

# Handling Offense Pt. 2

Pastor James Foley – Sunday, March 13, 2022

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## BABY DEDICATION

Before we dismiss the children and volunteers, today is a special day for our assembly—a day in which we will dedicate a child unto the Lord! At this time, I want to call the **Lee** family forward, with their baby **Caroline Nantes Lee**.

**Psalm 127:3** states that children are a “heritage” and “reward” from the Lord. Thus, children are a gift from God to be both cherished and enjoyed! However, they are also a responsibility (i.e., a stewardship) of the highest order. Because children belong first and foremost to God, it is only proper that they be dedicated back to Him. We see this in the pages of Scripture! We are told in 1 Samuel that Hannah presented her son, Samuel, to the Lord. The Gospel according to Luke reveals that Joseph and Mary presented their son, Jesus, unto the Lord at the Temple in Jerusalem. In similar fashion, these parents seek to dedicate their child unto God Almighty.

**Tim and Cibebe**, I call your attention to the command of God recorded in Scripture (Deut. 6:4–7): “Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength. These commandments I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” In light of this passage, I challenge you to love the Lord with the whole of your being, teaching young Caroline to do the same. As you love God, one another and your fellow man, you will model before this child a life in Christ that she will one day embrace for herself. By coming before God and this assembled people, do you declare your desire to dedicate yourselves and your child to the Lord? If so, please respond by saying, “**WE DO.**” Do you promise, with the help of God and the partnership of the local church, to provide her a Christian home of love and peace, raising her in the truth of the Lord’s instruction, and to encourage her one day to trust in Christ as Lord and Savior? If so, please respond by saying, “**WE DO.**”

Finally, **CHURCH**, let us make a commitment as well. Ultimately, it takes a village to raise a child. Parents have first responsibility, but they need the support of the broader community. Do you promise by God’s help to be faithful in your calling as members of the Body of Christ to help this couple in their role as parents? Also, do you purpose to model a godly before this child, that she might come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ in due time? If so, please respond by saying, “**WE DO.**”

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

## CONVOY OF HOPE – UPDATE

**KEY 1** – Last Sunday we collected an offering for the refugee crisis in Ukraine. All collected monies were sent to Convoy of Hope (i.e., an Assemblies of God-related humanitarian and disaster relief organization working to provide food, water, shelter and basic hygiene products to those most in need).

**KEY 2** – I stand amazed at your generosity, as \$2,170.00 came in. All of that has been given to Convoy of Hope!

**KEY 3** – At this time, let us dismiss the children and workers for Children’s Church and Nursery....

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## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for joining us today! Whether you are here in person or joining via the livestream, you are most welcome. Please have a Bible at the ready and be prepared to take notes as you like. We have much to cover in a short space of time.

## SETTING THE STAGE

**NOTE 1** – We are in the midst of an extended series on the topic of offense. We have all felt slighted, wounded or put-off by the words and actions of our peers, so it is vital that we all learn to respond in a biblical manner! Last week we outlined a slate of reasons as to WHY we are so easily offended (i.e., personal pride and insecurity, faulty assumptions, miscommunication, and misunderstanding). Please review this sermon online at [www.NewLifeBarre.org](http://www.NewLifeBarre.org).

**NOTE 2** – Now that we have identified varying triggers for offense, let us consider HOW to properly compensate for them. God has not given us permission to live in our hurt or react poorly toward others because of it. Though we cannot control the actions and intentions of others—and let us recognize that people can be challenging to live with at times—we can control how we respond in kind! So let us delve into the topic of effectively navigating offense...

## THE STARTING POINT

To begin, we do well to realize the most offense is NON-INTENTIONAL and can be overcome without the need for confrontation or conflict resolution. As we have established, most offense stems from misunderstanding, miscommunication and/or unaddressed matters of the heart. Thus, the best way to transcend offense is to simply overlook it and move on. Consider the following teaching of Christ...

### Matthew 7:12 (NIV)

12 So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

**KEY** – If you want others to overlook your unintended slights (i.e., giving you the benefit of the doubt), perhaps you should extend that same grace unto others! These sentiments are affirmed elsewhere in the pages of Scripture...

### Proverbs 19:11 (Emphasis Mine)

11 A person's wisdom yields **patience**;  
it is to one's glory to **overlook an offense**.

### 1 Peter 4:8 (Emphasis Mine)

8 Above all, love each other deeply, because **love covers** over a **multitude** of sins.

## DELVING DEEPER

Moments of offense typically require a spirit of grace that manifests in a willingness to overlook the matter. You will be amazed how many hurts and wounds dissipate the moment you are willing to let go and move on. Of course, this should NOT be the end of the story...

**KEY 1** – Moments of offense also provide us with the opportunity to look inwardly, facilitating change. When we take offense, we should consider WHY we are offended (e.g., pride or insecurity, miscommunication or misunderstanding, etc.). Once we identify the core issue(s) in play, we can allow the Lord, His Spirit and His Word to bring about necessary inner transformation and renewal.

**KEY 2** – Allow me to illustrate with the remainder of our time this morning...

### PRIDE PT. 1

The first trigger we addressed last week was WOUNDED PRIDE. As was noted, we are remarkably self-obsessed creatures, and this self-obsession creates the perfect climate for offense. We become slighted when others dismiss our ideas, fail to appreciate our unique talents or contributions, overlook us in some way or neglect to show us proper deference, etc. Few things hurt like wounded pride...

**KEY** – When we are offended due to pride, this is the perfect opportunity to let God do some spiritual surgery!

If your pride is wounded, consider that the Lord is looking to excise that aspect of your fallen nature anyway, so let Him take the opportunity to perfect His good work! It is not His will for you to nurse your wounded pride—it is His will for you repent of it! Consider what Scripture states re: pride v. humility...

#### **James 4:6 (cf. Prov. 3:34)**

“God opposes the proud  
but shows favor to the humble.”

#### **Matthew 23:12**

12 . . . those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

#### **Philippians 2:3–8**

3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in very nature God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

7 rather, he made himself nothing  
by taking the very nature of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.

8 And being found in appearance as a man,  
he humbled himself  
by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

## PRIDE PT. 2

Perhaps a real-world illustration might be beneficial...

**ILL 1** – Imagine that a musically-gifted member of the body is asked to perform a solo during a special service. They work diligently to perfect their craft, ensuring a good performance. Solo day comes and they nail it! However, no one says anything to them after church during the coffee-hour. No “good job!” or “thanks for blessing us with your song!” Not even the Pastor offers a kind word following the service...

**ILL 2** – So they leave church, and on the ride home they are stewing. They are tempted to take offense at the Pastor and the congregation, for how could they not appreciate the blessing they were provided during the service! How could they show such little regard for their gifting or work hard work via practice?

**ILL 3** – However, they allow themselves to become vulnerable before God, seeking to know the WHY of their offense. Maybe the initial prayer might sound something like this: “God, I am hurt. I put my best into the performance and no one even noticed. How could it be that no one—not even the Pastor—said ‘thank you’ or ‘good job’? I feel miserable, like I want to pull away. I know this is not right. Help me to understand WHY I feel the way that I do. Help me!”

**KEY** – Of course, we know the trigger of this offense: i.e., wounded pride. What might take place next?

**ILL 4** – “God, I realize I am hurt because my pride is wounded. Lord, I confess that maybe I was focused a bit too much on the applause and the accolades of the crowd. Ultimately, I should not have been singing for them anyway; I should have been singing for you. Forgive me of my pride and cultivate within me a spirit of humility. Help me to forgive, that in my anger I might not sin against You and Your people!”

**Q. See what happens in this scenario?**

**A1.** The offense was never allowed to take root or yield a toxic harvest.

**A2.** The wounded pride was exposed and relented of before God in prayer.

**A3.** An opportunity for mercy, grace, perspective and growth was established.

## INSECURITY PT. 1

The second trigger we addressed last week was personal INSECURITY. Since the fall of humanity in the Garden, we have lived acutely self-aware of our deficiencies and failings (i.e., working to self-compensate in kind). Therefore, when others touch upon an area of personal insecurity, we are all-too-easily moved to take offense. For instance...

**ILL 1** – If you are insecure re: your cooking, how do you feel when someone says: “First time making this dish?”

**ILL 2** – If you are insecure re: your looks, how do you feel when someone says: “You look tired? Are you sick?”

**KEY** – Yet again, there is growth when we understand the source of our offense and deal with it in Christ!

Consider the following real-world scenario of navigating an offense rooted in personal insecurity...

## INSECURITY PT. 2

**ILL 1** – Sylvia is a believer, but she has her struggles. She has never felt particularly pretty or comfortable around other people. One Sunday her friend invites her to church, and Sylvia decides to attend (i.e., despite her ever-present discomfort). The worship was great and the message uplifting, but she did not feel like she quite “fit in.” This was reaffirmed by the fact that no one went out of their way to say hello or shake a hand. She thinks she even saw a few women looking at her shabby outfit. Once again, she feels unloved and out-of-place.

**Q1. What do we see herein? Her insecurity causing offense...**

**Q2. I wonder how many times she has lived out this toxic pattern or cycle?**

**Q2. However, what if Sylvia chose to deal with the underlying sp. issue at hand? Insecurity...**

**ILL 2** – “God, I am hurt again. I feel so ugly and like no one loves me. But this is not true! Rather than harboring bitterness against those I met today, I am going to look to You. I know that I am beloved by You, and that You have created me to be Yours. Help me to get over myself so that I can live in the freedom of truth. I am going to take this opportunity to grow closer to you.”

**Q. Imagine if Sylvia began to overlook offense in order to look both inwardly and upwardly?**

MY CHILD...

You may not know me, but I know everything about you ...Psalm 139:1

I know when you sit down and when you rise up ...Psalm 139:2

I am familiar with all your ways ...Psalm 139:3

Even the very hairs on your head are numbered ...Matthew 10:29-31

For you were made in my image ...Genesis 1:27

In me you live and move and have your being ...Acts 17:28

For you are my offspring ...Acts 17:28

I knew you even before you were conceived ...Jeremiah 1:4-5

I chose you when I planned creation ...Ephesians 1:11-12

You were not a mistake, for all your days are written in my book ...Psalm 139:15-16

I determined the exact time of your birth and where you would live ...Acts 17:26

You are fearfully and wonderfully made ...Psalm 139:14

I knit you together in your mother's womb ...Psalm 139:13

And brought you forth on the day you were born ...Psalm 71:6

I have been misrepresented by those who don't know me ...John 8:41-44

I am not distant and angry, but am the complete expression of love ...1 John 4:16

And it is my desire to lavish my love on you ...1 John 3:1

Simply because you are my child and I am your father ...1 John 3:1

I offer you more than your earthly father ever could ...Matthew 7:11

For I am the perfect father ...Matthew 5:48

Every good gift that you receive comes from my hand ...James 1:17

For I am your provider and I meet all your needs ...Matthew 6:31-33

My plan for your future has always been filled with hope ...Jeremiah 29:11

Because I love you with an everlasting love ...Jeremiah 31:3

My thoughts toward you are countless as the sand on the seashore ...Psalms 139:17-18

And I rejoice over you with singing ...Zephaniah 3:17

I will never stop doing good to you ...Jeremiah 32:40

For you are my treasured possession ...Exodus 19:5  
 I desire to establish you with all my heart and all my soul ...Jeremiah 32:41  
 And I want to show you great and marvelous things ...Jeremiah 33:3  
 If you seek me with all your heart, you will find me ...Deuteronomy 4:29  
 Delight in me and I will give you the desires of your heart ...Psalm 37:4  
 For it is I who gave you those desires ...Philippians 2:13  
 I am able to do more for you than you could possibly imagine ...Ephesians 3:20  
 For I am your greatest encourager ...2 Thessalonians 2:16-17  
 I am also the Father who comforts you in all your troubles ...2 Corinthians 1:3-4  
 When you are brokenhearted, I am close to you ...Psalm 34:18  
 As a shepherd carries a lamb, I have carried you close to my heart ...Isaiah 40:11  
 One day I will wipe away every tear from your eyes ...Revelation 21:3-4  
 And I'll take away all the pain you have suffered on this earth ...Revelation 21:3-4  
 I am your Father, and I love you even as I love my son, Jesus ...John 17:23  
 For in Jesus, my love for you is revealed ...John 17:26  
 He is the exact representation of my being ...Hebrews 1:3  
 He came to demonstrate that I am for you, not against you ...Romans 8:31  
 And to tell you that I am not counting your sins ...2 Corinthians 5:18-19  
 Jesus died so that you and I could be reconciled ...2 Corinthians 5:18-19  
 His death was the ultimate expression of my love for you ...1 John 4:10  
 I gave up everything I loved that I might gain your love ...Romans 8:31-32  
 If you receive the gift of my son Jesus, you receive me ...1 John 2:23  
 And nothing will ever separate you from my love again ...Romans 8:38-39  
 Come home and I'll throw the biggest party heaven has ever seen ...Luke 15:7  
 I have always been Father, and will always be Father ...Ephesians 3:14-15  
 My question is...Will you be my child? ...John 1:12-13  
 I am waiting for you ...Luke 15:11-32

Love, Your Father,  
 Almighty God

**Q. See what happens in this scenario?**

- A1.** The offense was never allowed to take root and yield a toxic harvest.
- A2.** The personal insecurity was exposed and 'relented of' before God in prayer.
- A3.** An opportunity for mercy, grace, perspective and needed-growth was established.

## FAULTY ASSUMPTIONS

The third trigger we addressed last week was FAULTY ASSUMPTIONS. We have the habit of assuming the worst in others, inferring thoughts and motivations that are likely not present in their hearts or minds. However, if we can learn to navigate this aspect of our nature, there is growth that can take place! Consider the following exchange between two moms...

**ILL 1** – “I can’t believe you let your kids eat toaster pastries! They’re all sugar and trans fats!” a friend told me recently. She was over for coffee and couldn’t help peering into my open pantry and seeing the box of toaster pastries. I could feel my anger starting to rise. My walls were going up. What would motivate someone to make a remark like that! It would never occur to me to critique what other people have in their kitchen cupboards. Maybe she thinks I am an unfit parent and that I do not take my parenting responsibilities seriously. Maybe she’s one of those ‘know-it-all-moms’ who looks down on other moms to make herself feel better.

**Q. Do you see what is happening herein?**

**A.** She is assuming the worst of her friend and entertaining toxic emotions...

**KEY 1** – It is tragic to think that many friendships begin to spiral downward due to such innocuous moments. Churches have probably split for less! Mercifully, this nigh-offended mother takes a moment to avert a meltdown by simply overlooking the offense. Consider the rest of the story...

**ILL 2** – I could feel my anger starting to rise. My walls were going up. What would motivate someone to make a remark like that! It would never occur to me to critique what other people have in their kitchen cupboards. Maybe she thinks I am an unfit parent and that I do not take my parenting responsibilities seriously. Maybe she’s one of those ‘know-it-all-moms’ who looks down on other moms to make herself feel better. Still, I told myself my friend probably meant well. After all, she studied nutrition in college and that was ‘her thing.’ In her own way, she was probably trying to show concern. So I simply smiled, shrugged and replied, “You’re right. They’re not exactly nutritious. But once in a while I buy them for a special treat.”

**KEY 2** – Be wary of your assumptions. If you catch yourself operating by assumption, stop and treat them the way you would like to be treated (Matt. 7:12b): “. . . do to others what you would have them do to you.” Nine-times-out-of-ten this will save you a lot of personal heartache and relational nightmare!

**FYI** – For further study on this topic, I would direct you to the OT figure of King Saul. In many ways his kingdom was undone when he assumed the worst of his servant, David (i.e., allowing the remarks of his female subjects to wound his pride and trigger his insecurity)...

### 1 Samuel 18:6–9 (Emphasis Mine)

6 When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with timbrels and lyres. 7 As they danced, they sang: “Saul has slain his **thousands**, and David his tens of thousands.”

8 Saul was **very** angry; this refrain **displeased him greatly**. “They have credited David with tens of thousands,” he thought, “but me with only thousands. **What more can he get but the kingdom?**” 9 And from that time on Saul kept a close eye on David.

## MISCOMMUNICATION & MISUNDERSTANDING

Lastly, we addressed the trigger(s) of MISCOMMUNICATION and MISUNDERSTANDING. We often take offense when there is a gap between what a person says and what we believe they said. Moreover, offense is easily triggered by misunderstandings fueled by cultural, age, gender, and/or personality differences. Allow me to illustrate this type of offense and how to overcome it in Christ with the following illustration...

**ILL 1** – One Sunday a church usher notices as youth texting during the Pastor’s sermon. Grippled by the sheer irreverence of today’s youth, the elder goes to the teen and says (irritably), “What are you doing with that phone?” To this, the youth replies “I’m working to understand the Pastor’s message.”

**FYI** – There is opportunity for offense due to misinterpretation herein. The elder could interpret the youth’s remarks as being sarcastic. After all, how could playing on a phone help you understand the message of the Pastor? There is also opportunity for offense due to misunderstanding. Perhaps the elder legitimately has no idea how a phone could serve as a tool in this context. They are unfamiliar with digital Bible apps, dictionaries, online resources, etc.

### **Q. How might the enemy use this situation to stir offense?**

**A1.** The elder might walk away stewing, deeming “all kids are the same these days!”

**A2.** The youth might be turned off to the church-world and the needless it creates...

**KEY** – However, this story need not have a tragic ending. What if it concluded in the following manner?

**ILL 2** – One Sunday a church usher notices as youth texting during the Pastor’s sermon. Grippled by the sheer irreverence of today’s youth, the elder goes to the teen and says (irritably), “What are you doing with that phone?” To this, the youth replies “I’m working to understand the Pastor’s message.” Though the elder is taken aback, he asks the teen calmly, “What do you mean? I’d like to talk afterwards about how you use a phone to help you at church.”

**ILL 3** – After church the youth and the usher talk for about thirty-minutes. During the first fifteen-minutes, the teen explains how a Bible app works, shows the notes they have taken, along with the quotations posted on social media. The youth is so intrigued by the elder’s attentiveness, they feel safe to spend the next fifteen-minutes talking about home and school struggles, leading to a request for prayer over the coming week. A real and lasting connection was forged, and it all began with a little bit of understanding and time invested!

### **Colossians 3:5–10, 12–15**

5 Put to death . . . whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. 7 You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. 8 But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. 9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. . . . 12 Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. 15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace.



## CONCLUSION

**NOTE 1** – Those who wish to give online may do so at [www.NewLifeBarre.org](http://www.NewLifeBarre.org). Those who wish to give in person can utilize the offering boxes located throughout the church facility. Thank you for your faithfulness in supporting this local work of Christ.

**NOTE 2** – Ministry schedule...

Prayer – Sunday at 8:45am

Sunday School – Sunday at 9:15am

CYC – Tuesday from 3–4pm and 4–5pm

Weekly Study – Thursday at 6:30–7:30pm

Women's Ministry – 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at 6:30pm

Men's Breakfast – 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday at 9am

Potluck – Final Sunday of the Month