

G R O W T H N O T E S

SERMON SERIES:

Free From the Trap: A Four-Part Sermon Series on Offense and Forgiveness

**A biblical journey toward healing, reconciliation,
spiritual maturity, and freedom in Christ – Part 1**

TODAY'S SCRIPTURES:

**Matthew 18:7; Luke 17:1-4; Proverbs 18:19; Proverbs
19:11; James 1:19-20; Matthew 18:15-17; Romans
14:13; Ephesians 4:2-3.**

TODAY'S MESSAGE

“Breaking Out Of The Trap Of Offense”

Key Scriptures:

Matthew 18:7 NKJV: Woe to the world because
of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man
by whom the offense comes!

Dealing with a Sinning Brother

¹⁵ “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. ¹⁶ But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’ ¹⁷ And if he refuses to hear them, tell *it* to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

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Luke 17:1-4: New King James Version Jesus Warns of Offenses: ¹⁷ Then He said to the disciples, “It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe *to him* through whom they do come!

² It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

³ Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.

⁴ And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.”

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Proverbs 18:19: NLT: An offended friend is harder to win back than a fortified city. Arguments separate friends like a gate locked with bars.

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Proverbs 19:11: NLT: Sensible people [with discretion] control their temper; they earn respect by overlooking wrongs.

Message: Smart people know how to hold their tongue; their grandeur is to forgive and forget.

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James 1:19-20: ¹⁹ Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. ²⁰ Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires.

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Romans NLT: ¹² Yes, each of us will give a personal account to God. ¹³ So let's stop condemning each other. Decide instead to live in such a way that you will not cause another believer to stumble and fall.

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Ephesians 4:2-3: NLT: ² Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. ³ Make every effort to

keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace.

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Series Overview

This four-part sermon series is designed to help believers recognize the spiritual danger of offense and unforgiveness, respond to hurt in a biblical way, and walk in the freedom Christ provides. The series moves from definition to deliverance, then from personal impact to relational and spiritual consequences. Each message gives the congregation language for what they are experiencing, Scripture for what God says, and practical steps for healing and obedience.

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Today's Message Background

Primary Question: What is an offense, what do people often mean by a “spirit of offense,” and how do we address and overcome it according to Scripture?

Big Idea: Offense is inevitable, but living offended is optional. Through humility, patience, truth, and forgiveness, believers can refuse the trap and pursue reconciliation.

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WHAT IS OFFENSE?

In the Bible, an "offense" is not just a bruised ego or hurt feelings. Offense primarily means a **stumbling block** or a **trap**—(That's why this message is entitled—**“Breaking Out Of The Trap Of Offense.”** An offense is an action—an attitude—a tradition—even a belief or teaching that causes someone to sin, fall away from faith, or trip spiritually.

The Greek Root Word In The New Testament—Is—*Skandalon*—which originally referred to the trigger stick or bait-hook of an animal trap. It literally means something that trips a person up—a **Sin or Transgression, Breaking God's moral law** or doing a wrong against another person—OR—against God—**Causing Others to Fall.**

Offense describes leading someone else into temptation or sin through careless or harmful behavior—literally placing or causing a "stumbling block" before others. Offense can be harboring resentment—bitterness—OR—a grudge when things don't go your way—OR—when you're faced with difficult truths. Offense can come

simply because we're not ready—and cannot handle the truth!

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WHAT SCRIPTURE SAYS ABOUT FORGIVENESS

- **Matthew 6:14–15** — Jesus teaches that forgiving others is directly connected to receiving forgiveness.
- **Matthew 18:21–35** — The parable of the unforgiving servant; a strong warning against receiving mercy but refusing to extend it.
- **Mark 11:25** — Jesus instructs believers to forgive when they pray, so nothing blocks their relationship with God.
- **Luke 6:37** — “Forgive, and you will be forgiven”; connects forgiveness with mercy and judgment.
- **Luke 17:3–4** — Jesus teaches repeated forgiveness when someone repents, even multiple times in one day.
- **Ephesians 4:32** — Forgive one another as God in Christ forgave you.
- **Colossians 3:13** — Bear with one another and forgive grievances as the Lord forgave you.

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LESSONS ON OVERCOMING OFFENSE

1. “Offense Is Unavoidable—BUT—Living Offended Is A Choice.”

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2. “A Spirit Of Offense Is A Heart Trained To Expect Injury!”

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3. “Offense Builds Walls Where God Calls Us To Build Bridges!”

Proverbs 18:19: NLT: An offended friend is harder to win back than a fortified city. Arguments separate friends like a gate locked with bars.

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4. “Overcoming Offense Requires Obedience To The Way Of Jesus Christ!”

Luke, Chapter 17, Says— Then He said to the disciples, “It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe *to him* through whom they do come! ² It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. ³ Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. ⁴ And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.”