

FIELD-TESTED SERMON RESOURCES

SERMON SERIES

TRUSTED | BIBLICAL | FIELD-TESTED

Thank you for downloading this sample PDF from our Sermon Series line of resources.

When you stand up in front of students to proclaim the Word of God, you need trusted, creative, and biblically solid content. YM360's Sermon Series are exactly what you're looking for!

Field-tested, from-the-trenches of youth ministry, YM360 Sermon Series are complete detailed sermon outlines, discussion questions, and graphic packages designed to help you lead students closer to God through proclaiming His Word.

SERIES OVERVIEW FOR LITTLE SINS: Zooming In On a Big Problem

When it comes to the sins in our lives, we'll find any reason to make them not seem as bad as they really are. That's how we end up with "big" sins like murder or adultery and "little" sins like gossip, pride, anger, and envy. Even though we can try to excuse these "little" sins away, the reality is that all sins are equally destructive to our relationships with God, our neighbors, and even ourselves. To rightly pursue holiness, righteousness, and love, we need to recognize sin for what it is – no matter how big or small we think it may be.

"LITTLE SINS" COVERS THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES AND PASSAGES:

- **Session 1 – Gossip (Proverbs 18:21)** | Gossip can seem harmless on the surface. It can even feel good to gossip from time to time. What the person we're gossiping about doesn't know won't hurt them, right? When we view gossip as a little sin, we run the risk of corrupting ourselves and everyone around us, not just the person we're gossiping about. So instead, we should use our words to give life and build others up because that is the way of Jesus.
- **Session 2 – Pride (Romans 3:19-20, 27)** | Pride might be one of the sneakiest little sins. It can manifest itself in many ways and can harden our hearts before we realize it. The Bible is clear that God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble, but what can we do to make sure that pride isn't taking root in our lives? In order to combat pride, we need to have faith in God alone and make others more important than ourselves.
- **Session 3 – Anger (Ephesians 4:26-27)** | Paul says that we should be angry yet not sin. So anger may not be a sin in and of itself, but it can become sinful depending on *why* we're angry and *how* we respond to our anger. Anger can be devastating to our lives and the lives of others if we're not careful, so we must learn to analyze our anger and rightly order our love.
- **Session 4 – Envy (James 4:1-3)** | Comparison really is a thief of joy. When we compare ourselves to the people around us, we can quickly become discontent with our gifts, and that discontentment turns into envy, which only leads to resentment for everyone around us. So envy may seem like a little, internal sin, but it actually makes it impossible to love God, our neighbor, or ourselves.

"LITTLE SINS" IS PART OF YM360'S SERMON SERIES LINE OF RESOURCES AND IS IDEAL FOR:

- Any large group setting
- Mid-week youth service
- "Master teacher" format

BACKGROUND SLIDES, PROMOTIONAL ARTWORK, AND MORE . . .

EVERY SERMON SERIES FROM YM360 COMES WITH:

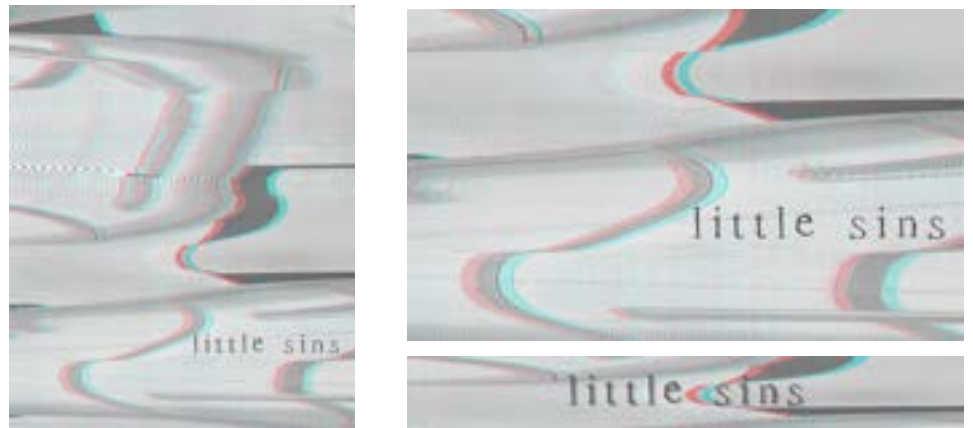
- **Detailed Sermon Outlines** – Every Sermon Series comes with detailed sermon outlines. Teach them "as is" or adapt them to suit your specific ministry context.
- **Discussion questions** – Questions are designed to foster conversations, help students think critically about the teaching, and wrestle with how these Biblical truths impact their complicated and ever-changing lives. You can use these discussion questions to facilitate small groups after your large group teaching or even create handouts for students to work through the message as you go.
- **Title and Background slides** – These are designed to be dropped into your favorite presentation software to help you build a creative environment around your sermon. Use them as a backdrop for song lyrics, Scripture passages, teaching points, and any illustrations you choose to display.
- **Artwork for promo and social media** – Social media images, web banners, and a printable poster file are included. Perfect for newsletters, websites, social media platforms, or print them off for posters and bulletin inserts.
- **Logo (including native logo design files)** – We include a logo file and the native design files to allow you to use the logo in ways you see fit.
- **100% downloadable and adaptable**

Each YM360 Sermon Series comes with title and background slides, promotional art (including Instagram images), and logo treatments. Here is what to expect.

**BACKGROUND AND
TITLE SLIDES**



**PROMOTIONAL
ARTWORK**



**INSTAGRAM
IMAGES**



**LOGO
TREATMENT**

little sins

NOTE: Each YM360 Sermon Series also comes with the native files of the logo in case you want to replicate the design for other uses.

Little Sins Sermon Series | Session 1: Gossip

How To Use A YM360 Sermon Series | YM360 Sermon Series are designed for use by a communicator in a large group setting. Each series download provides various elements such as a detailed sermon outline, suggestions on illustrations or images, Scripture passages, background information, and application points that you can use to craft a message that speaks to your students in your specific context.

This series download also includes discussion questions that can be used to facilitate small groups after your large group teaching or even create handouts for students to work through the message as you go. These questions are designed to foster conversations, help students think critically about the teaching, and wrestle with how these Biblical truths impact their complicated and ever-changing lives.

Make sure to leverage the series logo, title slide, background slides, and social media artwork this YM360 Sermon Series provides for promotion and message support. We've even included the native design files to allow you the freedom to use the logo in any way that meets your needs.

This YM360 Sermon Series was created to be suitable for all types of churches and ministry environments. It was intentionally designed to provide you with everything you need while also allowing you the freedom to make it fit your particular ministry context. Nobody knows your ministry like you do. Therefore, we encourage you to make any adjustments to this series you feel are necessary to best fit the needs of your students, church, or ministry context.

A Prayer Before You Prepare | Dear Lord, please prepare my heart as I begin to preach this series. Talking to other people about sin issues is not always the most fun. So, before any of that comes to the surface, I pray that You clear and cleanse my heart from any sins. As a pastor or volunteer in the church, I, too, am a human with fallibilities. Search my heart, please expose anything that is unlike You, and give me the courage to confess them both to You and a trusted mentor. I pray for healing in these areas. Help me be a conduit of Your grace to the students who will hear these sermons!

Little Sins Teaching Guide | A One-Page Glimpse Of Everything You Need To Prepare

Series Snapshot | *Little Sins* is a four-session sermon series that will confront your students' misbelief that there are such things as "little" sins. By discussing four sins they are sometimes tempted to see as less severe than others, *Little Sins* will challenge your students to see all sins as equally destructive and urge them to love God and their neighbor more sincerely.

Series Overview | When it comes to the sins in our lives, we'll find any reason to make them not seem as bad as they really are. That's how we end up with "big" sins like murder or adultery and "little" sins like gossip, pride, anger, and envy. Even though we can try to excuse these "little" sins away, the reality is that all sins are equally destructive to our relationships with God, our neighbors, and even ourselves. To rightly pursue holiness, righteousness, and love, we need to recognize sin for what it is – no matter how big or small we think it may be.

- **Session 1 – Gossip (Proverbs 18:21)** | Gossip can seem harmless on the surface. It can even feel good to gossip from time to time. What the person we're gossiping about doesn't know won't hurt them, right? When we view gossip as a little sin, we run the risk of corrupting ourselves and everyone around us, not just the person we're gossiping about. So instead, we should use our words to give life and build others up because that is the way of Jesus.
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Little Sins Series | Session 1

Large Group Teaching Summary | Gossip can seem harmless on the surface. What the person we're gossiping about doesn't know won't hurt them, right? When we view gossip as a little sin, we run the risk of corrupting ourselves and everyone around us, not just the person we're gossiping about. So instead, we should use our words to give life and build others up because that is the way of Jesus.

Key Takeaway | Gossip corrupts everyone involved, so instead, use your words to build up and give life.

Scripture Focus | Proverbs 18:21

What You May Need | *Optional Illustration:* Geico Gossip Commercial (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PD65-0c6hC8>), *Optional Illustration:* A Time You Gossiped (Personal Story), *Optional Illustration:* Handling Gossip Well (Personal Story)

I. Introduction

- A. Welcome to this new series we're starting called *Little Sins*! Now, you may be thinking, "wait, there's such a thing as little sin...?" Well, no, there isn't such a thing as "little sin." To God, sin is sin, no matter what it is – it's all the same "size," it's all "valued" the same if you want to think about it that way. And even though your teachers may grade your tests on a curve, our sin isn't treated that way. All sin gets the same result, the same consequence, no matter how small you think it is or how much worse you think someone else's sin is compared to yours.
- B. But it's still true that we can sometimes think of some sins as smaller than others or not as bad as the "big" ones, like murder, adultery, or something like that. We still face the problem of comparing ourselves to others and saying, "Well, at least I'm not doing as bad as *they* are." We're all still tempted to view some sins as okay as long as you don't do them a lot and other sins as permanent no-go's. And that's what this series is about. Over the next four sessions, we're going to cover four sins that many of us view as "little" or "not so bad." We're going to talk about why we shouldn't tolerate any sin in our lives, even just the little white lies we tell here and there to get out of trouble. We're going to see that BECAUSE GOD COMMANDS US TO BE HOLY, THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A LITTLE SIN.
- C. So with that being said, in this first session, we're going to talk about the sin of gossip. To get us started, let's take a look at what can happen if we let gossip get out of hand:
1. **Optional Illustration: Geico Gossip Commercial**
 - a) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PD65-0c6hC8>

II. Tension

- A. If you're like me, you're probably really familiar with gossip, but still find it hard to define. So before we go any further, let's get a working definition of gossip so that we're all on the same page. I once heard it put like this, "GOSSIP IS BEARING BAD NEWS BEHIND SOMEONE'S BACK OUT OF A BAD HEART." Here are a few examples of what gossip could be.
1. Talking badly about your teacher to your friends because you're angry with him/her.
 2. Spreading a rumor about someone that you know isn't true or aren't 100% sure is true.
 3. Gossip could even be spreading a story about someone that only you know because you feel a sense of power or pride by being "on the inside" or having the inside scoop.
- B. **Optional Illustration: A Time You Gossiped**
1. *Tell a story about a time you got caught gossiping about someone and the consequences that came from it.*
- C. A lot of us love to gossip. It can be really hard to resist because, if we're honest, gossiping feels good. It feels good to talk about other people's mistakes. It can entertain us. It makes us feel good to know all the "tea." It makes you feel like you're an insider or like you're included. Truthfully, it distracts us from what we've done wrong or the bad

things that are going on in our lives and lets us turn that negative attention to someone else for a minute. And it's a lot easier to talk about people when they're not around than when they're standing in front of us, so what they don't know won't hurt them, right?

- D. Gossiping may not seem like a big deal on the surface, but it's much more destructive than you would think. This "little" sin has a lot of power to do some significant damage to our own lives and the lives of the people around us. And if you don't believe me, let's take a look at what the Bible has to say about it.

III. Scripture

- A. Read PROVERBS 18:21
 - 1. *"Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits."*
- B. Death and life are in what you say! That's a pretty wild statement! Have you ever considered that your words could be this powerful even when people aren't around to hear them? Now, you may be wondering what this verse means since words may not be able to literally kill someone. This proverb is saying that the things you say have the ability to either put people down and make them feel small, unimportant, or belittled or to build people up and make them feel valued, loved, and cared for. In Ephesians 4:29, Paul gives this command concerning how we use our words, *"Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear."* The words that you choose to use have the power to either corrupt, which means to destroy, or to build up and encourage.
- C. But your words don't just affect the person you're talking about, either. That verse in Proverbs 18 ends by saying that *"those who love it will eat its fruits."* So what could that mean?? Well, you may not realize it, but when you gossip, you're not just tearing down the person you're talking about. WHEN YOU GOSSIP, YOU'RE ALSO CORRUPTING YOURSELF AND THE PEOPLE YOU GOSSIP TO.
- D. Let's take a look at how gossip can hurt literally everyone involved in the process.
 - 1. **The Person Being Gossiped About**
 - a) In perhaps the most obvious point of all time, the person being gossiped about will be hurt. When lies are spread about someone and secrets are shared with people they shouldn't be shared with, people are hurt. Let's go back to our definition of gossip – it's bad news shared about someone behind their back. So whether you're talking poorly about someone, making up lies about someone, or sharing their secrets with other people, you're corrupting them. You're using your tongue and your words to give them death rather than life. They're being torn down instead of built up. Even though gossip may wound this person the most, let's see how it affects the person who listens, too.
 - 2. **The Person Who Listens**
 - a) Proverbs 17:4 says, *"An evildoer listens to wicked lips, and a liar gives ear to a mischievous tongue."*
 - b) You may think that merely listening to gossip and not participating in it may not be so bad, but by sitting and listening to someone bear bad

news about someone else, you're enabling the gossip, you're allowing it to happen. By not trying to stop the gossip, you're just as guilty of gossip as the person speaking. That's why Proverbs 20 advises us to "*not associate with a simple babbler*" because when you listen to gossip, you're filling your mind and heart with words of death and corruption.

- c) 1 Corinthians 15:33 tells us that "*bad company ruins good morals,*" which, in this case, means that when you consistently surround yourself with people who gossip and regularly listen to gossip, you're eventually going to end up being the gossipier at some point. So it may be slightly different, but when you listen to someone use their words for death instead of life, you're affected by it too.

3. Finally, The Person Who Spoke It

- a) As I said at the beginning of our time together, gossiping is hard to resist. It can feel good to gossip about others because we forget about our own struggles and shortfalls for a moment. We like feeling like we have the inside scoop or we're a part of the "in-crowd." But the Bible has a lot to say about people who gossip, and none of it is good.
- b) Proverbs 11 says that whoever belittles his neighbor lacks sense, and whoever goes about slandering (spreading lies) is untrustworthy. In Romans 1, Paul lays out a long list of unrighteous and evil acts. In these few verses, listen to what he relates gossipers to.
 - (1) Romans 1:29-32 – "*They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.*"
- c) That's strong language for such a little sin, isn't it? Or maybe, gossiping is a lot bigger than what it seems to be on the surface. When you gossip, you're acting against God's commands, spreading death instead of life, and wounding other people instead of building them up.

IV. Application

- A. As you can see, GOSSIP CORRUPTS EVERYONE INVOLVED, SO INSTEAD, USE YOUR WORDS TO BUILD UP AND GIVE LIFE. But how can you do that? How can we live differently? If we're the gossipier, what do we need to change? Or if we're the person who listens to the gossip, what do we need to do? In either case, you should practice some self-awareness in moments when gossip is happening.
- B. If you're the person speaking, here are a couple of questions you can ask yourself...
 - 1. *Is what I'm about to say tearing down or building up? Would I want someone to share this same story that I'm about to share?*
 - 2. If the answers to those questions point to what you're about to say being gossip, then stop yourself! Ask yourself why you felt the need to share that story or reveal that secret. Most of the time, there's an issue within your heart that pushed you to want to gossip. In Matthew 12, Jesus says, "*how can you speak*

good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."

3. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal whatever it is in your heart that pushed you to gossip. Whatever it is, ask forgiveness for it and turn away from speaking like that. Use your words to build others up and encourage them!
- C. If you're the person listening, you're in a harder position. But there are still things you can do to avoid being an enabler of gossip. Here are a couple more questions to ask yourself whenever you hear someone gossiping to you...
1. *Why are you telling me this? Is this building up or tearing down? Would the person they're talking about want to be talked about this way or want this information to be shared?*
 2. Again, if it seems like gossip, try to put an end to it! Remember that even by just listening to words that are being used to tear others down, you're being enticed to follow the same path. That if you continue to listen to gossip and not do anything about it, eventually, you'll be the one gossiping. And if you can't put an end to it, leave that conversation. Try not to hang around people who love to gossip.
- D. **Optional Illustration: Handling Gossip Well**
1. *Tell a story about a time you saw gossip handled well and the fruits of that.*

V. Gospel

- A. Nobody likes their sins and shortcomings to be put on blast by somebody else. And in the same way, we wouldn't want Jesus to do that with us! Thankfully, that's precisely the story of the Gospel – the good news of salvation made available to us in and through Jesus!
- B. See, in the beginning, God created the whole world and everything in it in perfect relationship with Himself. However, Adam and Eve, the first two humans, sinned against God. That means they disobeyed God's commands and His will for their lives. And because all sin is equally intolerable to God, all sin gets the same punishment and warrants the same consequence. So Adam and Eve's relationship with God was eternally broken. They became spiritually dead. And we've all received that sinful nature, and we sin every day. We do things against God's Word and will for our lives, like gossiping about others. So we're spiritually dead and separated from God too. We all owe Him a perfectly obedient life, but we can never make that payment.
- C. But thankfully, God didn't want to leave us separated from Him. Despite our rebellion against Him, He wanted to have a relationship with us again. But that required someone to pay that debt of a perfectly obedient life, and since all humanity was filled with sin, we couldn't do it for ourselves. So God came down from Heaven to do it for us. Jesus Christ, God the Son, came and lived a perfectly obedient life that we were meant to live. He had full rights to life with God, but He willingly gave up His life and died on the cross to pay our debt for us. But the best part is that three days later, He rose back to life, having defeated sin and death forever, and went back to Heaven, where He still is now.

- D. Because our debt is paid, we can freely come before God and have forgiveness of all our sins – past, present, and future. All we have to do is repent of (turn away from/ask forgiveness for) our sins and believe that Jesus really is God, that He really came down from Heaven and lived a perfect life, that He really died on the cross, that He really rose from the grave, and that He’s the Savior we desperately need. When we submit our lives to Him in this way, we are granted forgiveness of our sins, eternal life, and a relationship with God. He approaches us with incredible grace and mercy; He sees our shortcomings and sins, yet He still chooses to offer us forgiveness. When we repent of our sins, turn away from them, and give our lives to Jesus by committing to follow Him, God doesn’t see our sinfulness anymore. He sees the perfect righteousness of Jesus!

VI. Conclusion

- A. This week, as you go, ask yourself those two questions as you’re talking...
1. *Is what I’m about to say tearing down or building up? Would I want someone to share this same story that I’m about to share?*
 2. If it’s gossip, then stop yourself! Ask for forgiveness, and use your words to build others up instead of tearing them down.
- B. And as you listen, ask yourself...
1. *Why are you telling me this? Is this building up or tearing down?*
 2. If it’s gossip, then try to put an end to it or leave that conversation. As Proverbs 20 says, don’t associate yourself with people who gossip.
- C. Finally, remember, gossip corrupts everyone involved, so instead, use your words to build others up and give them life. Let’s pray.

Little Sins Sermon Series | Session 1 Discussion Questions: Gossip

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Key Takeaway | Gossip corrupts everyone involved, so instead, use your words to build up and give life.

Scripture Focus | Proverbs 18:21

Little Sins | Session 1 Discussion Questions

You can use these discussion questions to facilitate small groups after your large group teaching or even create handouts for students to work through the message as you go. These questions are designed to foster conversations, help students think critically about the teaching, and wrestle with how these Biblical truths impact their complicated and ever-changing lives.

Get Them Talking | An Optional Opening Question To Get Students Talking

1. You could play a quick game of "telephone" to illustrate how news can turn into something completely different in a short period of time.

Discussion Questions

1. Read Proverbs 18:21. What does this teach you about God? What does this teach you about yourself?
2. What sins are you tempted to view as little or not as severe as others? What makes those little to you?
3. Why is it sometimes tempting to gossip about others or even just listen to gossip? What makes gossip attractive to you?
4. In your own words, what does it mean that death and life are in the power of the tongue? Give some examples.
5. How does gossip hurt everyone involved? Is it hard for you to believe that it hurts the gossiper and the listener too? Why or why not?
6. How can you check yourself in conversations to make sure that you're not gossiping about others? What do you find challenging about that? Why do you think that's hard for you?
7. What would it look like to use your words to give life instead of tearing others down? Why do you think this is important for us to do? How can you encourage your friends to do this when they're gossiping?