

SILENCE, FORGIVENESS, AND THE WAR WITHIN

March 17, 2026

1. In the economy of the Kingdom of Heaven, there is no _____ when it comes to offense. You are either releasing the debt, or you are attempting to collect it. And if you are attempting to collect it—even if only in the currency of "pity" from others or "shame" for the perpetrator, you are operating in the realm of revenge.
2. Revenge isn't always a dramatic act of retaliation. Sometimes revenge is simply the _____ of a debt. It is the refusal to let the other person off your hook.

LUKE 17:1 KJV 1900

1 THEN SAID HE UNTO THE DISCIPLES, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE BUT THAT OFFENCES WILL COME: BUT WOE UNTO HIM, THROUGH WHOM THEY COME!

3. The word He used for "offense" is the Greek word _____.
4. In the spiritual realm, offense is not just a feeling; it is a _____. The "hurt" is the bait, but the "offense", your internal reaction, is the trigger. If you take the bait, the trap closes. Once the trap closes, you are no longer a free agent; you are a prisoner of that moment, that person, and that pain.

Offense is a cage that you enter willingly because the bait of "being right" was too tempting to pass up.

5. We must recognize that the enemy of our souls is a master trapper. He doesn't need to tempt you with "big sins" if he can just get you to trip the *skandalon*. If he can keep you offended, he can keep you out of your _____. An offended heart is a distracted heart. An offended heart is a heart that is looking backward instead of forward.

MATTHEW 27:12-14 KJV 1900

12 AND WHEN HE WAS ACCUSED OF THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND ELDERS, HE ANSWERED NOTHING. 13 THEN SAID PILATE UNTO HIM, HEAREST THOU NOT HOW MANY THINGS THEY WITNESS AGAINST THEE? 14 AND HE ANSWERED HIM TO NEVER A WORD; INSOMUCH THAT THE GOVERNOR MARVELLED GREATLY.

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6. The text says Pilate _____. We need to sit in that marveling for a moment. Why would a seasoned Roman governor be shocked by silence? Pilate was a man who lived in a world of words, arguments, and power plays. He had seen hundreds of rebels, zealots, and criminals stand in that exact spot. Every single one of them did what you and I do: they _____ themselves. They begged for mercy. They pointed out the lies of their accusers. They tried to manage the narrative.
7. In the first-century Mediterranean world, you lived and died by a code of _____. If someone insulted you in public, you were socially and culturally obligated to "repay" that shame with a verbal rebuttal. This was called the "challenge-riposte" dynamic. If you didn't speak up, you were essentially agreeing that you were shameful.
8. But Jesus was not protecting His honor; He was protecting His _____.
9. This silence was an act of _____. Every word Jesus didn't say was a brick in the wall of His trust in the greater plan for His life.
10. When you are silent in the face of accusation, you are making a bold statement to the spiritual realm: **"My reputation is not my god. My Father is my _____."** If you can't be silent, it's because you don't truly believe God is going to fix it. Your noise is the evidence of _____. It is the evidence that you believe your words are more powerful than God's justice.

1 PETER 2:23 KJV 1900

23 WHO, WHEN HE WAS REVILED, REVILED NOT AGAIN; WHEN HE SUFFERED, HE THREATENED NOT; BUT COMMITTED HIMSELF TO HIM THAT JUDGETH RIGHTEOUSLY:

11. Every one of us has a courtroom inside our hearts. When someone hurts us, we immediately convene a trial. We take the judge's bench. We call witnesses (usually people who already agree with us). We replay the "video footage" of the offense over and over. We look for a _____. We want to see the other person suffer, apologize, or be shamed.

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12. Forgiveness is the act of *paradidōmi*. It is not saying, "No crime was committed." It is not saying, "It didn't really hurt." It is saying, **"I am removing myself from the _____ so that God can open the case in His court."** You are acknowledging that God is a better Judge than you are. He has more information, He has more power, and His justice is perfect. If you stay on the bench, you are essentially telling God: "I don't trust Your timing, and I don't trust Your justice. I'd rather do it myself."
13. Why is it so hard to step down from the bench? Why do we love our offenses so much? Because the *skandalon* (the trap) feeds our need for _____.
14. But notice how the trap works. Once you are caught in offense, your vision changes. You begin to see the world through the bars of your cage. You no longer see the person who hurt you as a human being made in the image of God; you see them only as a _____.
15. Offense makes us _____ others for small debts because we have become blinded to the massive debt God has already cleared for us.
16. You are both prisoners of the same _____. Forgiveness is not just a gift you give to the other person; it is the _____ that unlocks your own cage. As long as you hold the debt, you are chained to the debtor.
17. Many times, what we call "venting" is actually _____.
18. Why do we tell people what happened to us? If we are honest, it's usually because we want to "win" the court of public opinion. We want to recruit allies. We want to make sure everyone knows "the truth", which is usually just our side of the story, polished to make us look like the hero and the other person look like the villain. We are seeking _____, not healing.

"He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends."

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19. To "cover" a matter doesn't mean to hide abuse, enable sin, or lie. It means to refuse to use that information as a _____. When you "repeat the matter", when you tell the story to the fifth person who has nothing to do with the resolution, you are not "processing." You are _____. And whatever you rehearse, you reinforce.
20. Every time you tell the story to someone else for the purpose of getting them "on your side," you are taking a small piece of _____. You are trying to diminish that person's reputation in the eyes of another. That is not processing; that is an assassination. You are attempting to make them "pay" through the loss of their good name.

Diagnostic Questions :

- 1. Am I seeking a way out of this pain, or am I looking for a reason to stay angry?*
- 2. Am I talking to someone who can help me forgive, or someone who will help me build a case?*
- 3. Do I leave the conversation feeling quieter, or more "fired up" and "justified"?*

21. True healing produces _____. Revenge produces _____.

22. In Gethsemane, we see the humanity of Jesus in its most raw state. He was not "keeping it all in." He was praying until His sweat became like drops of blood. This wasn't a conversation between two people; this was the _____ of the Son wrestling with the _____ of the Father within Him.

23. His humanity could remain silent before Pilate because the Spirit had already decided that the accusations were not something to be addressed in the realm of His _____.

24. We have established that offense is a trap, but we must understand the biology of how that trap stays closed. When we choose to retain an offense, when we decide to "keep the file" in our own jurisdiction, it does not stay static. It isn't like a file in a cabinet that stays the same for years. It is more like organic matter. It begins to ferment. It becomes _____.

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HEBREWS 12:15 KJV 1900

15 LOOKING DILIGENTLY LEST ANY MAN FAIL OF THE GRACE OF GOD; LEST ANY ROOT OF BITTERNESS SPRINGING UP TROUBLE YOU, AND THEREBY MANY BE DEFILED;

25. Notice the progression. It starts as a root. A root is _____. You can't see a root on the surface. You can walk through a church, sing the songs, and look perfectly fine while a root of bitterness is growing underneath your "polite" exterior. Roots grow in the dark. They grow when we rehearse the hurt in our minds during our commute or while we are trying to fall asleep.

26. But eventually, that root "springs up." It breaks the surface. And when it does, it doesn't just trouble you; it _____ many.

27. So how do we practically live this out? If the war is daily, the strategy must be daily. Forgiveness is not a one-time "event" that covers you forever. It is a legal crisis point, but it is also a **daily responsibility**.

The strategy for daily release is built on three pillars:

1. IDENTIFY THE _____

The moment you feel that "arresting" feeling—that heat in your chest, that immediate desire to explain yourself, that urge to tell someone else what happened, stop. Recognize it for what it is. It is the **skandalon**. Say to yourself: "The trap is being set. My flesh wants to step on the trigger. But I choose to see this as a test of my trust."

2. IMMEDIATE JURISDICTION _____

Don't wait until you "feel" like forgiving. If you wait for the feeling, you will wait forever. Forgiveness is not an emotion; it is a legal decision. You must say: "Father, I am being misrepresented. My heart wants to defend itself. But I am handing the file to You right now. I am closing the case in my court. You are the Judge. I am the child." This is the act of **paradidōmi** in real-time.

3. THE _____ MANDATE

This is the most "uncomfortably accurate" part of the teaching. This is not about liking them. It is about **disarming** the offense. When you pray for the person who triggered the trap, you are essentially cutting the wires of the mechanism. You cannot easily hate someone while you are

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sincerely asking God to work in their life. It forces your heart to move from the position of a **judge** to the position of a **priest**. Priests don't convict; they intercede.

When Jesus stood before Pilate, His silence wasn't just about trust; it was about _____. Because He didn't have to defend His reputation, He was free to fulfill His destiny. He didn't waste a single ounce of emotional energy trying to convince Pilate of His innocence. He saved all of His strength for the Cross.

28. The enemy wants you offended because he wants you _____. He wants you so busy fighting "Pilate" that you never make it to your "Assignment."

The Evidence of Release: How do you know when you've truly handed the case over?

- *You can hear the person's name without your heart rate spiking.*
- *You no longer feel the need to "win" the conversation when their name comes up.*
- *You can see them succeed without feeling like you've lost something.*
- *You find yourself thinking about them less and less, until one day you realize you haven't thought about the "case" in weeks.*

29. True silence is not about holding your breath while you're angry. It's about the _____ of a soul that knows its case is in the hands of the Highest Court. It is the peace that "surpasses all understanding."

The question for your notes today is simple but heavy: "Whose jurisdiction is your hurt in right now?"

30. Jesus stood silent. Not because He had nothing to say, and not because the flesh didn't feel the sting of the lies. He was silent because His humanity had already been brought under the absolute _____ of the Spirit. He had already yielded the rights of His flesh. He was so secure in the **divine justice** already established within Him that He didn't need to hear a verdict from Pilate's lips. The Spirit had already ruled on the case, and the flesh had no choice but to _____ to that silence.

SILENCE IS NOT WEAKNESS. FORGIVENESS IS NOT PASSIVITY. IT IS THE EVIDENCE THAT YOU TRUST GOD ENOUGH TO LET HIM HANDLE WHAT YOU CANNOT. IT IS THE ULTIMATE ACT OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE.
