

# SERMON NOTES

SUNDAY 11.08.24

**PREACHER: PS NATHAN BEAN**

“OFFENCE PART 2”

## BECOMING CHRISTLIKE

*BEING, THINKING & DOING*

**Conviction of a Disciple:** As disciples of Jesus, we can withstand the cultural push to allow offence to take root in our hearts.

### OVERVIEW

Offence blocks our growth into Christlikeness, so we must immerse ourselves in God's Kingdom if we hope to walk in the freedom that comes from a life lived with kindness, compassion, and forgiveness.

### ACTION

**Step 1:** Reflect: How has holding onto offence impacted my spiritual growth and relationships?

**Step 2:** Commit: In what ways can I intentionally saturate myself in the culture of God's Kingdom so His ways become my ways?

**Step 3:** Act: What steps can I take this week to cancel a debt of offence and practice kindness towards someone who has hurt me?

# THOUGHT

**SCRIPTURE:** MATTHEW 5:21-24, 43-48; EPHESIANS 4:26-32

It is easy to think about the way Jesus lived and assume that kind of life is simply out of reach. And to a degree, that's fair considering he had the whole fully God, fully man thing going for him. But what if we gave up on that idea too quickly? What if Jesus expects us to actually learn to follow him and become the kind of people who do what he taught us (Matthew 28:19-20)?

Whatever you think about that, there is one thing for certain that stops us from experiencing the full life that Jesus has for us: **Offence**.

It might sound like an overstatement, but offence truly is the quickest way for our growth into Christlikeness to go tumbling into a pit.

The challenge with this thought is that **our culture values offence**. The reality is that, over the past decade or so, our culture has placed an ever-increasing value on victimhood (whether real or perceived). Along with that, it places a high degree of honour on those who become offended on behalf of those victims. The tricky thing here is that some people genuinely need us to stand with them and speak up against injustice. Jesus, along with the Hebrew Prophets, led the charge in demanding that God's restoring love and justice be revealed through the way His people treated those who were hurting.

Unfortunately, this "standing with" in our modern society has run wild. As Christians—whether entering into issues of injustice, dealing with frustrating people, or simply sitting in traffic—we are being called into a life where our speech and actions are marked with kindness, compassion, and forgiveness become our most natural response to difficult people and situations.

How do we do this? As Christians, we need to be soaked in the culture of God's Kingdom. This is where our spiritual practices come in. For us to have the grace and power to swim upstream against the currents of our culture, our lives must be saturated in scripture, prayer, and rhythms of life that align us with God's Kingdom (where HIS way of life replaces OUR way of life).

The reality is that every day there are thousands of opportunities to be offended and disappointed. And all day long, offence is looking for a place to land a seed in your heart and take root. It just needs the right environment to grow into anger, resentment, and ultimately unforgiveness.

When we get caught in a loop of unforgiveness, we end up needing “them” to pay a price that they can never pay—nothing they do will ever undo what happened. This is an impossible loop. Unforgiveness blocks us from the flow of God’s forgiveness to us and through us (Matt 6:14-15).

### **So what can we do to get out of the loop?**

- **Cancel the debt.** Whatever you feel they owe you, let it go. This is the only thing that will bring you freedom. Stop returning to the hurt and release them.
- **Change your speech.** How do you talk about this person? Commit to only using speech that benefits and builds them up.
- **Practice kindness, compassion, and forgiveness.** This means your actions will have to come before your feelings. Just as Christ has acted toward you, we act toward others.

## **DISCUSSION**

1. How does our culture's value of offence and victimhood contrast with the life Jesus calls us to live?
2. What does it look like in practical terms to live a life marked by kindness, compassion, and forgiveness in today's world?
3. How can we support one another in breaking free from loops of unforgiveness and walking in the freedom Christ offers?

## **PRAYER**

Lord,

Help us to release any offences that hinder our growth into living like you. Give us the strength to swim upstream and live in your Kingdom's culture. May our lives be marked by kindness, compassion, and forgiveness. May our actions reflect your love, even when it's hard.

Amen.