

## Week 5

### Day one Steps to overcoming offense

1 Peter 5:8

Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.

Copy the verse:

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We need to RESIST the devil at his onset. He is looking for a door to enter into your life. DO NOT let him get into your mind. If someone has offended you or something has happened between you and another, do as it says in Matthew 18:15:

If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back

It says to privately win back your brother, you are to follow this pattern. If you continue reading to the next verse it states that you are to do this first and if they do not listen, take two or three people with you to talk with them. How many times do we just skip this part of the verse and go to someone else for "advice?" Don't go with an attitude of anger or righteousness. Go and say, *"I am sorry maybe you meant nothing by this, but I felt offended because...."*

Usually others don't think about what they say and they don't intend of it sounding the way you took it. You can avoid all kinds of trouble by following the principles God has laid out for us. We can create heaps of offense by going to the wrong people---go to the one that offended and state your case peacefully.

Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins.

And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."

1 Peter 4:8

This is all about growing our relationship with God and experiencing freedom in Christ. We should want every blessing that God has for us. We need more and more of His grace so that we can handle situations with people in a godly way, not in a carnal way. Can you imagine someone saying...*"I am so grateful that you brought that up because I did not even know I was doing that."* How much better could a situation go if we approached things this way?

God sent his Son so that we can live a life full of His love. We want to abound with his greatness. I love a word that will propel me to a higher level. Love covers a multitude of sins.

Offense will keep us from loving people. When we have unforgiveness and don't deal with the little stuff, it grows. It is not our job to take offense. It is our job from God to act without defense. Jesus did not take offense. He was a man who was rejected, abused, and He even had his friends go to sleep on Him when he asked them to pray. Why didn't he take offense? Because he knew WHERE HE CAME FROM AND WHERE HE WAS GOING! If anyone can know that, then they can have complete peace in their lives.

Your value is NOT determined by how someone has treated you. KNOW WHO YOU ARE!!

**Daily reading: Matthew 20, Laborers in the vineyard, Jesus foretells his death a third time, A mother's request, Jesus heals two blind men.**

**Prayer:**

**Lord, I want to have that total peace that passes all understanding in my life. Help me by convicting me to forgive those who offend me. Show me if there is someone whom I need to speak to about this. I am confident that I am going to learn to walk in total freedom in you without being offended in my life. Build me up Lord, this can only happen in you. In your name I pray Amen**

## Day two How to deal

### Proverbs 3:5

**Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him and he will make straight your paths.**

**Copy the verse:**

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How do we deal with offenses? We go to the Word of God. In 1 Samuel 16, you can read the story of David. I will paraphrase it here. God told Samuel to go down to Jesse and choose a boy among his sons whom He has chosen to be the next king of Israel. All of the brothers were ready to be chosen, but Samuel did not choose any of them. When he asked if there were any others, David's dad responded with "Well, yeah there is David out in the fields." This is a prime example of someone not taking offense. Think if your dad had all of your brothers lined up ready to be chosen to be king and he did not even bother to get you. I would think that if you wanted a good time to take offense that would be one of those times. But David did not complain, and what did God do? He had the prophet choose David right in front of his brothers. Can you imagine, all of David's brothers lined up waiting to be chosen and here comes along the most unlikely candidate? I am sure his brothers were complaining and seething!

As we continue on with the story of David, we come to where he is to fight Goliath. He doesn't get why any of these soldiers did not want to fight Goliath. The reason David wanted to fight is because he knew God would fight with him. Why was he so sure that God would be with him? Because he KNEW God. David spent his days alone tending the sheep. This enabled him much quiet time with the Lord. When you get lonely, don't ever get mad at God, take it and use it as a time with Him.

More and more as we read David's story we see how his brothers tried to diminish him. They didn't want him to think that he had any value and so they condescended him. They were angered and jealous within themselves so they took their frustration out on him. But he was used to it and so he responded by turning away. He knew not to take offense.

David was out tending the sheep in the field. It does not sound like much of a noble job, but he was doing what he was supposed to be doing. God came and plucked him out from his place, to be positioned as king! When you are doing what you are supposed to be doing and having that close relationship with the Lord, you never know when God will choose you to do something greater.

Don't let anyone diminish what you do or make you feel belittled. Any job that God has given you to do, is a job that is important. God cares ONLY about the part He has asked you to do. We all have roles and purposes to fulfill here on this earth, we do them to the best of our ability and wait for the blessings to flow.

**Bible reading: Matthew 21, The triumphal entry, Jesus cleanses the temple, Jesus curses the fig tree, The authority of Jesus challenged, The parable of the two sons and the tenants.**

**Prayer:**

**Lord I want to be used by you in a mighty way. Help me to see the value of my role in life right now. Give me a vision for my future and help me learn to achieve that goal. I want to be content where I am at in life and be expectant of the future that you have for me. Guide me and train me in the path that you have. In your name I pray, Amen**

## Day three Why to deal with it

**Mark 11:22**

**Have faith in God....**

**Copy the above verse:**

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All of this centers around how this anger affects our prayers. If you are going to pray for something, you should be praying because you want them to get answered.

*Then Jesus said to the disciples, "Have faith in God. I tell you the truth, you can say to this mountain, May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea, and it will happen. But you must really believe it will happen and have no doubt in your heart. I tell you, you can pray for anything, and if you believe that you've received it, it will be yours. But when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too.*

*Mark 11:22-25*

If you are going to complain about something, don't bother to pray about it. God doesn't answer complaints, he answers prayers. God says that whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, first forgive before you pray. This includes any offenses against your neighbor, your husband, the lady at the store, a friend, etc. Any type of offense no matter how big or small WILL hinder your ability to have prayer answered.

### **Seeing results that work!**

Taking offense is a high price to pay for something that is useless. If we are going to be victorious in life then we need to refuse to be offended. Taking offense hinders God's ultimate plan for our life. We can't go forward, we stay stagnant. Do you know what a body of water looks like that is stagnant and doesn't move? It is nasty, it starts to grow algae and forms green scum all over the top of it. It smells badly too. We want a life that is free to flow Christ through us. We want to move out of that stagnant pond to the living flowing waters that He has for us.

Make a list of scriptures promises that will help you to see others and situations as God would. This will enable you to look differently at things and not take offense. Copy these scriptures and place in an area that you will see them. Refer to them, especially in times when you want to take offense at someone or something.

*And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.*

*Matthew 11:6*

*In return for my love they are my accusers, But I give myself to prayer*

*Psalm 109:4*

*But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you*

*Matthew 5:44*

**Bible reading: Matthew 22, The parable of the wedding feast, Paying taxes to Caesar, Sadducees ask about the resurrection, The great commandment, Whose son is the Christ?**

**Prayer:**

**Lord, make my heart clean. Remind me when I am being offended. Help me to forgive quickly, let your words rest in my mind and let my heart be knit closer to you. I ask these things and am confident to receive them. In your name I pray, Amen**

## Day four Cure for offenses

**Matthew 22:37-39**

**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.**

**Copy the verse:**

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Love is the ultimate cure for offenses. It will destroy self-centeredness that thrives on its own self-seeking interest and rights. It will forgive those who disappoint us. Love WILL cover a multitude of sins.

Learning to not take offense at things is something that requires time. It takes time to discipline yourself to do something new. Just as if you were to quit a bad habit or an addiction, taking offense is something that has probably been taught to you from when you were very young. It is not impossible to overcome, it takes awareness and consistency to stop doing it. To ensure progress ask the Lord to help you become aware of situations that you take offense with.

When you are made aware of a situation, write it down. Then work through the steps outlined in this study to help you overcome them. Continue doing this until you learn to not take offense at things. This is a continual act of obedience. It requires awareness and time. Habits have been said to take twenty-one days to break. If you consistently work at it, you should be on a path freed from offense.

**Daily bible reading: Matthew 23, Seven woes to the scribes and Pharisees, Lament over Jerusalem.**

**Prayer:** God, your plan for my life is perfect. You have set forth a path of righteousness. You have removed obstacles and allowed freedom for me to flow through it. Help me to see the snares set forth by Satan and to avoid them. Let me walk in truth and love always. Keep me moving forward with my eyes focused on you. I ask these things in your precious name, Amen

## Day five Way of love

1 Corinthians 13:1

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Copy the verse:

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Love is a powerful tool. If you can truly love someone, you can look past all their faults and just love them for who they are. Sometimes it is easier to love the complete stranger who is a sinner than to love those who are close to us. We have to remember that God places people in our lives for us to love. We are to show compassion and love to them no matter what.

We can do great things for the Lord and when we do them and do not show love to others, we are as a “noisy gong or a clanging symbol.” That would be the definition of an annoying thing. If you were to hear that making noise, you would want it to stop. God uses that to explain how when we say we love someone but do not act like it, we are annoying. People will look at it as being a hypocrite, being fake. No one wants to be known as either of those. When we say that we are a Christian, we have to walk around and be as Jesus would have been. He walked around in love.

People are going to be motivated to want to change more by actions than by words. If you are on a mission, as we should all be, to be an example of Christ and you go out to change the world, do so with a pure heart. Don't go out thinking you are the “man or woman”, humble yourself and ask God to use you. Ask him to give you eyes that see the hearts of others when they are hurting. When people come against you, ask him to show you inside of them and their hurts and anger. Ask what it is you can do to help them. Love people for where they are at, not for where they have to go.

Exceed in your own relationship with the Lord, by forgiving quickly. When something comes against you and you want to get offended, don't. Know that Satan is around looking for whom he MAY devour, don't let it be you. Be bigger than that. Know that people are people, they make mistakes. Don't get wrapped up in all of that.

People may look at you and think you are weak, or that you are passive and get stepped on all the time. That is not the case. You can turn the other cheek when someone is coming against you and be the bigger person. When you can walk away and not get into it with someone, that shows being a true man or woman of God. Fools like to argue and get into fights. Godly, wise people, know they don't need to. They are confident in their path of life and don't need to mess with foolishness.

**Daily Bible reading: Matthew 24, Jesus foretells destruction of the temple, Signs of the end of the age, The abomination of desolation, The coming of the Son of Man, The lesson of the fig tree, No one know that day and hour.**

**Pray:** . Lord,let me not take offense and just let things roll off of me. People and things that come against me do not affect me. I know that you have my life in control. Even when the enemy wants to cause division in my life, I won't take it. Let me show love to others even when they don't deserve it. Remind me that people need you. Christians need you. I need you. Let me be thankful always and rest in your word of truth. I ask this in your name, Amen