

Studies in the Book of Proverbs by [John T Polk II](#)  
For [The Fellowship Room](#)

## (#38) The Proverbs of Solomon 11:12-13- Table the Tabloid Talk!

Since God Created humans, only God can provide specific understanding of human behavior. God gave Solomon Divine Wisdom (**1 Kings Chapters 3 and 10**) to explain what and why behavior is as it is, and **Proverbs 10:1 - 24:34** are randomly written, as if they were Judgments Solomon made about individual cases brought to him for Divine Wisdom (**1 Kings Chapters 3 and 10**), or simply God-given explanations about life. New Testament passages may help see the continuation of Wisdom offered through Jesus Christ.

### **Proverbs 11:12-13:**

He who is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor, but a man of understanding holds his peace. 13 A talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.

It is thoughtless to “despise” (show contempt, consider beneath) one’s “neighbor” (ones closest, associates), and everyone who understands this “holds his peace.” No one wants to be around anyone who constantly puts down others by criticizing, complaining and nit picking, especially behind their backs! This is called gossiping or “tale bearing,” and God, in the Old and New Testaments, has always condemned it as detrimental to friendships, family, or society, in general (**Leviticus 19:16; Romans 1:29-30; 1 Timothy 5:11-15**)! Whoever gossips about others to you, will gossip about you to others!

Other proverbs on this subject include:

- “The words of a talebearer *are* like tasty trifles, And they go down into the inmost body” (**Proverbs 18:8; 26:22**);
- “He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; Therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips” (**Proverbs 20:19**);
- “Where *there is* no wood, the fire goes out; and where *there is* no talebearer, strife ceases. As charcoal *is* to burning coals, and wood to fire, so *is* a contentious man to kindle strife.” (**Proverbs 26:20-21**).

Gossip may sound like something we want to know (“tasty trifles”), but it should remain “secret.” Most people do not need to know the deeds or details of the perversity of others. Christians are told “It is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret” (**Ephesians 5:12**). We should not “associate” with anyone who misuses listeners and abuses their subjects that way!



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To kill a fire, we remove the fuel; therefore to kill “strife,” we should take a talebearer out of the communication equation. We should reject all race baiters, labor baiters, or profit baiters whose half-truths, or no truths, create and inflame divisions and hatred between segments of church or society. There is a “time to be silent” ([Ecclesiastes 3:7](#)) about such matters, and be “counted wise:” He who has knowledge spares his words, *And* a man of understanding is of a calm spirit. Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace; *When* he shuts his lips, *he is considered* perceptive” ([Proverbs 17:27-28](#)).

We must overcome our tendency to have a “tabloid mentality,” and instead insist upon facts, repentance, and forgiveness, as Jesus Christ commands ([Matthew 18:15-17](#)).

