

I'M NOT MAD AT GOD

Luke 17:1 Then said he unto the disciples, **It is impossible but that offences will come**: but woe unto him, through whom they come!

NAS And he said to his disciples, "**It is inevitable that stumbling blocks should come**, but woe to him through whom they come!"

NIV Jesus said to his disciples: "**Things that cause people to sin are bound to come**, but woe to that person through whom they come."

AMP And [Jesus] said to His disciples, **Temptations [that is, snares, traps set to entice to sin] are sure to come**; but woe to him by or through whom they come!

- **IT'S EASY TO HEAR SERMONS, BUT LISTEN TODAY FOR THE VOICE OF GOD WITHIN THE VOICE OF THE PREACHER!**
- **Exodus 20:19** And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.
- Anyone who has trapped animals knows that a successful trap must be either hidden or baited. Satan is subtle and cunning! His most deceptive and deadly traps are both hidden and baited!
- One of his best baits is something every person has encountered - **OFFENSE**. Offense itself (like bait) is not deadly unless it is consumed. But once you feed on it, you are trapped!
- Offended people are oblivious to their condition because they focus only on the wrong done to them.
- **Jesus said it is impossible to live in this life and not have the opportunity to be offended!** The question is not "**Will you encounter this trap?**" but "**How will you respond to it?**"
- Don't let your own problem or someone else's sin affect your relationship with God! **Your response determines your future!**
- **ARE YOU OFFENDED?** Are you compelled to tell your side of the story? Do you fight thoughts of suspicion or distrust? Are you constantly rehearsing past hurts? Have you lost hope because of what someone did to you? Are you hindered from fulfilling your full potential? Do you feel betrayed? **Could you be mad at God because of what happened?**
- **Psalms 55:12-14** ¹² For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: ¹³ But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. ¹⁴ We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.

- In David's case, it was a fellow believer who hurt him!
- The higher the expectations, and the closer the relationship, the more severe the offense usually is. (*that's why the most vicious legal cases are divorce cases*)
- The greatest hatred can develop among people who were once close. **Only those you care about can hurt you!**
- **2 Timothy 2:24-26** ²⁴ And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, ²⁵ In meekness instructing **those that oppose themselves**; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; ²⁶ And that they may **recover themselves out of the snare of the devil**, who are **taken captive by him at his will**.
- **The Greek word for "offend" in Luke 17:1 is "skandalon" - it signifies "the trigger of a trap" or "bait"**
- Those who are in opposition (offense) are unaware that they are held prisoner to do the devil's will!
- When a person is bitter, they are deceived into believing they are right even though they are not. The enemy appeals to their pride, causing them to deny their true condition.
- They all too easily grow accustomed to that great spiritual vacuum called "**LUKEWARM**" – neither hot nor cold for God – because they have become the center of their own universe!
- **Revelation 3:15-17** ¹⁵ I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. ¹⁶ So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. ¹⁷ Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:
- The result is the same whether you have **actually** been treated unjustly or just **believe** that you have!
- A VICTIM SAYS: "I was mistreated and misjudged; therefore I am justified in my behavior."
- A VICTOR SAYS: "Two wrongs do not make a right; I will not hold onto an offense."
- **Matthew 24:10-13** ¹⁰ And then shall **many be offended**, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. ¹¹ And many **false prophets** shall rise, and shall **deceive many**. ¹² And because iniquity shall abound, **the love of many shall wax cold**. ¹³ But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

- **One of the signs of the end time is that MANY WILL BE OFFENDED!** These are obviously Christians, because their love (agape - God's unconditional love in their hearts) will wax cold.
- Many Christians walk in a selfish love that is easily disappointed when expectations are not met.
- **People can only disappoint you to the degree that they fall short of your expectations.**
- You set yourself up for offense if you require certain behaviors from those in relationship with you.
- **You also set yourself up for offense if you require that God do everything in your life according to your expectations!**
- Notice that Jesus warns of false prophets immediately after His prophecy of many being offended.
- **Matthew 7:15** *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*
- In Matthew's gospel, Jesus called false prophets "wolves in sheep's clothing." They give the appearance of being Christian but have the inward nature of a wolf. They are sent by the enemy to infiltrate and deceive. They must be identified by their fruits, not their teachings or apparent spiritual gifts.
- Wolves always prey on wounded and young sheep, not healthy and strong ones. False prophets tell people what they want to hear, not what they need to hear. **Offended people are easy prey!**
- **Proverbs 18:19** *A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city; and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.*
- Strong cities of ancient times had **WALLS** around them as their assurance of protection. They kept unwelcome inhabitants and invaders out; all entrants were screened. Those owing taxes were not allowed in until they paid. Those considered a threat to the city's health or safety were kept out.
- **We construct walls when we are hurt to safeguard our hearts and prevent any future wounds.**
- We become selective, denying entry to all we fear will hurt us. We filter out anyone we think owes us something. We withhold access until these people have paid their debts in full.
- We open our lives only to those we believe are on our side. Yet often, these people are offended as well, so we only succeed in stacking additional stones on our existing walls.
- These walls become **STRONGHOLDS**, set patterns of thinking through which all incoming information is processed. Our walls become a source of distortion because these false thoughts war against the true knowledge of God.
- **Eventually, our walls of protection become a prison.** At that point, we are not only cautious about who comes in, but so in terror of future injuries that we cannot venture outside our fortress.
- This tragic state of affairs increases exponentially when we extend our offended feelings to include God, and lock Him outside the walls of our heart! THAT IS A SIN AGAINST OUR ONLY REMEDY!
- When this happens, God continues to pour out spiritual blessings, but in our lives they become stagnant (**Sea of Galilee - Dead Sea**).
- When we filter everything through past hurts, rejections and experiences, we cannot believe God!
- **WE NEED A CHANGE IN THE WAY WE THINK!** ("brain change") ☺
But the good news is that God has given us the weapons to tear down the walls of offense!
- **2 Corinthians 10:4-5**⁴ *(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) ⁵ Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;*
- The function of the preached Word is to momentarily allow you to get a glimpse of the TRUTH about yourself, to DIVIDE between your thinking (this happens in your mind) and God's thinking (this happens in your spirit).
- **Hebrews 4:12** *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*
- **HERE IS GOD'S TRUTH ABOUT HIS PURPOSE FOR YOU:**
- **Jeremiah 29:11** *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.*
- **NLT** *For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.*
- Absolutely no man or devil can get you out of the will of God! He alone holds your destiny! Only **YOU** can thwart the will of God for your own life - **BY GETTING OFFENDED!**
- **JOHN THE BAPTIST** knew what it was to be puzzled by the trials God allowed in his life – he knew by heart the miracles that would accompany the Messiah, and they weren't happening in his life!

John knew what the Messiah could do ...

Isaiah 35:4-6 ⁴Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you. ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. ⁶Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

But here's what the Messiah doesn't do ...

Matthew 11:4-6 ⁴Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: ⁵The 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. **(BUT JESUS DOESN'T FINISH THE PROPHECY!)** ⁶And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

- **JOB** also knew what it was to have undeserved trials, but he refused to bring an accusation of unfairness against God!
- **Job 19:25-27** ²⁵For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: ²⁶And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: ²⁷Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.
- **NLT** ²⁵“But as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and that he will stand upon the earth at last. ²⁶ And after my body has decayed, yet in my body I will see God! ²⁷ I will see him for myself. Yes, I will see him with my own eyes. I am overwhelmed at the thought!
- **DAVID** was persecuted unjustly, but here is his “diary,” written in the cave of Adullam at one of the lowest points of his life: – see verses 1-4, 7-8, 18-19)
- **Psalms 34:1-4, 7-8, 18-19** ¹ I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. ²My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. ³O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. ⁴I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears ... ⁷The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. ⁸O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him ... ¹⁸The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. ¹⁹Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.