

## **Overcoming Offense**

### **By Christian Equippers International**

We've all experienced offenses. Each of us have been responsible for offending others, as well as having been offended ourselves.

Often, offenses are little more than minor injustices and misunderstandings. At other times, they are severe and long lasting. Sometimes offenses are unintentional; at other times they are deliberate and malicious. Regardless of the nature of the offense, the Bible teaches us to respond to this problem in a righteous manner.

In this teaching, we will examine this subject and review the steps to overcoming the offenses in our life.

#### **HOW CAN WE DEFINE OFFENSE?**

An offense can be defined as "a feeling of being insulted, slighted, or wronged. "It is an emotional response to an injustice or indignity.

When we are offended we often experience hurt feelings, resentment, anger, contempt, and personal outrage. Offenses are usually the result of being unfairly treated, or feeling that our rights have been violated.

The word "offense" is found in the scriptures. It originally meant a trap or snare. It simply means a "stumbling block". Offenses are anything which becomes a hinderance or obstacle to ourself or to another.

#### **HOW COMMON ARE OFFENSES?**

Life is filled with potential offenses. Offenses are inevitable. Jesus confirmed this when He stated: "IT IS IMPOSSIBLE THAT NO OFFENSES SHOULD COME" (Luke 17:1).

Not only do we repeatedly experience them, but we are all guilty of causing offenses in the lives of others. James proved this when he wrote, "For in many things we offend all" (James 3:2, KJV).

Many things can cause an offense. They can range from a thoughtless word, to a failure to greet someone. They can arise from a slanderous tongue, to something as simple as a passing glance. On the next few pages, we will consider some of the most predominant causes of offense.

## **COMMON CAUSES OF OFFENSE**

### **I. THE TONGUE**

The most common source of offense is the tongue: "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man" (James 3:2, KJV).

Since none of us have reached perfection, we all tend to offend with our mouths. Occasionally, we have all failed to avoid words which have caused others to be offended.

The tongue can be used creatively or destructively: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue" (Prov. 18:21). It is an unruly member which can inflict injury upon others: "It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God ... and with it we curse men" (James 3:8, 9).

### **II. AN UNFORGIVING SPIRIT**

When we fail to exercise a forgiving spirit, offenses often result. The tendency to hold a grudge, nurse a grievance, or keep a record of wrongs is a common cause of offense. For this reason, Jesus admonished us to forgive: "...if you have anything against anyone, forgive him ..." (Mark 11:25).

In fact, Jesus told Peter that we were responsible to forgive our brother for as many as 490 offenses in one day! (Matthew 18:22).

One of the greatest safeguards against possible offense is the willingness to forgive and forget quickly. This is at the very heart of Christian love: "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, FORGIVING ONE ANOTHER, just as God in Christ also forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32).

This is an excerpt from the booklet; Overcoming Offense. To purchase the booklet visit [www.equipper.com](http://www.equipper.com)