

A CHRISTIANS CORE VALUES #5 DEAL WITH OFFENSES

It is a fact. If you are a part of the human race you will be offended or you will offend.

I. You will offend others

A. We offend with words

James 3² For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body. KJV.

I don't think we are perfect.

B. We offend the weaker believer with our liberty

Rom. 14²¹ *It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. KJV

Matt. 18⁶ But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea. KJV

We must be careful that we do not violate the conscience of a new convert by doing something that they have been saved out of.

When Paul stated that he would eat no meat he was referring to meat offered to idols. If a convert had been saved out of idol worship was to see him eating meat offered to idols he would be tempted to return to pagan practice.

II. You will be offended by other Christians

A. Others may think you are not good enough to serve.

Ill. Acs 15 Paul and Barnabas got in a heated argument over John Mark who had left Paul on a missions trip. Barnabas took Mark and Paul took Silas and went their separate ways.

B. Others may be clickish and racially separated.

Gal. 2 ¹¹ When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. ¹² Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. ¹³ The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray.

¹⁴ When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, “You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs? NIV

C. Others may criticize and talk about you.

2Co. 12 ²⁰ For I am afraid that when I come I may not find you as I want you to be, and you may not find me as you want me to be. I fear that there may be quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder. NIV

The list could go on and on. **A brother don't pay you what he owes you, a brother wants you to cut him a special deal etc.**

III. We can be offended by God.

A. We can be offended with God **when things go wrong.**

Ill. John the Baptist- “I am in prison, Jesus is free. He is the Messiah. Why isn't he doing something about my circumstances? Are you the Christ or not?

Matt. 11 4...Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: ⁵ The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and

the poor have the gospel preached to them. ⁶ And blessed is *he*,
whosoever shall not be offended in me. KJV

There are a lot of people in the church who throw up their hands and walk out on God because they are offended by God's sovereign will to answer in a time and fashion of his own choosing.

If they hear a message from the Word of God that offends their own will to continue in sin or disobedience to that Word, they get offended and determine never to step foot inside the door of the church again.

If their prayer is answered in a way that they don't like, they stomp out on God and refuse to pray again!

If we truly believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Deliverer, the Son of God, the Savior of the World, the Lord of our Lives, then let's **trust him** through every situation, no matter how dark it may seem on the outside.

Let's not get offended by Christ! Let's not get offended by the truths of his Holy Word!

Psa. 119:165 Great peace have they which love thy law and nothing shall offend them.

B. We can be offended with God when we are persecuted.
Ill. Matt. 13 ²⁰ But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; ²¹ Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended KJV

Matt. 24 ⁹ Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. ¹⁰

And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. KJV

IV. How we deal with our offenses determines our peace.

A. If I am the offender

1. I will face a strong stubborn spirit.

Pro. 18¹⁹ An offended brother is more unyielding than a fortified city, and disputes are like the barred gates of a citadel. NIV

2. I should labor for reconciliation.

Mat. 5²³ “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there **remember** that your brother has something against you,²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar. **First go and be reconciled** to your brother; then come and offer your gift. **NIV**

- * by dealing with the issue quickly
- * by confessing our fault
- * by humbling ourselves to our brother
- * by making restitution for the wrong done.

B. If I am the offended

1. Forgive unconditionally- They do not have to ask for forgiveness.

Mark 11²⁵ And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.

Matt. 18³⁴ In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

³⁵ “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.” NIV

2. I am to pray for the offender.

Luke 23 34 Jesus prayed for those who were crucifying him, “Father forgive them for they know not what they do”.

Stephen prayed a similar prayer for those stoning him.

3. I am to love them.

1Peter 4⁸ Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

C. What happens if I do not obey the Holy Spirit in forgiving my brother?

1. My worship is not received.

Do you think God is serious about you making your relationships right with other people? He’s serious enough to say that you need to stop right now, right where you are and make it right. You can continue playing church all you want, but God isn’t going to have it.

2. I destroy the relationship.

3. I place myself in bondage.

There is no bondage like that of broken relationships. Loose ends make for tight knots. When you are at odds with a family member or a brother in Christ, it gets everyone involved all tied up in knots, and the only way to untie those knots is through reconciliation and forgiveness. It’s only then that peace can be made. It’s only then that people feel the freedom to open up and be one again.

I can have no peace.

D. What is accomplished when I forgive?

1. I have kept a brother or sister.

2. I have maintained unity in the body of Christ

3. My worship will be accepted by God