



[**Lij Here:** Just like last week, as a hook to get the students' attention and really thinking about what they are doing wrong in relationships, the first half of these messages intentionally offer bad advice—**SO BE SURE TO SPEAK WITH LOTS OF SARCASM** starting from the beginning.]

Hello, students! It is great to see you again. Hopefully you liked what we talked about last week—about the need to get rid of friends—and have tried to put in to affect the art of being an uncommitted friend.

However, if your pals are just too dimwitted to notice that you have been trying to ignore them, you may need to take it up a notch. So, if you have acquaintances that keep coming around despite your best efforts to be scarce, then you need to listen up, as tonight we are going to share with you our second step to being a bad friend and getting them to leave.

TEAR THEM DOWN WITH YOUR WORDS.

If they are going to insist on being around you, then make their time one of misery. Let your words be so hurtful to them that they second-guess their decision to consider you a friend. What do I mean by this? Well, let's take another look at this old book of wisdom from the Bible called Proverbs.

Proverbs 16:28 (NIV)

A perverse person stirs up conflict, and a gossip separates close friends.

If you continued to read the book of Proverbs, you would hear time and time again of the wicked capabilities that it says the untamed tongue can possess, but this one verse sparks the imagination to several ways one can cause drama amongst one's peers.

I can't tell you of the number of friendships I've seen turn sour (both in person and online), because people were careless with their words. It doesn't matter if you've just got a filthy mouth constantly toward someone, or you just let one juicy story out that you were entrusted with ... you can be sure that it will cause problems. In fact, it will cause more than just problems, it can cause pain. Look what Proverbs says earlier.

Proverbs 12:18 (NIV)

The words of the reckless pierce like swords.

Pain can be a great reason for someone to leave a relationship, and it can come in a variety of ways, including physical, which I would not suggest since that is quite likely to get you in legal trouble. So, if you are taking notes, we are going to look at three verbal ways ...

TO BE A BAD FRIEND, AND TEAR THEM DOWN!

1.) BE JUST PLAIN MEAN.

The easiest thing to do is to call them names. They can be generic, rude things (dork, freak, loser), or you can play them off of personal details. If they just missed a game winning free-throw, call them something like “Brick Head,” or if some girl quickly dates a boy after breaking up with some other guy, call her a...nahh I’m not gonna go there, but don’t be afraid of the more explicit names, either.

If you can’t come up with clever names, I encourage you to insult them directly. Just mock their features and failures. Let them know that you disapprove without a doubt. Also, make sure that they know that you are far better than them in every way they have failed or not measured up. Saying things like, “Wow, you failed that assignment? What a moron! I didn’t even try on that one and got an A,” covers all the bases to make a grand slam of an insult.

If possible, when undermining them, try to do it in front of others. This one is great if you can’t come up with anything bad on them, because you can just speak badly to them.

When in group conversations or settings, always find a way to cut them off or make an excuse for why they aren’t capable of saying anything relevant. If they are talking about something with the group say, “This is boring,” and change the topic to something you deem more interesting.

If it is something interesting, they can still be wrong about it, so tell some good reason to the group why he or she doesn’t know what they are talking about, even if it’s just, “That’s the stupidest thing I’ve heard, you don’t know what you’re talking about!”

2.) **EXPOSE UNNESSESARY PERSONAL INFO.**

There is a pretty easy model to follow with this step. Simply take any non-public knowledge that would embarrass or make others think less of them, and share it openly.

This could be things said to you in confidence, like crushes, worst fears, and family drama. It could also include things they've gone through. Perhaps how they cried when they heard that their crush liked someone else, or that they wet the bed at a sleepover in the first grade.

Once you have picked out your juicy tidbit, just bring it up for no good reason at all (other than to try to gain everyone's attention). It also helps if after you've shared it with one person, you to go ahead and continue to share it with others. After all, there is no harm, since it's no longer a secret, and it will ensure that your soon to be ex-best friend knows that it was you who shared their dark secret with everyone else.

WHEN IN DOUBT LIE, LIE, LIE.

If they are boring, or just haven't trusted you with any secrets, it doesn't mean you can't make up some. Try and make them believable, yet still surprising. I suggest spinning facts that you do know. Here are a few examples of what you can do:

- Is their parent easily upset? Say something like, "I'm pretty sure their dad has an anger problem or something."
- Did they get called to the office mysteriously? Tell the kids in your row that you heard he is getting screened for a drug test.
- If they have been dating someone and are gone from school for a few days, tell everyone, "You know she must be pregnant."

The more outlandish it is, the better it will sever your relationship, because it will cause more pain thus driving them further from you.

BECAUSE THAT IS THE OPPOSITE OF WHAT FRIENDS DO ...

[BREAK SARCASM]

Again, we find ourselves in some pretty gruesome situations, pretty easily, because it is easy to be a bad friend. In fact, words make it really easy to be an enemy.

It reminds me of Jesus' biggest earthly enemy, the Pharisees. They personally never laid a hand on Jesus, but because they so strongly disliked him, they let their words do some major damage. Their group referred to him as a blasphemer, drunkard, and trouble maker. Many helped perpetuate untrue rumors that He was trying to cause political unrest. Worst of all, when on the cross, they mocked Him.

To think that these were "God's people." It all makes you aware very quickly about the ways we have torn others down, but that is not what we have been called to do.

Instead, we should do what Proverbs 12:18 says and "*bring healing.*"

It may be hard to understand or to recognize those moments and help someone instead of succumbing to selfish motives. How do you keep quiet so that you don't hurt someone? When it is appropriate to speak, how do you not cross lines and hurt others?

I suggest you THINK. T-H-I-N-K. THINK.

Ask yourself the following: "Is what I'm about to share ..."

TRUE – Do I even know for certain that this is 100 percent fact? Am I assuming anything? Has the person it is about even confirmed it to me?

HELPFUL – Is the situation that I am in right now, or the person I am speaking with, going to benefit from me sharing this information?

INSPIRING – Does this do anything to lift someone up, while not bringing anyone else down? (If you are trashing someone else to make someone feel better, it isn't inspiring.)

NECESSARY – Do I NEED to share this, or do I just WANT to share it? Is it actually an important detail that brings clarity, or is it me getting everyone's

attention for the moment? Even if it is topical, is this even the right time or place for this to be shared?

KIND – Is it mean to anyone? Would the person it concerns appreciate me saying this? Would it cause any grief or problems for the person to have it shared not on their terms? If you are talking to the person it is about, are you speaking in a way that encourages them instead of hurting them?

The points shared today are not the only ways we tear each other down, but they are some of the most major ones. How has your memory been sparked by this? In what ways have you hurt those around you with your words? What are some wise actions you need to take to “*bring healing*”?

Let’s pray.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS:

1. What’s the most hurtful thing a loved one has ever said to you?
2. Proverbs 12:18 says that reckless words can “pierce like swords.” How could each area listed tonight (mean, unnecessary, or lies) affect someone in that way?
3. How do you see these ways of tearing people down among your own friends and in school? Do not share the names of specific people.
4. In what ways do you fail to consider whether or not words spoken to/about your friends that are true, helpful, inspiring, necessary, or kind?
5. Who is someone to whom you need to make amends, because you failed to keep a secret or spoke unfairly about them?