

## Loving People Who Offend Us

Lesson 01 of the series: "No Offense"

### A. Jesus said we are supposed to love people who offend us.

"Take offense" = to become angry or upset by something that another person has said or done

"But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, offer the other cheek also. If someone demands your coat, offer your shirt also. Give to anyone who asks; and when things are taken away from you, don't try to get them back. Do to others as you would like them to do to you. If you love only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them! And if you do good only to those who do good to you, why should you get credit? Even sinners do that much! And if you lend money only to those who can repay you, why should you get credit? Even sinners will lend to other sinners for a full return. Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked. You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate." Luke 6:27-36 (NLT)

Note: Loving people who offend us is NOT our default setting.

"An offended friend is harder to win back than a fortified city. Arguments separate friends like a gate locked with bars." Proverbs 18:19 (NLT)

### B. Five things we can choose to do that will help us love people who offend us:

1. We can choose to worship God every day.

"Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the Lord our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care." Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

"Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you your heart's desires. Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him, and he will help you. He will make your innocence radiate like the dawn, and the justice of your cause will shine like the noonday sun. Be still in the presence of the Lord, and wait patiently for him to act. Don't worry about evil people who prosper or fret about their wicked schemes. Stop being angry! Turn from your rage! Do not lose your temper—it only leads to harm."

Psalm 37:4-8 (NLT)

2. We can choose to surrender our right to be offended every morning.

"Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross." Philippians 2:3-8 (NLT)

"My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Galatians 2:20 (NLT)

3. Every evening we can choose to let go of any anger or resentment we may have picked up during the day.

"And 'don't sin by letting anger control you.' Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil." Ephesians 4:26-27 (NLT)

4. We can pray for the people who offend us.

"You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy. But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:43-45a (NLT)

"Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them." Romans 12:14 (NLT)

“When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.’” Luke 23:33-34 (NIV)

“While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’ Then he fell on his knees and cried out, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them.’ When he had said this, he fell asleep.” Acts 7:59-60 (NIV)

5. We can choose to do good to the people who offend us.

“Don’t rejoice when your enemies fall; don’t be happy when they stumble.” Proverbs 24:17 (NLT)

“If you come upon your enemy’s ox or donkey that has strayed away, take it back to its owner. If you see that the donkey of someone who hates you has collapsed under its load, do not walk by. Instead, stop and help.” Exodus 23:4-5 (NLT)

**Good News!** “God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.”  
Philippians 2:13 (NLT)

John Schmidt • 10-11-20 • [john@centeringlives.com](mailto:john@centeringlives.com)

### Connect Group questions

1. The dictionary defines “taking offense” as “becoming angry or upset by something that another person has said or done.” Why do you think so many people are easily offended in our culture these days?
2. Why do you think so many people seem to stay offended in our culture? Does it matter?
3. Read Luke 6:27-36. How can we apply these verses during an election year and a global pandemic?
4. Discuss the following list of things we can do to help us love people who offend us:
  - We can choose to worship God. (Psalm 37:4-8, 95:6-7)
  - We can choose to surrender our right to be offended every morning. (Philippians 2:3-8, Galatians 2:20)
  - Every evening we can choose to let go of any anger or resentment we may have picked up during the day. (Ephesians 4:26-27)
  - We can pray for the people who offend us. (Matthew 5:43-48, Romans 12:14)
  - We can choose to do good to the people who offend us. (Proverbs 24:17, Exodus 23:4-5)
5. How does it make you feel to read that Jesus and Stephen (the first Christian martyr) both prayed that God would forgive the very people who were killing them? (Luke 23:33-34, Acts 7:59-60) How is this possible?
6. Spend some time as group praying for each other, our church, and Christians across our country. Ask God to help us love people who may never love us back.

**Great Resource:** “Unoffendable: How Just One Change Can Make All of Life Better,” by Brant Hansen, W Publishing Group, 2015.