

In preparing for this msg - **I listened** to a **msg**
on the **same subject** - I taught **9yrs ago**

It was **a reminder** msg for the church - of **the FOUNDATION**
we **had LAID** about how **critically important** it was . . .

for **the church** to **live** in **UNITY** - & **HARMONY**

I **referred to** our "**Foundation for Leadership**" scripture
that **ALL leaders** were required to **study thoroughly**

Col 3:12-17 - an **incredible text** that summarizes what it takes
for **Christians** to **live** in **HARMONY** & **UNITY**

Man - We **laid that foundation** firm in **2001**
& we **constantly reminded** the church of it in **'02** & **'03**

& in **2004** we experienced a **series** of **Relationship Conflicts**
that **ALMOST took** this church **out** - **Permanently**

The **enemy capitalized SO MUCH** on these **Offenses** -
there is **STILL fallout** from those early **Conflict years**

In **my Opinion** - **Offense** & **Conflict** in the church -
is the **Enemy's NUMBER ONE** method

for **TAKING OUT Individual Christians**
& **TAKING OUT** the Effectiveness of **Entire Churches**

But **what AMAZED** me **THEN** - & what **AMAZES TODAY**

Is the Number of Christians (*incl'd'g myself*) who KNOW
what the Bible says about offense & conflict

But who still get so easily TAKEN OUT by it
you would think we had never opened a Bible

SO TODAY- I want to ask us ALL - to make a commitment
to allow God to show us the MIRROR

This message is NOT about THEM - This message is about US

SAY that with me - ***This Msg is about ME !!!***

This message is about OUR PART - OUR ROLE
When we are Offended in the Church

Let's Pray

Jesus taught A LOT on HOW our VERTICAL & HORIZONTAL
Relationships IMPACT ONE ANOTHER

& here's what we know - Especially from the N.T. Teaching

#1) Our Relationship with God - is EVIDENCED (Displayed)
by how we handle our Relationships with others

#2) Our Relationship with God is AFFECTED (Impacted)
by how we handle our Relationships with others

& so - because this is SUCH an IMPORTANT area to Get RIGHT
& because we so often get it WRONG

I just want to SURVEY today - HOW we can Actually HANDLE
“Being Offended in the Church” . . .

AND - How we can actually Bring GLORY to God
IN the way we HANDLE *“Being Offended in the Church”*

AND - what I want to do today is SELL you a BOOK
by a True Reconciliation Professional (not me)

Ken Sande is the President of “Peacemaker” ministries
& the author of the foundational book - “The Peacemaker”

But that in-depth (thick) guide was re-written last year
into a smaller version - called “Resolving Everyday Conflict”

I REALLY REALLY Encourage EVERY Christian who will ever
Face Offense in the church (*which means EVERY Christian*)

to get a copy of this book “Resolving Everyday Conflict”

Or if you want to be a real serious “Student” of Peacemaking
Get the larger version called - “The Peacemaker”

Both by Ken Sande - You can get their ministry info at
peacemaker.net (SINGULAR) peacemakER.net

We don’t actually HAVE these books (amazon.com)

I didn’t know about Ken Sande or the Peacemaker Ministries
back when Offense almost DESTROYED this church

& I had no one around me Wise enough (*or Strong enough*)
to get these truths into my life

I wish I would've **had** this **Knowledge** & **Commitment** back then -

Because there would've been a **lot MORE Glorifying God**
& **lot LESS Enemies MADE**

So please - **Lstn Carefully** today - & Let's **ALL** Make a **Commitment**
to **making** these **4 steps to Peacemaking**
a **VERY REAL** part of our **Christian Life** - - *Here they are . . .*

- #1) Glorify God**
 - #2) Get the Log out of our Own Eye**
 - #3) Gently Restore**
 - #4) Go and Be Reconciled**
-
-

Let's just **SURVEY** **all FOUR** today . . .

#1) GLORIFY GOD

It's amazing how **Mature Christians** (including leaders) - so **Quickly**
LEAVE God on the **SHELF** - **when** they've **been Offended**

We're **not concerned** with **Glorifying God** - we're **concerned** with
How **WE FEEL** - We've been **HURT**, We've been **WRONGED**

Our **Natural Response** is to think about
NUMERO UNO - **NUMBER ONE** - **ME** - **MYSELF** - & !

& **that Power** of **SELF INTEREST** - even in **Mature Christians**
Often Keeps **God SIDELINED** - **During** an **Offense**

OR - we **Justify** our **SELF FOCUS** - with **God's Word**

We **Manage** to **USE The Bible** to **DEFEND**
our **Feelings**, our **Anger**, & our Response

But **VERY SELDOM** - is our **First & Foremost** thought
HOW am I going to GLORIFY GOD in this situation?

But that is **EXACTLY** what our **First & Foremost** thought - **MUST BE**

If you are **Saved today** - your **#1 purpose** in life
is to **GLORIFY GOD** - to **BRING HIM Glory**

1 Corinthians 10:31 (esv)

31 . . . whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Colossians 3:17 (esv)

17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus . . .

When we **Find ourselves** - on the **Receiving End** of an Offense
One of the **most Valuable things** we can do . . .

is to Just **STOP !!** - & **ASK** ourselves -
How can I Bring GLORY to GOD in this Situation ??

Now - **Many Christians** don't **really know** what that **means** -
to ***"Bring Glory to God"***

***"Bringing Glory to God" is us Manifesting (displaying)
God's Nature & His Character in our life***

When we **act** (respond) in **God's character**, & **not** our Own,
that ***"Brings Glory to God"***

So **WHEN** we **Respond** in **Mercy, Grace, Compassion, & Wisdom**
Those are **GOD'S Character Traits** - & that **Brings Glory** to God

& **when people** around you **SEE** you **respond** that way - **they** will
GIVE GLORY to God - because **they know** that's **not Natural**

In **EVERY** Matter of **OFFENSE** or **CONFLICT**
We've **got** to **Continually ask** ourselves:

How can I **Glorify God** in this situation ?

How can I **Honor God**?

How can I **Display the Life of Christ** in me?

OFTEN - what we **really need** - is a **Christian - More Mature** than us
to **Give us insight** - & **point us** in the **right direction**

& **what** we **DON'T** Really **NEED** - is **someone** who **will agree** with **us**
no matter how **ungodly** or **unbiblical** we're **acting**

Ken Sande's Book - Resolving Everyday Conflict . . .

has some **Great examples** of **HOW** you can **Bring Glory** to **God**
right in the midst of **Being Offended** in the church

But still - **When** you **experience Offense** in the Church
having a **Mature Christian** to **guide** you **BIBLICALLY** is crucial

& **ALWAYS Remember** - **Tell yourself** a **Thousand** Times
Your **Highest Goal** is to **IMITATE** God - & **Bring Him GLORY**

Ephesians 5:1–2 (esv)

1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.

2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us .

..

#1) Glorify God

#2) GET THE LOG OUT OF OUR OWN EYE

We have got to OWN OUR PART
of EVERY Offense we're involved in

When we've been Offended - Our NATURE is
to FOCUS (Obsess) on what that OTHER person has Done

& THAT is the PROBLEM . . .

Our Natural Focus is on that OTHER Person
& that's the EXACT OPPOSITE of what Jesus Calls us to

Matthew 7:3–5 (esv)

3 Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?

4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye?

5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

This is such a critical NEED - In EVERY SINGLE Offense

HOW IS IT - that we think that 2x4 sticking out of our eye . . .

is actually a MAGNIFYING glass - that enables us to see a
SPECK of saw-dust in that other person's eye

& man - if a 2x4 becomes a Magnifying glass - then I've met some
Christians with the HUBBLE TELESCOPE in their Eye

“Hey man, is that the HUBBLE TELESCOPE sticking out of your eye?” YEP - I can see a speck of dust in another Christian’s eye from a thousand miles . . .”

**Guys - Please - Listen - WE HAVE GOT to see our OWN SIN
& see our own FAILURES - FIRST**

& ONLY then - can we Attempt to HELP someone else with theirs

& BTW - Jesus is NOT saying here - that we shouldn’t help someone else with their own sins

He’s saying that FIRST - We’ve GOT to realize that OUR sin is just as bad - or WORSE - BEFORE we help them with theirs

**& IF you say - you have NO ROLE in an Offense
Then THAT statement - PROVES your ROLE**

We’ve Got to JUDGE our OWN ACTIONS

**What ROLE has our ATTITUDE played in this Offense ?
What ROLE have our ACTIONS played in this Offense ?**

Psalm 139:23–24 (esv)

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!

24 And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

Ask God to REVEAL it - then TAKE RESPONSIBILITY for it

ADMIT it - ACKNOWLEDGE it - CONFESS it

This is another place we often need a Spiritual Mentor to help us -

someone who can suggest HOW we may be able to see that LOG that Jesus says we already have sticking out of our eye

AND - If you have the courage to read Ken Sande's book "Resolving Everyday Conflict" - He'll give you more details

We need to take RESPONSIBILITY for our ROLE

We need to OWN it - & we need to CONFESS it to God . . .

AND Ultimately - we need to CONFESS it to that other person

Which leads us to Step #3

#1) Glorify God

#2) Get the Log out of our own eye

#3) GENTLY RESTORE

Often - After Truly Seeking to Glorify God

& After Dealing with the Log in our own eye . . .

Often we'll find - there's NO real REASON to even address the issue with the other person

BUT - there IS a time when we are called to address an Offense WITH the other Person

Galatians 6:1 (NLT)

1 Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself.

If you have truly taken the 1st two steps (*Glorify God - Get Log*)
hopefully with the help of a Spiritual Mentor

Then you need to pray God would make a way for you to GENTLY
& HUMBLY approach the person who's offended you . . .

Being Very Careful how you handle it - SO THAT you don't become
the OFFENDER instead of the OFFENDED

& Remember - Our Goal is to GLORIFY GOD
& our Concern is for THAT PERSON - NOT Ourselves

We're NOT Defending Ourselves - or Retaliating in any way
Our goal is to HELP that person - in THEIR walk w/ the Lord

James 5:20 (NKJV)

*20 . . . he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a
soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.*

But this - *"TURNING" a sinner from his way . . .*

Must be done GENTLY - HUMBLY - & in LOVE - this is NOT
Harsh Judging - it's Lovingly Addressing an ACTION

Again - a Mature Spiritual Mentor should be
a Required - Pre-requisite for this Step

& finally - the famous Matthew 18:15 (esv)

*15 "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault,
between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained
your brother.*

Guys - MAT 18 IS PRIMARILY ABOUT LOVE & FORGIVENESS

The **NET BIBLE** correctly titles this section
“Restoring Christian Relationships”

The Paraphrase - THE MESSAGE says

Mat 18:15 ***“If a fellow believer hurts you, go and tell him—work it out between the two of you. If he listens, you’ve made a friend.***

Mat 18 is **NOT** about **Condemning Judgment** - It’s about
RESTORING Christian **Relationships** when **At All Possible**

There **IS** a time **when** we **MUST go** to that other **person**
But we have **GOT** to **GO Gently** - **Humbly** - & **In Love** . . .

AND - After **FIRST addressing** our **OWN SIN** in this matter

& I promise you - ***If you will go to someone & say - “Listen, please, I’m truly sorry for how I’ve handled this situation. My attitude has been wrong, my actions have been wrong. Please forgive me”***

Most Often - ***Almost always***

that **other person** will **RESPOND** in that same **Spirit**

Most Often say they’ll say - ***“No, actually, It was MY attitude & MY actions that were wrong, & I’m sorry. Please forgive ME”***

If you need **MORE** on **how** to **go about** this - go to **amazon.com**
& BUY ***“Resolving Everyday Conflict”*** - **Ken Sande**

But **let me say** one other thing . . . You **MUST** - **GO IN PERSON** !!

NO Texting - **Tweeting** - **Emailing** - **Facebooking** - **Google+ing**
Morse coding - **Carrier pigeoning**, You **MUST** - **GO** - In Person !!

AND - there **ARE** **exceptions** to the **GENTLY RESTORE** Rule

There are times when you **SHOULD NOT Approach** a person
& **should NOT** try to **RESTORE** them

But **I don't** have the **time** to **get into** the **Exceptions** - -
Either **talk to me** later - or - **GET the BOOK**

#1) Glorify God

#2) Get the Log out of our own eye

#3) Gently Restore . . .

#4) GO AND BE RECONCILED

One of the **ABSOLUTE HARDEST Vs's** in the **N.T.**
Regarding Offense - is **Mat 5:23-24**

These Vs's ARE Part of the **larger context** of ANGER
& **Jesus** is using **Extreme Language** to make his point

& He **DOES make** his **point** here - **Very CLEARLY**

Matthew 5:23–24 (esv)

***23 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember
that your brother has something against you,***

***24 leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled
to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.***

In an **EXTREME way** - Jesus **makes it Clear** - How **IMPORTANT** it is
that we **do all we can** to be **RECONCILED** with **other Believers**

This **IS** the **Ultimate Goal** - in **ALL NORMAL Matters** of **Offense**

& guys - ANY Reconciliation - after an Offense in the Church
Will only come - Thru GOD'S DIVINE FORGIVENESS

True Reconciliation after an Offense CANNOT occur
without God's Miraculous GIFT of Forgiveness

Ken Sande says

*“Christians are the most FORGIVEN people in the world.
Therefore, we should be the most FORGIVING people in the
world*

Many times in the N.T. - It is made Perfectly CLEAR - we are
To Forgive - IN THE SAME WAY - as we have been Forgiven

& THREE times Jesus makes it clear . . .

that our Forgiving others Has a Direct IMPACT on how
our Heavenly Father offers US continual Forgiveness

Here's a Definition - Ken Sande

*Divine Forgiveness is a Radical Decision not to hold an offense
against the offender. It means to release a person from
punishment or penalty*

Divine Forgiveness is ALWAYS REQUIRED
for True Reconciliation after an Offense

& us withholding God's Divine Forgiveness
is one of the surest ways there is - to our Spiritual Death

Many people have been credited with this saying:

*“Unforgiveness is the poison we drink ourselves,
hoping that others will die”*

& There are TWO SIDES to this Divine Forgiveness

ONE SIDE - is completely between YOU & GOD

This is YOUR Forgiveness & Release of an Offense to God
& this DOES NOT depend on the other person at all

This part of Divine Forgiveness Frees YOU
from Bitterness & Resentment & Bondage from the Offense

But the other SIDE of Divine Forgiveness,
that LEADS to Reconciliation - DOES involve the other person

This SIDE is when there is Real Confession, & Repentance,
& Divine Forgiveness - Usually on the Part of BOTH PARTIES . . .

& THAT - is when we see the Super-Miracle of Full Reconciliation

There's SO MUCH MORE that needs to be said
about the Reconciliation Step

But let me just add this ONE THING . . .

Sometimes you can Truly go thru ALL the steps
& still have the other person REFUSE Reconciliation

BUT - - YOUR responsibility
is YOUR HEART & YOUR ACTIONS

AND - God calls you - to always be WILLING to Reach Out
to that other person - for Reconciliation

But God knows it TAKES TWO - to Be Reconciled

That's why Rom 12:18 says - very clearly (esv)
18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

Guys - **WE NEED** to **Learn MORE** about **These Critical Truths**

I PRAY Calvary Nuevo **would be** a **SAFE-HARBOR**
of **Unity**, & **Harmony**, & **Reconciliation**

& **THAT** is why I've been **SUBTLY Encouraging** you to buy the book
"Resolving Everyday Conflicts" by **Ken Sande**

& **don't just** use it as a **coaster** for your **Large Dr Pepper**
Read it - **Study** it - **Put it** to the test - **WITH** Someone else

& **ONE MORE THING** - we **CANNOT do this** on our **OWN** -
There is NOT enuf TRY in us

We've **got** to **Crucify** that Idol of **SELF-INTEREST**
We've **got** to **Surrender** our **RIGHTS**
We've **got** to be **TRANSFORMED** by the Power of God

& as we **Fully Surrender** to **Jesus Christ** - **Daily**
& as we **Live FILLED** with the **Holy Spirit** - **Daily**

We will **begin** to **Walk in the Spirit**, & **NOT fulfill**
the **Natural DESIRES** of the **Flesh** (*that WAR w/ the Spirit*)

Let's Surrender this to God - & **Ask Him** to **Transform** us
& then Let's **Step-Out & DO** - what He **CALLS US to DO**

IN HIS POWER - & **FOR HIS GLORY** - **OKAY ??**

Let's Pray