



Blackfoot

Church of Christ

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Growing in the Shadows

By Ross Ward

Traveling back to see family I took note of a group of trees growing in front of my parent's new house. There are three different varieties. There is one pear, two black walnut, and one oak. Each are about 50 years old, but none are alike. The pear tree is relatively tall but not very bushy so as to provide much shade, though it does provide a good crop of pears each year. Similarly, the two walnut trees are not very tall, but they are very bushy, providing good shade and abundant walnuts, which nobody knows how to open so they can be ate. The oak stands tall and bushy proving abundant shade and acorns for the wildlife. There are couple of things I observed about them.

Each is useful in its own way. Whether providing food or shade they each have a purpose, and each accomplishes it in different ways. Some might want to compare the pear and walnut trees to the oak. They are very small in comparison, but they still more than effectively produce fruit. The oak provides abundant shade but no fruit for human consumption. So, one cannot be judged inferior to the other. A lesson Paul taught the Corinthians.

1 Cor 12:12-18, For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.¹³ For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles,

whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.¹⁴ For the body is not one member, but many.¹⁵ If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?¹⁶ And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?¹⁸ But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

We see that being different does not make something inferior. Each has its purpose. Paul wanted the Corinthians to focus on Jesus not on their abilities, which were not their own anyway. Love demands this.

I also observed that one of the walnut trees grew distorted. There had been a faster growing oak tree near to it. This faster growing tree shielded the sun from the much slower growing walnut causing the walnut tree to grow out in a different direction. This walnut tree did not produce limbs on that side. There is a great lesson here for us. Our own abilities can prevent the development and growth of those around us. Whether it is our children or others. One must let each individual grow and develop to their full potential and that cannot happen when they remain under your care. They need their own full access to sun on all sides, else they grow distorted, at times maybe even permanently stunted. In a forest, saplings that do not get the sunlight they need will actually die. Think about that.

Let us all respect those around us. Each has their own abilities. Each has their own worth. Let us all give space for those around us to learn, especially our children, lest they grow up an old crooked and stunted tree.

Juicy Gossip

By Joe R. Price

Both the Law of Moses and the gospel of Christ warn against the sin of talebearing. Moses wrote, "You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor. 16 You shall not go about as a talebearer among your people; nor shall you take a stand against the life of your neighbor: I am the Lord" (Lev. 19:15-16). The apostle Paul warned, "And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not" (1 Tim. 5:13).

Talebearing (gossip) has been normalized as millions flock to the rumormongers as an avenue of their usual, information-gathering process. (If you doubt it, witness TV shows like Entertainment Tonight, TMZ, and Page 6, and publications like People Magazine and National Enquirer, whose website tag is, "Hottest Celebrity Gossip & Entertainment News.") Society is saturated with talebearing - juicy gossip that tingles the ears with baseless assumptions, groundless speculations, and false accusations against others.

Israel was told not to be talebearers precisely because it is unrighteous judgment against others (cf. Jas. 4:11-12). Paul observed the temptation to gossip that idleness poses and urged younger widows to avoid that conduct by accepting their God-given domestic responsibilities.

You see, talebearing is about having power over others. It draws people into its snare, leading them to abandon reason and fairness, causing some to even "stand against the life" of the innocent based on nothing more than hearsay (Lev. 19:16). The talebearer is an untrustworthy liar. Wisdom teaches us not to associate with such folks, because talebearing causes wounds and strife (Prov. 11:13; 18:8; 20:19; 26:20-22). The best way to put out the fire of talebearing is not to receive it. (And, being sure we do not start that flame.)

Prayer Requests & Announcements

- Wards are away in AR for a family reunion this week
- Sylvia Ward, Ross's Mom, is getting around pretty well
- Scott Boucher (Sparks NV) is in hospice care
- Keep April in your prayers as she deals with health issues
- The Christians in the Philippines

Worship Assignments

Today

Song Leader – Chad Mitchell

Lord's Table – David Porter

Wednesday

Song Leader – Ben Palmer

Invitation – Chad Mitchell

Blackfoot Church of Christ
370 North Shilling Ave.
Blackfoot, Idaho 83221

Meeting Times:

Sunday Morning Classes 10:00AM
Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM
Wednesday Evening 7:30PM



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