone put you in charge of soliciting prayers by spreading personal details? If the elders (who have a supreme concern for the members in the body) aren't recruiting prayers, then what gives you the right to do so? Remember, even if the tale is correct, you are still a gossip. That your whispering has taken the form of seeking help for someone does not change it's true character of evil. A jewel encrusted dagger doesn't hurt less than an old kitchen knife. You can package your weapon as carefully as you like, but you are still a conniving busy body. You need to repent. You are lost, and you are endangering the souls of many others.

**This Is Nothing I Wouldn't Say to His/Her Face** completely misses the error in passing on the information. Whispering does not become right if you would be willing to say it to the person's face. The point missed is, *why haven't you gone and said it to their face?* And just as pertinent is the question: Why are you passing this information on to me? Will it save my soul? Will it even edify me? (Eph 4:29) Will it save the soul of the person you are talking about? I don't care if you would stand up and declare your whisper to the entire congregation

with the person present. You are lost, and it is time to repent!

**The High Praise Technique** has glowing words of praise for the subject, but then turns to criticism which leads to whispering. The whisperer might say, "Stan is such a great guy, and what a song leader. It's a pity he isn't more spiritually minded." This easily provokes a request for clarification. "I didn't know he wasn't very spiritually minded. In what way?", they might respond. To which our whisperer will then be "obligated" to dish out the dirt. At times the introduction is, "Now you know I love him...", or "You know I think the world of her..."

It doesn't matter how you introduce gossip. Nothing will change what it is. You can put the most pitiful tone-deaf singer on a stage and lead into him with an introduction by a highly acclaimed musician who heaps upon him accolades of praise that would make a statue of Mozart blush; but when he opens his mouth, the introduction loses all meaning. I don't care how much you say you love someone, or how highly you praise them. If you gossip about them, you are a hypocrite and a sinner in speech, and you need to repent.

It's long past time for us to be repenting of speech that is self serving and ungodly. Paul told the Colossians: "*Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward out-*

(Whispering, *continued on pg 3...*)

## THIS WEEK'S DAILY BIBLE READINGS

### NEW TESTAMENT READING

JAMES 1 - 5

March 30 - April 1

### OLD TESTAMENT READING

EXODUS 10 - 17

April 2 - 5

I TIMOTHY 4:13

*Think About It...*

**The only tale a gossip won't repeat is the tale about himself.**

# FAMILY NEWS & NOTES

News and Notes of Interest  
to Fry Road Members

Because of the large number of visitors to our services, we would ask those wishing to identify with the congregation to do so by expressing this interest directly to the elders.

## Upcoming Meetings & Events:

**Gospel Meeting (Steve Wolfgang) V.B.S. ("We Would See Jesus")**  
April 13 - 16, 2014 June 23 - 26, 2014

**Annual Singing September 6, 2014**      **Gospel Meeting (Joseph Casimier)**  
September 7 - 10, 2014

## Sick and Shut-Ins

Sections have been removed to preserve members' privacy

## Sermons:

### Next Sunday:

What Does the Lord Hate  
(Proverbs 6:16-19)

### Tonight:

What Is the Source?

(Whispering, continued from pg 2...)

siders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person." (Col 4:5f) Should our speech be with grace only toward outsiders? Shouldn't we take the time, and make the effort to know how we should respond to each other, rather than letting garbage fall from our mouths? We are to consider ourselves members of one another (Rom 12:5), and care for one another, laboring as common members of Christ's body. If you injure your brother or sister, you do injury to the body of Christ. Think carefully about your claim to love Christ as you deal with your brethren. There should be no disparity between one and the other. If there is, then it's time to repent.



**Information on local gospel meetings and preachers we support can now be found on the new bulletin board in the West hallway.**

## Class Material...

The class material for the second quarter adult class study (*The Nature of God*) is now available on the table in the foyer. This study will begin April 20, after our gospel meeting with Steve Wolfgang. Our present study on the Holy Spirit will overlap into the first two classes of the second quarter.

# FOR THE RECORD

## WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

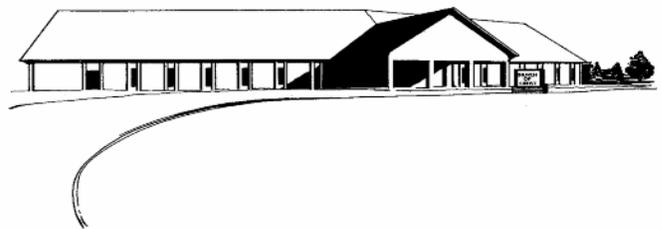
## MONTHLY ASSIGNMENTS

*Sections have been removed to preserve members' privacy*

IN KEEPING WITH OUR LONG STANDING AGREEMENT, THOSE SERVING PUBLICLY ARE REMINDED TO PLEASE DRESS IN A MANNER RESPECTFUL OF THE GOD WHOM WE SERVE.

### ELDERS:

Ruben Amador  
Matthew Heaton  
Donnie Mangrum  
Steve Voss



### DEACONS:

John Coleman	Ken Dunsmore
David Ellison	Ray Farrell
Aubrey Garner	Steve Geraci
Steve LaGrasta	John Light
Steven Martin	Mike McMurray
Jason Mock	David Stevenson
Glenn Tomblin	

### TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Bible Classes	9:30 AM
Sunday Morning Assembly	10:30 AM
Sunday Evening Assembly	6:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Classes	7:30 PM

### EVANGELIST & EDITOR:

Bob Pulliam                      bob@fryroad.org