Maligning, Proverbs 30:10

Do not malign a servant to his master,

Lest he curse you, and you be found guilty. (NKJV)

Translated “malign,” the word is closer in meaning to “slander.” The term is only used twice in the OT, here and in Psalm 105:5. Psalms considers the one who secretly slanders his neighbor; God destroys that person. Here the slanderer finds the servant’s master and provides an evil, fictitious report about his worker. We all face the temptation to make someone else look bad. Slandering others has now become an acceptable communication pattern. Consider with me the nature of political ads. When is the last time you heard someone say something positive about someone with whom they disagree?

“Lest” is something to avoid. The danger of slandering someone is a curse. The master utters the curse. “Curse” is in a Hebrew stem that intensifies the nuance of “disdain” or “diminish.” 1 Samuel 17:43 gives a good picture of the owner’s feelings. Goliath, upon seeing the lad, David, said, “’Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?’ And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.” I can see Goliath “cursing” David with vile disgust. So it is with the owner.

A curse is bad enough, but the proverb adds another warning, “you will be found guilty and suffer punishment.”

Anyone who goes out of his or her way to slander another person justly deserves to be punished, so don’t do it. Stop yourself. Say something positive about the servant (worker) and stay out of the boss’s business.

My love to you all,

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