

Don't Take The Bait ~ Week 1

THE TRAP OF LIVING OFFENDED

1. It's impossible to avoid being offended.
2. Even if you escape one offense, the creative ways you can get baited are endless.

Luke 17:1 (NIV) Jesus said to his disciples: "Things that cause people to stumble are bound to come.."

Luke 17:1 (NKJV) Then He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses should come.."

Offense is the Greek word **Skandalon**:
bait that triggers a trap to close when an animal touches it.

The BAIT is OFFENSE.. the TRAP is LIVING OFFENDED

Anytime you hold onto an OFFENSE, you put BITTERNESS in your heart.

HOLDING onto an offense allows the JAWS of bitterness to sink into your heart.

God's plans for your future are too BIG to hold onto an offense from your past.

Avoiding an offense is IMPOSSIBLE, but living offended is a CHOICE.

Proverbs 19:11 "A person's wisdom yields patience; it is to one's glory to overlook an offense."

1. Not everyone overlooks an offense, only the WISEST people do.
2. When you overlook an offense, it's "to one's glory" which means - you become "MAGNIFICENT"
3. To overlook an offense means to "PASS over or STEP over" it.

"Your friends don't need an answer,
and your enemies won't believe you no matter what you say."

4. To step over an offense, you often have to close the gap with LOVE. (Assume the best.)

Proverbs 10:12 "Hatred stirs up conflict, but love covers over all wrongs."

Two options with an offense:

ACCUSE – assume the worst about someone

LOVE – assume the best about someone's intentions

CHALLENGE:

1. NAME something you are offended by right now.
2. Decide to step over it. LET IT GO

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Discussion Guide

Discuss:

- Why is offense the bait and being offended the trap?
- What does being offended do to us that keeps us trapped?
- Why is it that those closest to us have the most power over us to become offended?
- Share a time when you were offended when the other person meant no offense.
- How would you apply Leviticus 19:9-18 to your current life situation?
- Read Proverbs 19:11. A person's wisdom yields patience; it is to one's glory to overlook an offense. When we read this proverb, how does it jibe with Jesus' teachings?
- James 3:9-17 and Proverbs 2:1-5 complement each other. How do these verses apply to this weekend's message? What is God trying to teach us about wisdom in this scenario?
- How can an offense of someone's past influence how a non-Christian views church?
- How has holding onto an offense of your past impacted Christians?
- Give an example where you moved from an accuser to love in a situation where you were offended.
- Do you know someone who holds on to a past offense that is impacting their relationships in the present? What is it like to be around them? Have you been that person?
- Describe a time you chose to overlook an offense. How did that impact the relationship?

Other Passages:

- Psalm 55:12-14
- Leviticus 19:9-18

Challenge:

- Name the trap of offense you need to step over this week with love?
- Take a couple moments to pray by name for a person who has offended you.