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OFFENSE

FROM "TRIGGERS" SERIES

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

The definition of being **offended** is **resentful** or **annoyed**, typically as a **result of a perceived insult**. It will leave you spiritually and emotionally broken. The spirit of offense comes from the lack of understanding, communication, and value. The enemy will often sow seeds of offense in areas you need - your family, work, church, and circle.

5 signs that someone is easily offended

1. They **complain** more often than not.
2. They are **always the victim**.
3. They are **insecure**.
4. They are **narcissistic**.
5. They just **want attention**.

How many of us can look at this list and see ourselves? We can easily identify these signs in others and not examine internally if we have any of these traits. In Matthew 7:3, *we are instructed to look at ourselves first*. Offense can turn into deeper problems - resentment, unforgiveness, bitterness and hatred.

Judas, one of the 12 disciples, teaches us about the spirit of offense. Let's learn from his story.

JUDAS

One that Jesus **hand picked**.

One that Jesus **gave power**.

One that Jesus **let travel close**.

One that Jesus **washed their feet and fed The Last Supper**.

One that Jesus **trusted with the finances**

OFFENSE SILENCES YOU

*John 12:3-8 NIV - [3] Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. [4] **But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot**, who was later to betray him, objected, [5] "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages." [6] He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. [7] "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. [8] You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."*

It's possible that Judas is offended, because even though Jesus didn't denounce him as a thief, the rebuke drew attention to his greed.

- Offended people are negative people and can always find something wrong in a right moment.
- Silence disconnects and distances you from those you are connected with and assigned to. It will leave you alone and isolated.
- People will avoid telling the truth to those with a spirit of offense because they fear the reaction.

How do you respond to correction or rebuke? What offense(s) have you allowed to silence you? How do you plan to get your voice back?

OFFENSE SEDUCES (TALKS TO YOU)

*John 13:27 NIV - [27] As soon as Judas took the bread, **Satan entered into him**. So Jesus told him, "What you are about to do, do quickly."*

- The enemy cannot stand unity. If he cannot get to you, he will try to get to those around you.
- The enemy uses subtle suggestions to see if you reject or let it in.
- You have to know what to hear and what to resist (see James 4:7).
- When you operate in offense, the gateway to sin is wide open.

Think of a time when you felt offended, how did you respond to the offense? Did you become a different person? How did the offense impact your relationships?

John 8:44 AMP - [44b] He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks what is natural to him, for he is a liar and the father of lies and half-truths.

- The enemy is incapable of telling the truth. He will tell you what you want to hear and justify your offense with his words. He will also make you think you're right when you're wrong.
- When people are offended, they are more easily deceived.
 - *Matthew 24:10 NKJV - And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.*

What lie(s) of the enemy have you believed only to realize you were deceived? Looking back, did offense play a role in accepting the lie?

OFFENSE SEPARATES YOU

*John 13:30 NIV - [30] As soon as Judas had taken the bread, **he went out. And it was night.***

- Offense makes you abandon established relationships, separate yourself and become vulnerable to different attacks. It can cause you to only think short-term.
 - *Proverbs 18:19 NKJV - A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, and contentions are like the bars of a castle.*

Has offense caused you to isolate or separate yourself? In your season of isolation, who did you rely on? How did you handle your emotions toward others? Who or what did you hold onto that you should have released, but kept because you were offended?

OFFENSE SURROUNDS YOU (GATHERS AROUND YOU)

Luke 22:4-6 NIV - [4] And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. [5] They were delighted and agreed to give him money. [6] He consented, and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.

- The enemy takes the thing you are offended about and offers it to you.
- Offense needs company, so turn up your discernment. Anytime the enemy uses somebody against you, it's going to be someone who knows you.
- Offended people support you privately and slander you publically.
- Evil communication corrupts good manners (see 1 Corinthians 15:33).

Who celebrates with you when you are offended? How can you ensure the enemy doesn't use you in his effort to sow offense?

OFFENSE SENTENCES YOU (EXECUTES YOU)

Acts 1:18 NIV - [18] With the payment he received for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out.

- The enemy wants to make you a danger to yourself (self-sabotage) and kill your purpose and assignment. He wants to spill out everything God poured into you.
- You have to know when you have changed due to offense so you can go back and correct it.

What is the enemy trying to get you to destroy? How did you feel once you got what you thought you wanted? Did it correct the offense or make it worse?

THE SOLUTION

*Matthew 18:15-17 NIV- [15] "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. **(YOU AND THEM)** If they listen to you, you have won them over. [16] But if they will not listen, take one or two others along **(THEM AND YOU)**, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' [17] If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; **(US AND THEM)** and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.*

- Own your feelings and deal with offense quickly. Be okay with not receiving an apology.
- True friendship can check you. Rebuke does not mean that those in your circle do not love you.

Who have you given the authority to check you when you are wrong? How receptive are you to being corrected by those who are close to you?

In order to not live in offense, follow this process (Matthew 18:15-17):

- **STEP 1: YOU AND THEM**
 - First, deal with offense 1-on-1 with the person who offended you.
- **STEP 2: THEM AND YOU**
 - If the person doesn't listen, seek someone with wisdom who is neutral to help support you in addressing the matter.
- **STEP 3: US AND THEM**
 - If the matter persists and the person refuses to listen even after addressing it with another individual in step 2, then escalate the issue. *Do not discuss the offense with others until you have gone to the offender first! (Step 1)*

PRAYER

Father, Thank You for being the mirror that shows me who I am. You allow me to see when I am out of character and operating in spirits that do not honor You. You provide me with instructions on how to free myself from the hand of the enemy. You have given me a circle that brought me out of isolation and a vulnerable state where the enemy was able to use me. Because of Your love, I am free and able to effectively communicate my feelings and emotions in a healthy way that does not ruin all that You have poured into me. I now declare my freedom in Jesus' name, Amen!

***Content covered in this sermon study guide may be triggering for some. If you or someone you know may be struggling with suicidal thoughts, contact the suicide prevention resource center by dialing 988 or (800) 273-8255. Please reach out for help.**