

The Sins of Slander and Judgmentalism

James 4:11-12

October 15th, 2025

Theme: In contrast to the proud, quarrelsome, contentious speech that characterizes the world around us, believers are to speak about one another with loving humility.

James shares several reasons not to slander or judge other believers:

I. The slanderous and judgmental malign God's law. (11a)

II. The slanderous and judgmental usurp God's law. (11b)

III. The slanderous and judgmental disregard God's authority. (12a)

IV. The slanderous and judgmental disregard their impotence. (12b)

Small Group Questions

1. What is the relation of speaking evil against (i.e. slandering) other Christians and judging other Christians? How are the two distinct? Why does James discuss both together in this passage?
2. Are there times where judging other professing believers is appropriate? If so, what are some considerations for how to go about that in a God-honoring way?
3. Based on this passage, Matthew 7:1-5, and Romans 14, there is a kind of judgment that is sinful. What kind of judgment does God forbid? What are some practical situations in your life where you can be tempted to this kind of judgment?
4. What is slander? How seriously does God take this sin? What opposite virtues should believers instead be characterized by when it comes to our speech about other Christians?