



# PWOC

*Protestant Women of the Chapel*

## WORKSHOP: AN UNOFFENDABLE HEART

by Victoria Robinson

### PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

**RELEVANCE:** Offenses are inevitable, but being offended is a choice. Allowing bitterness to remain in a heart will bring devastating spiritual consequences. A wise woman will look at offense as an opportunity to become more Christ-like.

**INTRO:** The word offense, "...originally referred to the part of a trap to which BAIT was attached. Hence, the word describes laying a trap in someone's way. In the New Testament, it often describes an entrapment used by the enemy.

- Offense is a tool of the devil to bring people into captivity." ~John Bevere
- Jesus Himself said, "Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!" (Matthew 18:7; NKJV)
- Luke 17:1 states, "It is impossible that no offenses should come."
- "People will offend us either by what they do, or by what they do not do. Either way, life offers us *daily opportunities* to be offended." ~Mark Batterson
- "Our response to an offense determines our future." ~John Bevere
- "Being offended is to get so upset with someone that you hold a grudge against them or retaliate actively or passively." ~Frank Viola



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## I. TAKING UP OFFENSES

How would you describe or define being offended?

**ACTIVITY:** In a small group of no more than 3 people, read the following scriptures and record what you discover about taking up an offense.

*If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it; if a foe were raising himself against me, I could hide from him. But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, my close friend, with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship as we walked with the throng at the house of God. (Psalm 55:12-14; NIV)*

*And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will. (2 Timothy 2:24-26; ESV)*

*A man's wisdom gives him patience. It is his GLORY to overlook an offense. (Proverbs 19:11; NIV)*

## II. OFFENSES AS STUMBLING BLOCKS

It is said that people don't stumble over boulders; they stumble over stones. Those "...relatively small things; the personality of someone in authority bothers us and soon we are offended; a friend or family member fails to meet our expectations and we take an offense into our soul." ~Francis Frangipane



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How can offenses become a stumbling block to our walk with Christ?

What are the results of taking up an offense?

**ACTIVITY:** In your same small group discuss the following questions. Record your insight so you can report to the larger group.

1) Read the following Scriptures and discuss what they have to do with picking up an offense:

- Proverbs 17:9 (NIV): *He who covers an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.*
  
- Ephesians 4:26 (NIV): *In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.*

2) What is the difference between being hurt and taking up an offense?



**Three truths to consider:**

**Truth A: The truth is that not everyone will like you but you can choose to live at peace. (Romans 12:9-21)**

**Truth B: The truth is another person's offense is not mine! I can choose to not take up the offense. (Hebrews 12:15)**

**Truth C: The truth is I can choose a godly response no matter what. (John 8:4)**

**Which truth holds the most meaning for you? Why? Share your answer with a partner.**

**APPLY IT TO LIFE:**

**1 Peter 2:22-23 provides the model for an unoffendable heart:**

*He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in His mouth. When they hurled their insults at Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly. (NIV)*

**THE PROCESS OF LAYING DOWN OFFENSES:**

**If you are holding on to an offense, here are the necessary steps to take to lay it down.**

- Recognize you are hurt- "I'm fine" will not help the process (Psalm 139)
- Pray and perhaps even fast (Isaiah 58:6)
- Speak, write, and even sing your willingness to forgive
- Search the Scriptures for examples of those who forgave others
  - Joseph forgave his brothers (Genesis 50:19-21)
  - Father of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-31)
  - Jesus on the Cross (Luke 23:34)
- Bless the Offender (Matthew 5:44; Psalm 35:11-14)
- Pray for Reconciliation (Matthew 18:15-20)



*We pray, 'Lord, I want to change.' To answer our prayer, He sometimes puts us in situations that perfectly offend us. The offense itself awakens our need for grace. Thus, the Lord precipitates change by first offending the area of our soul He desires to transform. He does not expect us to merely survive this adversity, but to become Christ-like in it. Ask Joseph in the Old Testament: the 'land of offense' became the land of his anointing and power. Listen, my friends: the destiny of man unfolds or dies at the junction of offense. How we handle offense is the key to our tomorrow. ~Francis Frangipane*

Read the following prayer:

*My dear Savior and Lord, forgive me for being easily offended and for carrying offenses. Right now, I choose to lay them down at the foot of the Cross. I say with Christ, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."*

*Grant me the new creation heart that can walk as Jesus walked through a world of offenses without stumbling. I want to see everything as an opportunity to pray, everything as an opportunity to become like Christ. Lord, help me to interpret offenses as opportunities that lead to transformations.*

*Grant me, O Lord Jesus, the pulse and beat of YOUR Unoffendable Heart.*

*In Christ's Holy Name, AMEN*

**\*For further study on the topic:**

*The Bait of Satan* by John Bevere

*The Three Battlegrounds* by Francis Frangipane

*The Freedom of Forgiveness* by John MacArthur

*When You Can't Say "I Forgive You"* by Grace Ketterman, MD and David Hazard

*When Forgiveness Doesn't Make Sense* by Robert Jeffress

*Total Forgiveness* by R.T. Kendall



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