

Don't Take the Bait: How Satan Uses Offense to Trap You

Offense is everywhere in our culture. Social media arguments, workplace drama, even church conflicts—people are constantly finding reasons to be upset. But have you ever stopped to consider that offense isn't just an emotional reaction, but a spiritual trap?

Pastor Vlad Savchuk warns that offense is one of Satan's most effective weapons against believers.

"Offense is a stumbling block to your destiny," he says. "It's a trap, it's a tripping hazard." The enemy wants nothing more than for us to take offense, hold onto bitterness and ultimately sabotage our own calling.

Jesus made it clear in Luke 17:1: "It is impossible that no offenses should come." In other words, you will be offended—it's unavoidable. The real question is: what will you do with it? Here's how Satan uses offense to trap you, and more importantly, how you can break free.

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1. Offense Is a Baited Trap

Savchuk explains that the word "offense" in the New Testament is translated from scandalon, which refers to the trigger of a trap. "When an animal touches the trigger to eat the bait, the trap springs shut," he explains. In the same way, when we take offense, we step into a spiritual snare. Once caught, we spiral into unforgiveness, resentment and bitterness. The moment we dwell on hurt feelings, whether justified or not,

we've taken the bait.

2. The Profile of an Offended Person

Savchuk outlines four key traits of people who live in offense:

- **Entitlement:** "The person with offense feels like they are owed something." They expect recognition, status or appreciation and feel rejected when they don't get it.
- **Pride:** "Prideful people are self-reliant instead of God-reliant." Offense and pride go hand in hand, blinding people to their own faults.
- **Obsession with Unfairness:** Many offended people fixate on how they were treated. "People with offense often feel church leaders and others treated them unfairly." They become bitter when they don't receive the opportunities they think they deserve.
- **Control Issues:** "Offensive people often desire to control the situation," Savchuk notes. When things don't go their way, they leave relationships, churches and communities instead of dealing with the root issue.

3. Offense Sabotages Your Destiny

Satan isn't just trying to hurt your feelings—he's trying to derail your calling. Matthew 16:23 tells us that Jesus rebuked Peter, saying, "Get behind me, Satan! You are an offense to me." Savchuk explains, "Offense is something that doesn't want you to reach your destiny." If Satan can't take you out through sin, he'll try to take you out through offense. The more you focus on your wounds, the less you focus on God's purpose for your life.

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4. How to Overcome the Trap of Offense

The good news? You don't have to live offended. Here's how to break free:

A. Realize a Hardened Heart Won't Be Changed by Circumstances

People often think if they just had better leaders, better friends or a better church, they wouldn't struggle with offense. But Savchuk points to Israel's experience: "Their environment was better, their hearts were still the same." A new situation won't fix a heart poisoned by offense—only repentance will.

B. Take God Seriously—Not Yourself

"Every offended person is obsessed with themselves," Savchuk says. They focus on how others treat them instead of how they are treating others. The key to overcoming offense? Stop making yourself the center of the universe. "We should be addicted to God's presence, we should take God very seriously and we should honestly not make a big deal of ourselves."

C. Keep Your Heart Right Even When Things Aren't

Offense often stems from injustice—real or perceived. But as Savchuk warns, "'It's not right' is the devil's best material to create offense in your heart." If you let yourself become consumed by unfairness, you'll never heal. Keeping your heart right in difficult situations is key to staying free from offense.

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D. Never Grow Out of Repentance

"Unforgiveness will do more damage to you than what people

hurt you with,” Savchuk warns. Holding onto bitterness doesn’t hurt your offender—it only poisons you. The secret to spiritual growth? “Never grow out of repentance.”

E. Lean Into Awkward Conversations

Avoiding offense doesn’t mean ignoring problems. “We build the trust, character and relationships of tomorrow by engaging in tough conversations today.” Instead of gossiping about those who have offended you, go to them directly. “I have to go to them and lean into awkward conversations,” Savchuk admits. Addressing offense with humility can bring healing and restore relationships.

Choose Freedom Over Offense

Satan has a clear goal to keep you bitter, distracted and stuck in unforgiveness. But Jesus offers a different way: one of freedom, peace and spiritual growth.

“Don’t let Satan trap you; avoid this trap, don’t bite that lie, walk away from that offense,” Savchuk urges. Offense will come, but you don’t have to take the bait. Choose to forgive, release bitterness and live unoffended.

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