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Good morning Laurie

May we please talk through an important issue, words that you spoke to our joint neighbour, [name withheld], earlier this year?

I had intended to leave our discussion as it stood, however in praying the issue through yesterday I believe that this issue needs to be dealt with more constructively, the explanation that follows explains but you are welcome to ask me for more.

As you know I have a Christian faith (although I do not proselytise) and I asked the Lord whether I should confront you over what is essentially gossip (at one end of the scale) and defamation (at the other). While there is more that I am now aware of, I was surprised at the strength and urgency at His insistence to deal with this all, hence this letter and request for time.

My understanding, extracted (as I have previously hinted at to you in person) from [name withheld] over a period of days was that your conversation when he first arrived in Taumarunui is that you said four things:

1. That I was "trouble";
2. That I had caused Ron Cooke problems;
3. That I had pissed a lot of people off around town; and
4. That in your opinion I was best to be avoided, for reasons of self-preservation.

You can enhance or correct the details of what you actually said any time. The third and fourth points do not concern me, the third is true and the fourth is simply your advice which you are welcome to share as widely as you so wish. The first and second concepts however are based on incomplete and/or incorrect information and are therefore false. Apart from the lacking of wisdom in participating in gossip when you could have established the truth or otherwise of these claims by talking with me, the sharing of these falsehoods is slander; i.e. defamation.

You have wronged me.

I have never done anything to harm you, nor hurt you, indeed the opposite is true because for years I have told you that you could keep your pigeon house on my land for the moment. You are in a position of relative power over me with a son a local Pastor with social influence and your wide reach in society as a New World driver & being active in business. Your words have now caused two of your neighbours trouble – [name withheld], in that he found your words to be

false when he engaged with me and found me open, honest and generous even to a fault, and me in that you have spoken ill of me 'behind my back'.

There are two ways for me to deal with this wrong: a) I come to you seeking an opportunity to resolve matters in an open and honest (mature) way, and/or b) I use the legal system. Scriptural advice is to attempt the former before engaging in the latter, thus I seek the opportunity to talk.

In order to commence this process I wish to establish what you have said, when and to whom. Hoping and assuming that you are prepared to be honest about this, I then seek to know from what information you established your claims and from where that information came.

Having that knowledge I will then determine my course of action which will likely include public notification in my normal manner (by blogging) and may go further, especially considering yesterday's events in which it appears to me that this matter may be a little more than a storm in a teacup in His eyes.

Thanking you for your time.

Regards

[signed]

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