

Overcoming Offense

Deep & Wide

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
- The Damage is Catastrophic
- The Deadliest Trap

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
 3. I Want You to Diligently & Humbly Work Towards Reconciliation Regarding Any Offense that Stands Between You and Others
- I've had several calls this week already...A welcome confirmation of our need for this truth
 - **Some have been about the nature of some long-held hurts**
 - Agony of not being able to resolve
 - Maddening frustration of wrestling with wanting peace and ongoing hurt
 - **Some have been about hurts / misunderstandings with me**
 - The Covenant
 - **Some have just been another episode of accusation, blame, and condemnation**
 - Heartburn / Acid Reflux

Offense Runs Deep

Proverbs 12:18 **“Thoughtless words can wound as deeply as any sword...”**

- Teaching on this subject always brings strong emotions to the surface
 - Frustration, irritation, anxiety, bitterness, judgment, anger, jealousy, even rage...
- Teaching on offense is, in all seriousness, offensive to those with unresolved offense
- The Offended & The Offender Must Look Deeper Inside Themselves
 - **The Offended**
 - “Pre-existing Conditions”

2 Cor. 10:4-5

The weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful **for the destruction of fortresses.** We are destroying **speculations** and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking **every thought** captive to the obedience of Christ...

- Predisposed to certain beliefs and vulnerabilities
- Lies we've believed

○ The Offender

- Sometimes Innocent & Unintentional
- Sometimes “Pre-Existing Conditions”
 - “Hurting People Hurt People”
- It’s No Joke!

Proverbs 26:18-19

Just as damaging as a madman shooting a deadly weapon is someone who deceives a friend and says, “I was only joking.”

I didn't mean anything by it... Why are you so sensitive? Good grief, I was just kidding!”

Both the Offended and the Offender Must Make Allowances for the Other

Colossians 3:12-13

Clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.¹³ Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you...

A Wide, Distorted Perspective of Justice

- Peter’s Question Reveals His Belief that Forgiveness Should Only Go So Far

Matthew 18:21

Then Peter came to him and asked, “Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? **Seven times?**”

The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness (Simon Wiesenthal)

“You are a prisoner in a concentration camp. A dying Nazi soldier asks for your forgiveness. What would you do?”

- Jesus Leaves Little Doubt Regarding His Perspective -- Limitless

Matthew 18:22 “No, not seven times,” Jesus replied, “but seventy times seven!”

- Everyone Offended wrestles with the legitimacy of their claim on Justice
 - We often get hung up on misunderstanding how other legitimate truths play into it
 - Trust; Consequences; Wisdom; Enabling; Self-Respect...
- The Heart of the Matter is to Whom the Administering of Justice Belongs

James 4:11-12

Don’t speak evil against each other, dear brothers and sisters. If you criticize and judge each other, then you are criticizing and judging God’s law. But **your job is to obey the law, not to judge whether it applies to you. God alone, who gave the law, is the Judge.** He alone has the power to save or to destroy. So, what right do you have to judge your neighbor?