

## Conundrums of Conflict & Deeper Truths (Part 1)

### 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

A **conundrum** is a difficult problem or question that seems to have no easy answer. A similar concept is one being **“hung on the horns of dilemma”** where there seems to be only two answers, neither of which is preferable.

### Legitimate Causes of Confusion

*Justifications and rationalizations, we use to hold onto offense that seem legitimate because they are tied to legitimate biblical truths and values.*

- Justice
- Weakness & Being Taken Advantage of
- Enabling & Codependency
- Trustworthiness & Vulnerability
- Self-Care & Self-Respect

### The Hierarchy of Truth

*Truth is not relative. Truth is truth. But Scripture develops the concept that some truth is “weightier” than other Truth. In other words, some truth is deeper, more foundational, and supersedes the claim of less “weighty” truths.*

#### Matthew 23:23

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected **the weightier provisions of the law**: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.”

- **An Example of Weightier Truths Superseding Other Laws of God**

#### Matthew 12:1-8

At about that time Jesus was walking through some grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, so they began breaking off some heads of grain and eating them. <sup>2</sup>But some Pharisees saw them do it and protested, “Look, **your disciples are breaking the law** by harvesting grain on the Sabbath.”

<sup>3</sup>Jesus said to them, “**Haven’t you read in the Scriptures what David did when he and his companions were hungry? <sup>4</sup>He went into the house of God, and he and his companions broke the law by eating the sacred loaves of bread that only the priests are allowed to eat. <sup>5</sup>And haven’t you read in the law of Moses that the priests on duty in the Temple may work on the Sabbath? <sup>6</sup>I tell you, there is one here who is even greater than the Temple! <sup>7</sup>But you would not have condemned my innocent disciples if you knew the meaning of this Scripture: ‘I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.’ <sup>8</sup>For the Son of Man is Lord, even over the Sabbath!”**

# Deeper Truths

## Mercy Supersedes Justice

### James 2:12-13

So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by *the* law of liberty. For judgment *will* be merciless to one who has shown no mercy; **mercy triumphs over judgment.**

- This Truth is at the Center of Jesus, His Ministry, and the Gospel.
- Holding onto Offense is the antithesis of the whole story of the Bible, God's redemptive plan, and everything He is working for.

***“He who is devoid of the power to forgive  
is devoid of the power to love”***

MLK, Jr.

## Human Weakness Channels and Highlights God's Strength

### 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

**...(Through) my weaknesses...the power of Christ can work through me.** That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For **when I am weak, then I am strong.**

- This is a central theme of **the Cross** and it's Power

### Matthew 5:38-42

“You have heard the law that says the punishment must match the injury: ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’ <sup>39</sup> **But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also. <sup>40</sup> If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. <sup>41</sup> If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles. <sup>42</sup> Give to those who ask, and don't turn away from those who want to borrow.**

- **Being Wronged (Offense) is an Opportunity...**
  - **For the Power of God's Goodness to be on Display**
  - **For People to See the Difference Between Light & Darkness**
  - **To Point People to God**

### Matthew 5:11-12

“God blesses you **when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. <sup>12</sup> Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.**

***“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.  
Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”***

MLK, Jr.

**Next Week:** Working Through Conundrums of the issues surrounding Enabling, Giving Trust, Self-Care, Self-Respect, Responsibility to Fight Oppression etc...