



I. REVIEW/INTRO

A. Overflow: God Is the Source of Joy and Peace

Romans 15:13 (NLT) I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in Him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

B. The enemy is aiming for your heart

Proverbs 4:23 (NLT) Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.”

II. CRAZY PAIN

A. When Crazy Gets Personal

- The hardest crazy comes from people

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!

Luke 17:1 (NIV) Jesus said to his disciples: “Things that cause people to stumble are bound to come, but woe to anyone through whom they come.

Luke 17:1 (NLT) One day Jesus said to his disciples, “There will always be temptations to sin, but what sorrow awaits the person who does the tempting!

B. Offense can cause us to stumble and will lead to sin

- **Offense is emotional and it hurts**

Stumble: The Greek word “stumble” **proskomma** means “to trip, to fall over something in your path. It’s the visible result of actually falling over something

Offense: The Greek word for “offense” is **skándalon** — where we get the word “scandal”

- It doesn’t just mean “something that offends you” — it literally means “*the trigger of a trap.*”
 - It’s the part of an animal trap where you place the bait

C. Offense is more than a reaction, it’s a strategy

- Offense isn’t the trap itself; it’s the trigger that sets it off
- **Offense promises satisfaction but delivers captivity**
- Offense isn’t just a feeling — it’s a setup

III. THE TRAP: WHERE OFFENSE BECOMES A PRISON

A. The progression: Offense, Unforgiveness, Bitterness

2 Timothy 2:26 (NIV) and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.



- **Offense** opens the door
- **Unforgiveness** keeps you inside
- **Bitterness** builds the walls

B. Unforgiveness is the decision to hold onto the offense

- Unforgiveness is saying, “*You owe me something, and until I get paid back, I’m not letting go*”

C. The root of bitterness

- Bitterness is the **fruit** of long-term unforgiveness

Hebrews 12:15 (NLT) Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many.

The phrase “**root of bitterness**” (rhiza pikria in Greek) literally means a deeply embedded *source of sharpness or poison, it’s a corrosive venom*

- Roots grow beneath the surface, feeding everything above it

D. Bitterness replaces the *flow of grace* with *the grip of judgment*

IV. GUARD YOUR HEART

A. There are two paths the heart can take

- The root determines the fruit

Grace Cycle (Healthy Heart)

Hurt happens → You turn to God → He gives grace → You forgive → Freedom and joy

Grudge Cycle (Bitter Heart)

Hurt happens → You turn inward (“I’ll decide who gets mercy”) → Grace stops flowing → You grow bitter → Captivity and dryness

C. Forgiveness transfers the case to God’s court

Forgiveness means to release (aphiēmi in Greek): to send away, to cancel a debt, to untie a knot

D. When crazy gets personal, Grace becomes powerful

Ephesians 4:32 (NLT) Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

- Forgiveness doesn’t:
 - Change the past — it redeems it
 - Erase the pain — it ends pain’s control over you
 - Mean forgetting — it’s remembering through the lens of grace