

# 7 Signs That a Trap Has Been Laid

## 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

2 Cor. 2:11

(Forgive)...So that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan,  
**For we are not ignorant of his schemes (traps).**

## Early Warning Signs of Danger

### 1. When You See a Build-Up of Internal Stress

**Proverbs 17:14** Starting a quarrel is like opening a floodgate, so stop before a dispute breaks out.

- **Stressful day, week, circumstances...anxiety, fear, etc.**
  - Father/Husband comes home...sets into motion a “fire”
    - **James 3:7** “...It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself.”
  - Soon every member of the family is scorched by something they had no knowledge or hand in

### 2. When You Do More Talking Than Listening or Refuse to Talk at All

**James 1:19-20**

Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. <sup>20</sup> Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires.

- **Proverbs 12:15** Fools think their own way is right, but the wise listen to others.
- “Silent Treatment”

### 3. When a Sarcastic, Smart-Aleck, Condescending, Manipulative, or Debating Tone **First** Makes an Appearance

**Ephesians 4:29-32**

**Watch your talk!** No bad words should be coming from your mouth. Say what is good. **Your words should help others grow** as Christians. <sup>30</sup> Do not make God’s Holy Spirit have sorrow for the way you live. The Holy Spirit has put a mark on you for the day you will be set free. <sup>31</sup> **Put out of your life all these things: bad feelings about other people, anger, temper, loud talk, bad talk which hurts other people, and bad feelings which hurt other people.** <sup>32</sup> **You must be kind to each other. Think of the other person.**

## 4. When You Invite Self-Pity in by Focusing Almost Entirely on You and/or Your Pain

“Self-pity is the response of pride to suffering...Self-pity says, “I deserve admiration because I have sacrificed so much. The reason self-pity does not look like pride is that it appears to be needy. But the need arises from a wounded ego and the desire of the self-pity is not really for others to see them as helpless but as heroes. The need self-pity feels does not come from a sense of unworthiness, but from a sense of unrecognized worthiness. It the response of unapplauded pride.” -- John Piper

## 5. When You Don't Get What You Want

### James 4:1-3

What starts these wars and fights among you? Is it not because you want many things and are fighting to have them? <sup>2</sup>You want something you do not have, so you kill. You want something but cannot get it, so you fight for it. You do not get things because you do not ask for them. <sup>3</sup>Or if you do ask, you do not receive because your reasons for asking are wrong. You want these things only to please yourselves.

## 6. When You Allow Yourself to Start Assigning Motives

“She doesn't even care!”

“He always has to be right!”

“Your pride won't even let you say you're sorry!”

“Oh, his work is way more important to him than I am!”

“She never loved me!”

### 1 Cor. 4:3-5

As for me, it matters very little how I might be evaluated by you or by any human authority. I don't even trust my own judgment on this point. <sup>4</sup>**My conscience is clear, but that doesn't prove I'm right. It is the Lord himself who will examine me and decide.**

**So don't make judgments about anyone ahead of time—before the Lord returns.** For he will bring our darkest secrets to light and will reveal our private motives. **Then God will give to each one whatever praise is due.**

- God alone understands and can judge the motives of people's hearts

## 7. When You Start Pulling Up the Past to Build Your Case

- Counseling
  - Past Hurts -- Who's to blame more – the score instead of the solution...

### Philippians 4:8-9

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things...put it into practice, and the God of peace will be with you.