

The Letter of James: Transformed by Christ

Do not speak evil against one another, brothers and sisters. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?

James 4:11–12

"Speaking evil" about someone else may be words spoken publicly or whispered privately, it may be said directly to a person's face or spoken behind their back, it may be an outright lie or a truth that shouldn't be shared, it includes exaggerating their shortcomings or minimizing their good deeds.

Do Not Speak Against Your Brothers and Sisters...

1. Because they are in Christ.
 - We cannot condemn those whom God has justified.
 - Slander is the work of our enemy (Revelation 12:10).
 - Slander is the work of the world (John 15:18-19).

Do Not Speak Against Your Brothers and Sisters...

1. Because they are in Christ.
2. Because you are condemning God's law.
 - We act as if we're above the law, and we put ourselves in its place.
 - We are saying that God's word is insufficient.
 - Instead, we should humbly receive God's word (James 4:10).

Do Not Speak Against Your Brothers and Sisters...

1. Because they are in Christ.
2. Because you are condemning God's law.
3. Because only God is a worthy judge.
 - He alone is the lawgiver.
 - This judge does not only condemn but also rescues!

Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love.

Micah 7:18

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2. Because you are condemning God's law.
3. Because only God is a worthy judge.
 - He alone is the lawgiver.
 - This judge does not only condemn but also rescues!
 - By comparison, "Who are you to judge?"
 - We may speak God's law, not our own thoughts, and we do so gently, as a fellow Christian, susceptible to sin.