

To Be Or Not To Be Offended

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Offend from the dictionary:

1. An official crime, a crime against moral, social, or other accepted standards
2. Anger, resentment, hurt, or displeasure
3. Something that causes displeasure, humiliation, anger, resentment, or hurt

Offend from the Scriptures:

1. To scandalize - to stumble or entice to sin, cause to fall or sin.
2. Scandal - snare, the cause of displeasure or sin, or malicious gossip. A situation that causes someone to loose their faith.
3. To fall, to sin.
4. To break away from just authority. To rebel, revolt.

To Offend

Sin - Crime against God.

We need to worry about offending God. Sinning is causing offense against God.

(Matthew 13:41-42) The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that *offend* [cause to sin], and them which do iniquity; (42) And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

The disciples, especially Peter, were an offense to Christ. When we desire the things of the world, then we offend God.

(Matthew 16:21-23) From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. (22) Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. (23) But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

We are to mark them, take note of them, who cause offenses contrary to the doctrines we have received.

(Romans 16:17) Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

Jesus was delivered to death for our offenses (sins).

(Romans 4:25) Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

To Cause Someone to be Offended

Causing someone displeasure, hurt, or causing someone to fall and stumble. To scandalize - entice to sin. Scandal - cause of displeasure or sin, or malicious gossip.

The key to avoiding offense is learning how not to be offended. Most of us have lots of experience offending others. Offenses will come, no matter how we try to avoid them.

(Matthew 18:1-7) At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? (2) And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, (3) And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. (4) Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (5) And whoso shall receive one

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such little child in my name receiveth me. (6) But whoso shall offend (entice to sin) 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. (7) Woe unto the world because of offences (scandal)! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

Who are the "little ones"? In context, they are little children, verses 1-5. However, the definition is not limited to young people. Verses 12-14 define "little ones" as the one sheep out of 100 that went astray. In Zechariah 13:7, the little ones are all the sheep. We are all "little ones" in the general sense.

An example of offending the "little ones" is a new believer in the faith, who comes to church and is offended by gossiping in the church. We are never to speak bad about our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

To Be Offended

(Proverbs 18:19) A brother offended (break away) is harder to be won [back] than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.

The disciples were offended by Christ.

(Matthew 26:31, 33) Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended (stumble) because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. (33) Peter answered and said unto him, Though all *men* shall be offended (stumble) because of thee, *yet* will I never be offended.

People who are not grounded in Christ, easily become offended, as shown in the Parable of the Sower.

(Mark 4:16-17) And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; (17) And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

Offended at Christ. Because of offense, very few miracles were done.

(Mark 6:3-6) Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. (4) But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. (5) And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed *them*. (6) And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.

Jesus warned us of coming persecution so we should not be offended.

(John 16:1-3) These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. (2) They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. (3) And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

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Jesus knew He offended some of His own disciples, who as a result, no longer walked with Him. Some people are not willing to walk with the Lord. For some people, the truth will offend them. (John 6:60-66) Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? (61) When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? (62) *What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? (63) It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life. (64) But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. (65) And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. (66) From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

There will be situations in the world that will cause people to loose their faith in God. Even though situations come against us, we are still accountable for our actions. NEVER LOOSE YOUR FAITH IN GOD!!

Not To Be Offended

Canaanite Woman

(Matthew 15:21-28) Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. (22) And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. (23) But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. (24) But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (25) Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. (26) But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* to dogs. (27) And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. (28) Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great *is* thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

Here we see that Jesus was testing her faith, and this woman **chose not to be offended**. Many people would have been offended, but this woman was not. She humbled herself to the feet of the master and continued in faith petitioning the Lord. As a result she received the miracle that she was asking for.

However, just before this incident, Jesus also offended the Pharisees, Matthew 15:1-20. In verse 12, we see that the disciples were concerned about Jesus offending these "high and mighty" important persons. But the Savior was not out to make friends. He called the Pharisees hypocrites, transgressors of the Commandments of God, and blind leaders of the blind. Unlike the Canaanite woman who had great faith, the Pharisees *were* offended. One must conclude that it is not good to be offended. The Canaanite woman seemed to have a right to be offended at indignities done to her, but she wasn't. The Pharisees had no right to be offended because they were wrong in leading others away from the paths of God. Yet they were offended. Therefore, WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO BE OFFENDED!

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What We Should Do

We should give ourself to loving God's law, because this brings peace and strength to our hearts. This strength will keep us from falling away from God.

(Psalm 119:165) *Great peace have they which love thy law: and **nothing** shall offend them.*

We should do our best not to offend our brethren.

(Romans 14:21) *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.*

We should try not to offend anyone. We should not have prejudices in our church.

(1 Corinthians 10:32) *Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God.*

Why? Because we want to bring people to Christ.

(1 Corinthians 10:33) *Even as I please all **men** in all **things**, not seeking mine own profit, but the **profit** of many, that they may be saved.*

We should never be ashamed of what we believe.

(Romans 9:33) *As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*

Remember, Jesus is a stumbling-block, a rock of offense. Jesus is truth, and there are those who do not want truth. Jesus is the Holy One, and there are those who do not want holiness.

Will everyone be saved? I wish everyone that we witnessed to will be saved. I wish everyone that visited our church would be saved. However, some people will be offended by truth, and we cannot change that, nor can we change the message that we preach. We do not preach what people want to hear, we preach the truth, and we try to do it in love so that we will bring as many people to Christ as we are able to.

CHOOSE NOT TO BE OFFENDED!!

CHOOSE TO STAND STRONG FOR THE LORD!!

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