



# The People You Can't Offend

March 12, 2017 | WONDERFUL MERCY CHURCH

# An Enemy of Peace

- An enemy of peace and our soul's wellness: being offended and nursing anger that feeds it
- Offense is something we choose. Every time. It never just happens—it's never forced on us against our will
- So also: we can choose not to be offended
- Brant Hansen's advice: "Go into situations thinking, I'm not going to be offended. No matter what."

# An Enemy of Peace

- **Ecclesiastes 7:9** NAS

“Do not be eager in your heart to be angry, For anger resides in the bosom of fools.”

- “Let us consider, then, how great the sin of anger is, by which, while we part with mildness, the likeness of the image of the Most High is spoiled.” [Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* 1.5.78, in *The Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*]

# The People You Can't Offend

- What if here at Wonderful Mercy Church, we were known as THE PEOPLE YOU CAN'T OFFEND?
- What if we decided that if we were going to have any kind of reputation at all it would be this: “Oh, *those people at Wonderful Mercy, they'll love anyone!*”

# Scandalized?

- **Matthew 7:3** GW

“So why do you see the piece of sawdust in another believer's eye and not notice the wooden beam in your own eye?”

- When you are offended, you cannot see the offender the way your Father sees them

# Scandalized?

- **Romans 4:17** NKJV

“God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did...”

- God looks at the person we're offended with as she could be, as she was made to be

# Free to Love

- “Jesus is this way with the most morally embarrassing people. You can’t find a single story in the Bible where He’s so disgusted, so scandalized by someone’s moral behavior, that He writes him off. It just doesn’t happen.” [Brant Hansen, *Unoffendable* (Thomas Nelson Publishers, ©2016), p. 27]

# Free to Love

- **John 14:1-3** MSG

“Don’t let this throw you. You trust God, don’t you? Trust me. <sup>2</sup> There is plenty of room for you in my Father’s home. If that weren’t so, would I have told you that I’m on my way to get a room ready for you? <sup>3</sup> And if I’m on my way to get your room ready, I’ll come back and get you so you can live where I live.”



# Free to Love

- If Jesus doesn't write people off when they engage in offensive behavior, why do we?
- “Our problem is that this world does not teach us to pay attention to what matters.” [John Ortberg, *Soul Keeping* (Zondervan, © 2014), p. 54]
- Jesus is inviting us to pay attention to what matters – to our souls and the spectacular beauty in the ones with whom we are offended, for they too bear the image of God

# If We Were The People You Can't Offend

- We would be an inviting people, people who are “attractive in a way that makes others want to be near us, with us”
- We would be a faith community we'd be eager to invite others into: a safe haven, filled with grace



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