

Banishing a Deadly End-Times Destiny-Killing Spirit From Your Life

“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.”

I’ve shared this prophetic word with you twice now. I first heard it in December 2015 but since many in the body of Christ are still taking the bait of Satan, I sounded the alarm again last week. This destructive spirit of offense is destroying destinies—but it can ultimately send you to hell if you don’t break free. I preached on this at Awakening House of Prayer on Sunday and many rushed the altar in tears. Others came slowly one by one in what was a powerful altar call.

In Christ’s Matthew 24 discourse on the end-times, He warned us against deception, false christs and not getting into fear as the signs of the times manifested. He warned us of persecution and martyrdom. He warned us of false prophets rising. And He told us those who endure to the end shall be saved. He also said this:

“And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold” (Matt. 24:10-12, NIV). We’re seeing this now.

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A Satanic End-Times Strategy

Clearly, an uptick in offense is one of the signs of the end-times. Offense leads to betrayal and hate and lawlessness. John the apostle taught us that anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and murderers do not have eternal life abiding in them (1 John 3:15). Offense sets you up for deception from false prophets and theologies.

If you are going to get offended with your brothers and sisters now, you'll certainly be offended at Jesus in the end times when things don't unfold the way you thought. Judas was offended with the Lord and betrayed Him and committed suicide. Taking Satan's bait of offense is a form of spiritual suicide, like a cancer that spreads slowly until it overtakes you.

The word offense in the Bible comes from the Greek word *skandalon*, which is the name of the part of the trap you set the bait on to lure the animal. *Vine's Dictionary* says offense is a hindrance or a stumbling block. Offense causes us to stumble in our walk with God. We need to guard our hearts from offense with all diligence for out of it flows the issues of life (Prov. 4:23).

In his book *The Bait of Satan*, John Bevere writes:

"A pure heart is like pure gold—soft, tender, and pliable. Hebrews 3:13 states that hearts are hardened through the deceitfulness of sin! If we do not deal with an offense, it will produce more fruit of sin, such as bitterness, anger, and resentment. This added substance hardens our hearts just as alloys harden gold. This reduces or removes tenderness, creating a loss of sensitivity. We are hindered in our ability to hear God's voice. Our accuracy to see is darkened. This is a perfect setting for deception."

Dealing With Offense in Our Hearts

It's impossible that offenses won't come (Luke 17:1) yet Paul said, "I always strive to have a clear conscience toward God and toward men." It is possible to reject the bait of offenses

that come your way if you are not one in the last days that falls into the “lovers of themselves” category (2 Tim. 3:2).

We can't walk in the glory of God and offense at the same time. Proverbs 19:11 tells us, “The discretion of a man defers his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression” (MEV). We can't get prayer answers and walk in unforgiveness at the same time (Mark 11:22-26; Matthew 6:9-15). We can't walk in offense and expect not to enter into resentment, unforgiveness, bitterness and hatred.

“A common excuse for self-preservation through disobedience is offense. There is a false sense of self-protection in harboring an offense. It keeps you from seeing your own character flaws because the blame is deferred to another,” Bevere writes. “You never have to face your role, your immaturity, or your sin because you see only the faults of the offender. Therefore, God's attempt to develop character in you by this opposition is now abandoned. The offended person will avoid the source of the offense and eventually flee, becoming a spiritual vagabond.”

Dealing with offense in our hearts requires repentance—a change of thinking. We need to crucify our flesh, ask God for the grace of humility, stop being selfish and determine not to be offended. We need to allow the Lord to heal any past hurts, wounds, rejection or other issues that drive us toward offense. We need to stop using the Word of God to justify our right to be offended so we'll stop fleeing relationships and churches and repeating the same cycle.

Walking in Humility

By the same token, we need to walk in humility with those who are offended with us—justifiably or unjustifiably—knowing that offense could ultimately send them to hell. Unfortunately, it's nearly impossible to walk in humility with someone who refuses to meet or talk with you. But you should give it

several good attempts bathed in intercession before you give up. Jesus said:

“You have heard that it was said by the ancients, ‘You shall not murder,’ and ‘Whoever murders shall be in danger of the judgment.’ But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca,’ shall be in danger of the Sanhedrin. But whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be in danger of hell fire.

Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go on your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (Matt. 5:21-24).

Always allow the Holy Spirit to lead you. Your brother may not reconcile but if you’ve gone to them three times and taken others, you’ve done all you can do. Beloved, guard your heart from offense in this hour and be careful to avoid offending others as much as possible. Walk humbly and circumspectly before the Lord. The days are evil.