



Small Group Guide: Resolved - Part 2 (Offense)

Series: Resolving Conflict God's Way

Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

Icebreaker Question: Share a time when you misunderstood someone's intentions and later realized they weren't trying to offend you. What did you learn from that experience?

Key Scripture References

- 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 - The Ministry of Reconciliation
- Proverbs 19:11 - Overlooking Wrongs
- Matthew 24:10-12 - Offense in the Last Days
- Luke 17:1 - Offenses Will Come
- Psalm 103:8-14 - God's Compassion and Mercy

Main Takeaways

1. Reconciliation is Our Ministry

Every Christian is appointed and ordained to the ministry of reconciliation. When we reconcile with one another, we live out the gospel message to the watching world.

2. Offense is a Trap (Skandalon)

The Greek word for offense means "trigger" or "trap." Being offended isn't just about hurt feelings—it's a spiritual crisis that can cause us to stumble in our faith, fall into sin, or even abandon Christ.

3. Two Options: Overlook or Ignore

- **Ignoring** = stuffing it down, pretending it didn't happen (leads to bitterness)
- **Overlooking** = acknowledging it happened but choosing to rise above it (leads to freedom)

4. Every Offense is a Crossroads

When offended, we stand at a decisive moment: Will we respond in the flesh or walk toward Christ? Our response reveals who is truly king of our hearts.

5. Jesus is Our Greatest Example

On the cross, facing the ultimate offense, Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they're doing." The greatest offense in history produced the greatest act of grace.

Discussion Questions

Understanding Offense

1. Before this sermon, how did you typically define "being offended"? How does understanding offense as a "trap" or "trigger" change your perspective?
2. The pastor mentioned that more times than not, the issue in conflict is us, not the other person. Why is this hard to accept? What does it look like to examine ourselves first?

Biblical Reconciliation

1. Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-20. What does it mean that we've been "committed" or "appointed" to the ministry of reconciliation? How does this change how you view conflicts?
2. Why do you think reconciliation is so important to God's heart? How does our reconciliation with others demonstrate the gospel?

Responding to Offense

1. What's the difference between ignoring an offense and overlooking an offense? Can you share an example from your life of each?
2. The pastor said, "You cannot stop people from offending you, but you can stop offense from living in you." What practical steps can we take to prevent offense from taking root?

The Crisis Moment

1. When you're offended, what are the immediate thoughts or feelings you experience? How can we create a "pause" before reacting?
2. Read Proverbs 12:18 and 19:11. What does it mean to be "sensible" in controlling our temper? How does overlooking wrongs earn respect?

Grace and Mercy

1. Read Psalm 103:8-14. How does remembering God's grace and mercy toward us help us extend grace to those who offend us?
2. The pastor shared that when we pray for those who offend us, it's hard to harbor bitterness. Have you experienced this? What makes this practice difficult?

Church Unity

1. How have you seen offense damage relationships in the church? What would change if every believer practiced biblical reconciliation?
2. The pastor mentioned church splits over things like decor or not being greeted. Why do seemingly small offenses cause such major damage?

Personal Reflection Questions

(Allow 3-5 minutes of silent reflection)

- Is there someone who has offended me that I've been ignoring rather than overlooking?
- Am I holding onto bitterness or unforgiveness toward anyone?
- Who is truly king of my heart—Christ or my flesh?
- Is there someone I need to reconcile with this week?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge:

Choose ONE of the following:

1. **Inventory Your Heart:** Ask God to reveal any unresolved offenses you've been stuffing down. Write them down and prayerfully release them to God.
2. **Pray for Your "Offender":** Identify someone who has offended you and commit to praying blessings over them daily this week. Notice how your heart changes.

3. Practice the Pause: The next time you feel offended, pause before reacting. Ask yourself: "Who is king of my heart right now?" Then respond accordingly.
4. Reconciliation Step: If the Holy Spirit is prompting you about a specific relationship, take one step toward reconciliation this week (prayer, a conversation, seeking forgiveness, etc.).
5. Get the Book: Order "The Peacemaker" by Ken Sande (the book referenced in the sermon) and commit to reading it.

Group Prayer Time

Prayer Prompts:

- Pray for humility to examine our own hearts before pointing fingers at others
- Pray for those in the group dealing with current conflicts or offenses
- Pray for marriages, families, and church relationships to experience reconciliation
- Pray for grace and mercy to flow through us to others
- Pray that we would be peacemakers who reveal Christ to a watching world

For Next Week

Preparation: We'll continue the "Resolved" series next week. Continue to reflect on areas of conflict in your life and how God might be calling you to respond differently.

Memory Verse: *"Sensible people control their temper; they earn respect by overlooking wrongs."* - Proverbs 19:11 (NLT)

Leader Notes

- Be sensitive that some group members may be dealing with deep wounds or serious offenses. Create a safe space for sharing.
- Not all offenses should be overlooked—clarify that situations involving abuse, harm to self/others, or ongoing destructive patterns need intervention.
- Encourage practical next steps, not just discussion.
- Model vulnerability by sharing your own struggles with offense and reconciliation.
- Keep the focus on personal responsibility and heart change, not fixing others.