

7 Deadly Sins: Broadcasting the Bad News

By Jill A. Williams

MamGobozi, Skinner-bek, Tattletale, Doorkeeper to the ditaba case files and skeletons in the closet. Did you hear? Today we're talking about those who talk about us...Gossipers! Have you been talked about? Or are you usually the one who does the talking-about others? In the book of Job, we see that even the devil gossips about us, to God (nogal!). He is dubbed the accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10). His trail of lies look a little like this...

We interrupt our regular broadcasting to bring you: the BAD NEWS

Devil: God, we're at the crime scene here with Miss X. As you see here, she just oozes irresponsibility. Taking a whiff of that cigarette that she promised never to put to her lips again. She was an active Youth member and later became a minister of the Eucharist in her parish, but now look at her. There have been numerous reports about the way she looked at that man who usually sits in front of her in church. We took the liberty of finding out his marital status and it has been confirmed that he is married with three kids. It's clear that she probably wants another child out of wed-lock. Reports have also come in about how naughty her kids are. We heard her eldest got expelled yesterday. AND he swore at the principal when he got caught cheating on his final exam. It goes to show what a bad example they have in their lives. AND-

PAUSE. Isn't it funny how evil seems to be compounded when taken from the devil's mouth? And how often do we gladly take helpings of this to form opinions, to speculate and to judge others? Acting as broadcasters of news that can only be termed as bad.

Say it with your chest

"If you have something to say, say it to my face."

That's probably what God tells us whenever we grumble, mumble and complain about something happening to us. Times get tough, and sometimes we speak to everyone about our situation except for the one who can actually help us through it. That's technically how we gossip about God. The thing is, he hears every word. At times we avoid this conversation because deep down we're actually mad at God Himself, for allowing us to face such extreme adversity.

These are times where we forget that God is good (Psalm 86:5), and that everything that happens to us comes as no surprise to Him. This is not the time to be floppy and sappy. This is the time to SPEAK. Whatever words or thoughts that come to you, that are not aligned with God's Word or promises He has made, need to be "[brought] into captivity... to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5). Speak with authority. Say it with your chest: "I bind every negative thought and word formulated by the works of the devil and cast them at your feet, O God, placing them all under Your authority."

There. Don't you feel so much lighter already?

What had happened was...

Demons know where their authority lies. They only have as much power as you give them (Ephesians 4:27). My parish priest reminds us often of the power of confession and how it is part of the procedures that exorcists go through before exorcising demons from people. You need to tell God what happened. That's part of the journey to forgiveness. The power of forgiveness can allow you to be set free from strongholds set up by demonic powers and principalities. Self-examination is very necessary for our sanity. The less you look at your actions and are humbled by the mercy that the Lord has given you for what you have done, the less empathetic you'd be towards other people and their issues. So go ahead and "examine me, O LORD, and try me; test my mind and my heart" (Psalm 26:2), so that I don't look at others faults as worse than mine (Matthew 7:3-5).

Covered under the mantle

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer." (Psalm 19:14)

We need to ensure that everything we do and say is acceptable and pleasing to the Lord. We will be held accountable for every word we say, which means that we need to be intentional about what we sing, what we say in anger or happiness and even what we whisper in secret. This seems almost impossible to police. Where do we even start? It all begins with love: "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1 Corinthians 13:7). We need to learn to bear wrongs patiently (1 Peter 3:8-9), by covering people under the mantle of love as a default action - instead of snapping at someone or going to the nearest broadcaster to publish juicy details on what mang-mang did where-where to who-who for the what-what.

"Great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people" (Eleanor Roosevelt). People change all the time. There will never be enough discussion about a person, to fully understand why they do what they do. However, God remains constant (Hebrews 13:8). That is why it's so important to cover people with love, because Love itself never changes. It corrects and changes what needs to change in us and gives incubation to that which is developing in us.

Mercy said no

When God created everything, he said it was 'good'. But man? Genesis 1:31 says He called us 'very good'. Despite all the wrong we do, to ourselves, God and to others, we are still looked

at through the lens of Grace. You're probably wondering what God says when the devil goes about running his mouth? It goes a little like this:

(PLAY)

Devil: AND, she doesn't even pray! What can one do but hate her now, right God? Over to You.

God: We know all of that, Devil. We have witnessed these crimes taking place. I see your minions are standing ready with more trauma for her, are they awaiting your orders?

Devil: Yes Lord! So what you gonna do? What you gonna let ME do? (Giggling)

God: That's all for today Devil. Who can overlook a repentant heart like that? We're sending in Grace and Mercy to follow her all the days of her life. The Holy Spirit is on the scene to cover her with the mantle of love and anoint her with the oil of gladness. She's good. We're Good.

Devil: But the reports...

God: Thanks for the updates Devil, I'll add it to your reputation. This was another episode of the Bad News TURNED GOOD. Goodnight and be blessed.