

I. INTRO/REVIEW

Can't we all just get along?

Psalm 55:12-14 (TPT) ¹² It wasn't an enemy who taunted me. If it was my enemy, filled with pride and hatred, then I could have endured it. I would have just run away. ¹³ But it was you, my intimate friend—one like a brother to me. It was you, my adviser, the companion I walked with and worked with! ¹⁴ We once had sweet fellowship with each other. We worshiped in unity as one, celebrating together with God's people.

- We've ALL felt this pain

Proverbs 16:28 (TLB) An evil man sows strife; gossip separates the best of friends.

II. OFFENSES—THE SEEDS OF SEPARATION

A. Offenses are the seeds of separation

Luke 17:1 (NKJV) Then He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe *to him* through whom they do come!

The Greek word offend: Skandalon. This word originally referred to the part of the trap to which the bait was attached. The word signifies laying a trap in someone's way.

- Someone is trying to trap you and the bait is offense

III. DON'T TAKE THE BAIT

A. To take offense is to take the bait that will lead you down a path to bondage

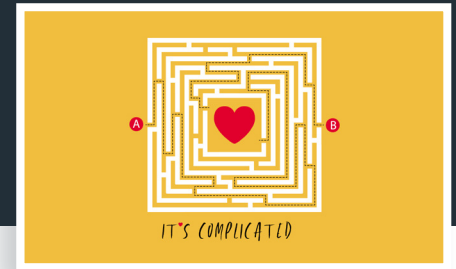
Matthew 24:10-12 (NKJV) ¹⁰ And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. ¹¹ Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. ¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

- The end result of offense is that our heart will grow cold and unresponsive to God's love and loving the world that Jesus loves

Luke 17:1 (AMPC) And [Jesus] said to His disciples, Temptations (snares, traps set to entice to sin) are sure to come, but woe to him by *or* through whom they come!

B. Sin will lead to some kind of separation in your life

James 1:14-15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.



John 18:36 (NLT) ³⁶ Jesus answered, “My Kingdom is not an earthly kingdom. If it were, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. But my Kingdom is not of this world.”

IV. THE FUNDAMENTAL'S OF OUR FAITH

A. Christianity is often difficult because we don't appreciate the fundamentals

- Fundamentals are the core/primary rules, principle's that everything else is based on
 - Worship
 - Prayer
 - Generosity
 - Forgiveness
- We want heavenly rewards with earthly responses, but it's not how it works
- Fundamentals are rarely natural
- Fundamentals need to be practiced, corrected and perfected

Proverbs 26:17 (TLB) Yanking a dog's ears is no more foolish than interfering in an argument that isn't any of your business.

B. Forgiveness isn't for you but for them

Matthew 18:21-22 (TLB) ²¹ Then Peter came to him and asked, “Sir, how often should I forgive a brother who sins against me? Seven times?” ²² “No!” Jesus replied, “seventy times seven!

2 Timothy 2:24-26 (NIRV) ²⁴ Anyone who serves the Lord must not be hard to get along with. Instead, they must be kind to everyone. They must be able to teach. The one who serves must not hold anything against anyone. ²⁵ They must gently teach those who are against them. Maybe God will give a change of heart to those who are against you. That will lead them to know the truth. ²⁶ Maybe they will come to their senses. Maybe they will escape the devil's trap. He has taken them as prisoners to do what he wanted.