

This Destructive Spirit Is Destroying Destinies

Less than a year ago I sounded the alarm about a destructive spirit that's rising fast. It's especially deceptive because the one who falls into its snare cannot see it.

That not-so-subtle spirit is offense. I've been witnessing believers getting offended over slight corrections, unreturned phone calls and even the way certain people say "Holy Spirit." I've heard about believers getting offended over new relationships forming, being asked to sit out travel trips, or not being invited into a back room meeting.

There's an actual spirit rising that's causing these unreasonable offenses. It's Satan's plot to divide believers in an hour of church history when it's more vital than perhaps ever before that we unite on our common beliefs.

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Offense is dangerous because "a brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and their contentions are like the bars of a castle" (Prov. 18:19). But love is not touchy or easily provoked (see 1 Cor. 13:5-6). We know that, "good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense" (Prov. 19:11). And the Preacher offers some really good advice: "Do not give heed to everything people say, lest you hear your servant cursing you. Your heart knows that many times you have spoken a curse against others" (Eccl. 7:21-22).

Running Rampant in the Church

When I asked the Lord about this, He explained what is going on:

“A spirit of offense is rising and running rampant through the church. Those who are easily offended are candidates for the Great Falling Away. Those who cultivate and maintain an unoffendable heart will escape many of the assignments the enemy will launch in the days to come.

“For My people must band together in this hour and refuse to allow petty arguments and soulish imaginations to separate them. This is the time to press into community and relationship and reject the demonic notions and wisdom the enemy is pouring out.

“The love of many is waxing cold. Brother is turning against brother and sister against sister—in My body. You must come to the unity of the faith in order to accomplish what I’ve called you to do in this hour. The time is upon you. The opportunity is before you. Lay aside the resentment, bitterness and unforgiveness and, as far as it depends upon you, seek peace with all men.

“Humble yourselves even among those who you feel are your enemies and I will work to bring reconciliation that sets the scene for unity from which the anointing flows. You need My anointing to combat the antichrist spirits rising in this hour.

“Many of My people are wrestling in their flesh, engaging in works of the flesh, and otherwise letting the flesh lead in battle—and they are battling flesh instead of the spirits influencing the flesh. This is the result of offense. Forgive, let go, embrace your brothers and sisters despite their flaws and sins. I have.”

16 Ways to Discern an Offended Heart

I’ve discovered there are tell-tale signs of an offended heart—and the ultimate root of offense is pride. However, we may not recognize those signs in our life or the lives of others because they are often subtle or we are already blinded

to it.

Listen to Jennifer's podcast: Are You Offended?

1. Big complainers. We all complain from time to time but someone with an offended heart complains more than most. They complain about what people do or say to them—or don't do or say to them. They complain about the way others behave or what they receive. They complain about something most of the time.

2. Condemning critics. Beyond complaining about behaviors, people with an offended heart grow critical of the actual person. As this advances, the offended heart criticizes their targets for things they didn't even do or say based on their own twisted perceptions of reality.

3. Attention-seekers. People with an offended heart want your attention. They believe a lie that tells them they can demand your attention with evil reports about others. This, of course, elevates them to a position of importance in their own mind. Remember, offense is rooted in pride.

4. Insecurity abounds. People with an offended heart have a measure of insecurity, which is often connected to pride. Insecure people speak ill of others behind their backs, again to elevate themselves. They don't feel safe or secure in who they are, so they have to attack others to make them feel comfortable in their own skin.

5. Victim-hood rises. People with an offended heart usually have a string of sad stories about how people have wronged them. They may have been genuinely hurt and wounded, but now they see everything through the lens of victimhood whether they are being treated unfairly or not.

6. Pity parties frequent. People with an offended heart want your pity, which is connected with victimhood. They hope you will take up their offense and give them special treatment because of the injustice they've endured. Beware of taking up

another person's offense. It's dangerous.

7. Playing the blame game. People with an offended heart blame other people for their emotions, situations and circumstances. They don't take responsibility for their own feelings but instead point fingers. Blame is the guard to change.

8. Trigger-happy. People with an offended heart are easily triggered into a new offense. They are hyper-sensitive to anything that looks or sound offensive and are vulnerable to tapping into imaginary offenses the devil orchestrates to keep them in bondage.

9. Operate in presumption. People with an offended heart operate in presumption instead of truth. They automatically believe the worst instead of believing the best.

10. Strife-spreaders. People with an offended heart won't go to the person who offended them but will tell everybody else what someone did to them. This is dangerous according to Matthew 18, but it's especially dangerous when it's based in false perceptions. Sowing discord among brethren is an abomination to the Lord (Prov. 6:19).

11. Negative Nancys. People with an offended heart have an overall negative bent to them. They are quick to speak, quick to judge and slow to see the good in people or circumstances. They only believe the best of those who haven't offended them ... yet.

12. Fleeing spirit. People with an offended heart will not respond to your requests for reconciliation. They will avoid you, ignore you and otherwise refuse to engage in a conversation that could bring clarity and freedom.

13. Manipulating and controlling. People with an offended heart will begin manipulating situations to set people up for a fall. If you offend them, they will work to get others to rise up against you.

14. Quick to anger. People with an offended heart are quick to anger. It's unreasonable anger.

15. Narcissistic tendencies. People with an offended heart cannot be confronted with facts. You can't reason with them because the spirit of offense is unreasonable.

16. Unforgiving, resentful and bitter. People with an offended heart have a root of bitterness and resentment is evident in their conversation. They have ought in their soul and refuse to let go of the bait of Satan.

How do you deal with this? We'll look at some solutions in the next article in this series. {eoa}