

Life Group STUDY GUIDE

What you will need to supplement this guide:

1. A copy of the outline provided for notes on this message (copy from message or downloaded from the COASTAL APP.
2. A Bible or Bible APP to refer to verses.

PURSUING LIFE TOGETHER SUNDAY MESSAGE REVIEW

NOTE to the Life Group Leader: This guide is provided as a tool to assist you in facilitating a structured discussion with your group. When used in conjunction with the outline notes and a Bible this tool will ensure that your group will *Engage Authentically*. The questions are merely recommended “talk starters”. It is important for you to let God help you navigate through the conversation as you *pursue life together* as a group.

OPEN IN PRAYER

STARTER QUESTIONS:

Where have you seen God at work in your life since we last met?

What stood out to you from the message this week?

MAIN IDEA:

- REVIEW THE MAIN TOPIC OF THE MESSAGE. Allow time for discussion
- READ THE MAIN SCRIPTURE FROM THE MESSAGE OUTLINE.

How did this verse speak to you in your life?

- REVIEW THE SUB-TOPICS of the MESSAGE.

Have someone read each of the verses that were highlighted in the message, and briefly discuss.

Is there an area that you feel God is speaking to you through this message?

FINAL THOUGHTS:

- SUMMARIZE the main idea of this message.

Would anyone like to share your thoughts about what we discussed today?

How can we pray for you as a group?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

ESTHER: GOD BEHIND CURTAIN

The Dangers of Unchecked Offense

“A brother offended is more unyielding than a strong city...” Proverbs 18:19

Unchecked offenses lead to bad decisions!

*“On the seventh day of the feast, when King Xerxes was in **high spirits because of the wine**, he told the seven eunuchs who attended him—Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas— ¹¹to bring Queen Vashti to him with the royal crown on her head. He wanted the **nobles and all the other men to gaze on her beauty, for she was a very beautiful woman**. ¹²But when they conveyed the king’s order to Queen Vashti, she refused to come. **This made the king furious, and he burned with anger.**”*
Esther 1:10-12

The First Danger of Unchecked Offense - Uncontrolled Anger

ASK YOURSELF - Have I ever been offended by something that later on I realize that I shouldn’t have been offended or upset by?

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

James 1:19, 20

“He immediately consulted with his wise advisers, who knew all the Persian laws and customs, for he always asked their advice...¹⁵“What must be done to Queen Vashti?” the king demanded. “What penalty does the law provide for a queen who refuses to obey the king’s orders, properly sent through his eunuchs?”

Esther 1:13, 15

The Second Danger of Unchecked Offense - Justify Feeling Offended

ASK YOURSELF - Instead of taking my feeling offended to God, do I take it to my friends, therefore I’m led by people instead of being led by the Holy Spirit?

*“Memucan answered the king and his nobles, “Queen Vashti has wronged not **only the king but also every noble and citizen throughout your empire**. ¹⁷**Women everywhere will begin to despise their husbands** when they learn that Queen Vashti has refused to appear before the king. ¹⁸**Before this day is out, the wives of all the king’s nobles throughout Persia and Media will hear what the queen did and will start treating their husbands the same way. There will be no end to their contempt and anger.**”*
Esther 1:16-18

The Third Danger of Unchecked Offense - Exaggerating the situation.

ASK YOURSELF - Do I sometimes allow offense to make a situation MUCH worse than it actually is? Do I turn an offense into a premeditated, calculated and intentional personal attack?

*“So if it please the king, we suggest that you issue a written decree, a law of the Persians and Medes that cannot be revoked. It should order that **Queen Vashti be forever banished from the presence of King Xerxes, and that the king should choose another queen more worthy than she...**”²²He sent letters to all parts of the empire, to each province in its own script and language, proclaiming that **every man should be the ruler of his own home and should say whatever he pleases.**”*

Esther 1:19, 22

Because of the kings uncontrolled anger..

1. The king loses a good wife
2. The empire loses an honorable queen
3. Women throughout the empire will suffer

The Fourth Danger of Unchecked Offense - Making foolish decisions that are hard to recover from.

ASK YOURSELF - Have I ever been so upset that I made a foolish decision out of anger that was hard to recover from?

Have you been led by emotions instead of being led by God?

“It is impossible that no offenses should come...”

Luke 17:1

How should we handle offense?

B. Take it directly to God!

“We are human, but we don’t wage war as humans do. ⁴We use God’s mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. ⁵We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ.”

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

C. Pray for the offender!

“You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’ and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! ⁴⁵In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 5:43,44

- a) Help me to see them how you see them.
- b) Bless their marriage, bless their children, bless their home.

c) Help them to be successful in what they do.

D. Forgive the offender

“Get rid of all bitterness rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³²Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”

Ephesians 4:31-32