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**From:** Barry Durmaz [mailto:barry@mymail.net]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 06, 2011 12:59 PM  
**To:** Rick & Anette Friesen  
**Subject:** Business vs. personal sin

Hello Anette:

I hope you are doing well. I have a question....

I have an elder at my church who is telling me that if a Christian brother speaks derogatorily (slander) about a competitor **company**, and not against a competitor **individual**, that no possible sin has been committed.

Versus, a brother who speaks against another brother personally is sin.

**Can you point me to a biblical basis for such reasoning?** I don't find God making such a separation between business and personal sin. I have my reasoning about this, but would simply like you to relay to me a biblical basis for such reasoning.

Thank you Anette!

Barry

**From:** "Annette Friesen" <afriesen@peacemaker.net>  
**Subject:** RE: Business vs. personal sin  
**Date:** May 10, 2011 7:25:28 AM PDT  
**To:** "Barry Durmaz" <barry@mymail.net>

Dear Barry,

Good to hear from you and good question!

While Eph. 4:29 would definitely address the words spoken, I think Luke 6:45 points out that our mouths reflect what our hearts feel, which means that our words have motives. I Sam. 16:7 says that while man looks on the outward (or hears the outward) God judges our hearts. It is important in whatever situation we are in that we speak in a way that doesn't violate God's laws in the actions but also the reason we are saying it.

So, if we can't say something good about another "business" we should look for ways to share with them directly what our concerns are. If they have offended us, we have a responsibility to speak to them. Our words, whether in going to a brother to work things out or waiting for God to show us when and what to say, I Cor. 13 and Luke 6 "loving our enemies" still comes into play.

I think the best way to address this isn't by arguing with points of the law, but to ask others to consider what is the goal of their communication. If it is to demean another in order for ourselves to look good, then our motives are wrong despite the potential accuracy of our words. Our goal should fit the criteria of Eph. 4:29 no matter WHO we are speaking about (this is the way I interpret it). When we speak truth (hard truth) we speak it in love. So, even in politics, we can critique ideas, but the goal should be to speak the truth in love, believe the best of others (until we have evidence otherwise) and we shouldn't criticize others or imply guilt of character on others.

This might not be enough but hopefully a little information for you. I am currently in Oregon with our daughter who just had her second child. I will be back in the office on Friday if you it would be helpful to speak by phone.

In Christ,  
Annette

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