

Overcoming Offense

Learning to Let Go of Hurt, Anger, and Unforgiveness

Luke 17:1

He said to His disciples, **“It is inevitable that offenses will come, but woe to him through whom they come...”**

It's Not a Matter of If, But When

“It is inevitable that offenses will come...”

- I have always shared with people getting married, or joining a church, or building a new friendship – getting hurt is a foregone conclusion.

The Damage is Catastrophic

“But woe to him through whom they come...”

- **Enormous Pain and Loss**
 - Two people in my past I counted as my closest friends
 - Both friendships ended harshly for reasons I still don't know or understand

Psalm 55:12-14

It is not an enemy who taunts me—
I could bear that.

It is not my foes who so arrogantly insult me.
I could have hidden from them.

Instead, it is you—my equal,
my companion and close friend.

What good fellowship we once enjoyed
as we walked together to the house of God.

- Feels and Seems Unrecoverable

Proverbs 18:19

An offended friend is harder to win back than a fortified city.
Arguments separate friends like a gate locked with bars.

- **Collateral Damage**
 - Extended Family, Friends, Relationship
 - Life Together Church Family
 - Past, Present, and Future
- **Inner Conflict**

The Deadliest Trap

John Bevere's Best Selling book on Offense is **"The Bait of Satan"**

Bevere points out that in Luke 17:1 Greek word for "Offense" is *Skandalon* – part of the trap where you placed the bait.

Anyone who has trapped animals knows a trap needs one of two things to be successful. It must either be hidden, in the hope that the animal will stumble upon it, or it must be baited to lure the animal into the trap's deadly jaws. The enemy of our souls has incorporated both...One of his most deceptive and insidious kinds of bait is something that every Christian has encountered – offense.

Offended people produce much fruit, such as hurt, anger, outrage, jealousy, resentment, strife, bitterness and envy...and the results of holding on to offense include insults, attacks, wounding, division, separation, broken relationships, betrayal, and backsliding. Often those who are offended do not even realize they are trapped. They are oblivious to their condition because they are so focused on the wrong that was done to them.

(1) John Bevere, *The Bait of Satan*

- **So Many Warnings...**

- "Do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷ and do not give the devil an opportunity."
(Ephesians 4:26)
- "Don't let Satan outsmart us. We are not ignorant of his evil traps."
(2 Cor. 5:11)
- Put on the full armor of God so you can stand firm against the schemes of the devil."
(Ephesians 6:11)

- **The Real & Present Danger...**

Matthew 6:14-15; 18:35

"If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you.¹⁵ But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins...if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart."

My Goals of this Sermon Series

1. I Want You to Become Experts in Recognizing & Avoiding the Evil Trap of Offense
2. I Want You to Discover the Sources of Hurt, Anger, Resentment, and Unforgiveness Inside of You
3. I Want You to Diligently & Humbly Work Towards Reconciliation Regarding Any Offense that Stands Between You and Others