

Gossip Kills Trust

(June 4, 2026)

In 2 Corinthians 2:11, Paul tells us that “we are not ignorant of [Satan’s] devices.” But based on the many different interpretations of that verse, it seems that we are not as well informed as the simple reading of that verse seems to imply. Satan’s devices are not always so obvious.

But the context of 2 Corinthians 2 provides us with a helpful framework to know what Paul is referring to there. In that chapter, Paul is encouraging the Corinthian church to receive the man back into the church who had previously been excommunicated due to his sexual sin. Apparently after the church read Paul’s instructions in 1 Corinthians 5, they disciplined the young man in hopes of repentance. And by God’s grace, it worked.

The man repented of his sin, but the church was hesitant to receive him back into fellowship. Paul is warning in 2 Corinthians 2 that refusing to reconcile with this young man could create a division in the church that would do more harm than the original sin they were attempting to remove. Division is still one of Satan’s most effective devices to destroy the Church.

In his book, “Power of the Other,” Henry cloud singles out gossip, slander, and triangulation as the primary enemy of trust. In that book, he writes, “Divisiveness is one of the most destructive forces in [relationship]. It not only prevents resolution, growth, and forward movement, but it also makes problems worse by pitting one person against another and creating future splits throughout the team, family, or organization.” (p. 188-189)

When we fail to confront problems directly, we create divisions. We may call it “venting” to avoid the feeling of guilt, but if we are saying things about people that we haven’t told them directly, we are going to break trust in those relationships. So let’s try this: the next time someone shares hurtful information about another member of your family, team, or church, respond by asking them...“So are you going to tell them what you just told me, or will I?”

Gossip, slander, criticizing someone behind their back, triangulation, and even venting may do some of the most harmful damage to the Body of Christ. Satan’s devices are not always so obvious.