

10-18-2026, COTR Texarkana

Title: Unmasked, pt-6

Purpose: Expose how satan uses the trap of offenses to damage relationships and provoke people to forgive and doing acts of love to heal relationships.

Spiritual Truth: Offenses are the bait satan uses to destroy relationships; choosing to forgive and doing acts of love can heal relationships.

Text: 2 Corinthians 2:5-11

Topic: Offenses, Unity, Satan, Devil, Love, Forgiveness, Relationships

Series Title: Unmasked

Series purp.: Expose the schemes, tactics, and strategies of the devil and demons and provoke people to recognize and resist them.

Unmasked, pt-6

- I. Introduction: As Chr. citizens we are responsible to vote Biblical values. Non-partisan voter guides/ ballots, early voting Oct 19-30 TX/ AR *Candidate forum AR, Sat 6 PH
 - A. Review Series: **[1 Peter 5:8-9 (NLT) Stay alert! (be constantly ready⁶) Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour (destroy⁶). (NCV) 9 Refuse to give in to him, by standing strong in your faith.]** Christians are in a spiritual battle against an enemy we can't see. In this series we're exposing the tactics and strategies the devil uses against us.
 - B. Series 'Unmasked pt-6'. Today we'll talk about how satan uses offenses to destroy unity in relationships at home, school, work, church, neighborhood, ball team, etc. but we can choose to forgive and do acts of love to heal relationships.
- II. What does it mean to be offended?
 - A. **[Pr.18:19 (NLT) An offended friend (NCV insulted, NIV wronged)** is harder to win back than a fortified city. **Arguments** separate friends like a gate **locked with bars.]**
 - B. Def. Offended: To feel hurt, angered, mistreated, or wronged by what someone did or said; To be outraged because we feel attacked or insulted.² Gk. *skandalon*, the bait in satan's trap to cause us to stumble; ¹ Offenses can be real or imagined, **e.g.**, Someone says something derogatory about us or someone repeats a rumor about us.
 1. When we hold on to an offense, we take the bait and relationships are damaged. Offended people often don't realize they're caught in a trap and a pawn of satan.
 2. A progression offended people follow: (1) Someone hurts us or makes us mad; (2) we get upset and become angry; (3) we attack with words or we withdraw and build walls to protect ourselves from being hurt again; (4) if we refuse to forgive; (5) we seek revenge; (6) we become bitter and the relationship falls apart and our relationship with God is also affected. When we take the bait of satan, the offense becomes a spiritual stronghold that can only be broken by forgiveness and love.
- III. How do I know if I'm carrying an offense?
 - A. We relive the offense over and over in our mind, **e.g.**, cutting grass WV 7 yrs. after Ca
 - B. We talk negatively about them to others.
 - C. We find ourselves punishing them in sometimes subtle (passive aggressive) and sometimes overt (aggressive) ways. They hurt us so we hurt them. We build a wall

- between us and the person who offended us and pull away from them. We don't want to be around them **e.g.**, unfriend on FB, don't return texts or calls, avoid them in store
- D. Unless we forgive them, time doesn't make things better.
- E. When we realize we're offended, we have 2 choices: we can keep partnering with satan and keep chewing the bait (*Skandalon*) or spit it out and forgive them.
- IV. How can we get free when we're caught in the trap of offense?
- A. [Ge. 37:18–20 (NLT)] When Joseph's brothers saw him coming, they...said. 20...let's **kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns...**] Context: they were offended because Joseph was dad's favorite. Years later in Egypt, Joseph had the chance to take the bait of satan because of what they did. Joseph suffered as a slave and in jail. F.F. 17 years later Joseph's brothers come to Him to buy food. [45:4–15 (NLT)]...“I am Joseph, your brother, whom **you sold into slavery in Egypt**. 5 But don't be upset, and don't be angry with yourselves for selling me to this place...7 **God has sent me ahead of you** to keep you and your families alive and to preserve many survivors....8 he (*God*)... **made me**...the governor of all Egypt...15 Then Joseph...**wept** over them
1. If anyone had a right to be offended, it was Joseph. How could a man treated so badly not be offended but act in a loving way?
- B. (1) Joseph chose to forgive those who hurt him. We won't be able to get over the offense until we 1st forgive them. [Col. 3:13 (NLT)] Make allowance for each other's faults (*ESV* *bear with one another; accept, endure, be patient*), and **forgive anyone who offends you**. Remember, the **Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.**] Forgiveness means I turn my offense over to God for justice. I will no longer punish or get even. I'm wiping the slate clean and giving them another chance.
- C. (2) Joseph chose love instead of hate. [Lk. 6:27–28 (NLT)] “But to you who are **willing to listen**, I (*Jesus*) say, **love** your enemies! **Do good** to those who hate you. 28 **Bless** those who curse you. **Pray** for those who **hurt you**.] Why did Jesus say this? It's because love has power to heal relationships Satan wants to destroy; Loving people who have hurt us is a choice not a feeling. [Pr. 10:12 (ESV)] **Hatred** stirs up strife, but **love covers all offenses.**]
1. If we find it hard to treat people who offend us like this, ask God to help us forgive and love them so you can get free from satan's trap and be healed.
- V. Conclusion/ Response
- A. Prayer: (1) Are you offended at what someone did to you? (2) Are you willing to do your part to reconcile by forgiving them, and acting in a loving way?
- B. Souls: The greatest demonstration of love and forgiveness is what Jesus did on the cross. Jn. 3:16, Problem- Solution- Decision
- VI. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.
1. Easton, M. G. (1893). In *Easton's Bible dictionary*. New York: Harper & Brothers.
 2. Merriam-Webster, I. (2003). *Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary*. (Eleventh ed.). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc.

3. Lowery, D. K. (1985). [2 Corinthians](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 558). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.
4. Garland, D. E. (1999). [2 Corinthians](#) (Vol. 29, pp. 358–359). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.
5. Barbieri, L. A., Jr. (1985). [Matthew](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 30). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.
6. Raymer, R. M. (1985). [1 Peter](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 856). Victor Books.

VII. Supplemental Material

- A. Prin God blesses unity S Ps Unity releases God’s blessing and power and satan wants to undermine our unity at home, work, church, politics. One of his most successful to destroy unity is offenses. Today we’re going to expose him.
- B. Today we’ll see how satan uses offenses to damage relationships. This is true for families, work, and churches but applicable to all relationships. [2 Cor. 2:5–11 (NLT) ...the man who caused all the **trouble hurt all of you** more than he **hurt me**. 6 Most of you opposed him, and that was **punishment** enough. 7 Now...it is time to **forgive and comfort him**. Otherwise he may be **overcome by discouragement**. 8 So I urge you now to reaffirm your **love** for him...10 When you **forgive** this man, I forgive him, too...11 so that **Satan** will not outsmart us. For we are familiar with his evil schemes.
 1. Key words: Trouble, hurt, opposition, punishment, discouragement, comfort, forgiveness, and love. Satan was involved in a scheme to damage relationships.
 2. What this person did to cause grief is uncertain. Perhaps it was an incestuous man or Timothy was mistreated.⁴ More likely, Paul’s authority as an apostle was challenged by someone and the church was divided.³ Whatever the problem, people were offended, and Paul saw it as a trap of satan. Today’s message will be a series of Q/A’s about “Offenses, the Bait of Satan”. Credit John Bevere’s book
- C. The most hurtful offenses happen with people we’re close to. Families hurt one another, church members get hurt and take sides, teams at work get divided, e.g., a lawyer fired staff for political views on FB, a teenager gets hurt and runs away. [Eph. 6:4 (NLT) Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them.]
- D. What should we do when someone is offended at us? This is tricky because offended people usually feel they’re right and justify their responses.
 1. If they’re a believer, [Mt. 5:23–24 (ESV) So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that **your brother has something against you**, 24 leave your gift there before the altar and go. **First be reconciled to your brother**, and then come and offer your gift.] We don’t have to take the blame when we weren’t wrong but reconciliation is our primary goal. Pride makes us defend ourselves and our rights; humility says I hurt you, please forgive me without deciding who was

right. Reconciliation between brothers must be accomplished whether the “innocent” or the “offending” brother takes the first step.⁵ The more mature makes the 1st step.

2. If they’re an unbeliever, [Ro. 12:17–18 (NLT) **Never pay back evil with more evil.** Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. 18 **Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.**] Sometimes people want to be offended and want to fight. We can’t reconcile with people who don’t want to, but we can act like a mature Christian and not make it worse.
- E. [1 Cor. 1:23 (NLT) So when we preach that **Christ was crucified**, the **Jews are offended (ESV a stumbling block to Jews)**, skandalon. [John 6:60–61 (ESV) many of his disciples heard it...said, “This is a hard saying...61 But Jesus...said to them, “**Do you take offense at this?**”] i.e. take the bait of satan, Skandalon.
- F. Our culture has gone crazy. One of the biggest cultural sins is to offend someone and people are offended over everything. Video tip salad, a New Jersey school board voted to remove all holidays from the school calendar to avoid offending anyone. Our culture is offended over what the Bible teaches about marriage, gender, sexual immorality, race, individual responsibility, salvation through Christ alone, work ethic, etc. When we stand for Biblical truth, some people will get offended. That’s their problem, not ours. Christians should never be demeaning, arrogant or self-righteous; we should be gentle, kind and respectful but never abandon Jesus or Biblical truth just so people will like us.
- G. What do we do when offenses and truth collide?
Jesus offended people by telling them the truth. [Mt. 15:7–12 (ESV)...12 Then the disciples...said...“Do you know that **the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?**”] Instead of responding to truth and repenting, they took the bait of satan, Skandalon. When Biblical truth offends people, we must humbly stand for truth. Even when we speak the truth in love, some people will get offended like they did at Jesus. We don’t have to back down or apologize but pray for their eternal soul.