

Leaving 2020 Behind

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New Years is loved because it speaks of a new beginning. We can have a new beginning with God through Jesus Christ.

We can have 100 New Year's Days, but as long as we are trapped in 2020, it won't matter. **The changing of a calendar doesn't change a heart or spring you free from a trap.**

The trap of 2020 is offense, being offended in your heart.

Luke 17:1 - Then Jesus said to the disciples, it is impossible but that offences will come: but woe or grief to him, through whom they come!

- Offense is the bait in the trap the enemy uses to imprison you. An offended person is trapped.
- You cannot satisfy an offended person; they will rage against wisdom.

"2021 will prove to be a year of immense Kingdom expansion. However, it will not occur in a "Time of Peace". The warfare, anger, bitterness, rage and offense that was burning down our cities, has moved into individual hearts." Excerpt from an Email to 2 Key People on our Church Staff.

- Peace must start in the heart.

In the last days...

Matthew 24:10-12 - And then many will be offended or entrapped, will betray or deliver up one another, and will hate or be loveless to one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

- Most Christians out of 2020 are more concerned about their offense then for the eternity of other people.
- Offense sets you up to be deceived by the people who want to use you and your anger.
- Offense will cause us to not submit to God.

Offenses can be perceived, borrowed or real.

1. Perceived offense is simply that you don't see the whole picture.
 - When we walk in assumption.
2. Borrowed offense is when to take the offense of another and make it your own.
 - When we own the offense of others. It's like drinking someone's vomit.

3. Real offense is when you are genuinely injured and wounded.
 - Offenses trap us and then ruin our lives.
 - We can pass the offense and a pathway to destruction on to our children and loved ones.
 - Wounds that aren't properly treated will kill or maim you.

How do we get free from the trap of offense?

1. Live a Spirit-filled life and grow up spiritually.
 - In the coming weeks we'll talk about how to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and how to have an intimate relationship with God.
 - Growing up spiritually and being "spiritually fit" will prepare you to overcome the "unavoidable offenses" of life.
 - It's a lifestyle that will allow you to withstand "getting hit".
2. Consider Jesus

Hebrews 3:1 - Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus.

- This is one area that we are commanded to compare.
- We need to do everything in our life through the lens of Him.

Matthew 18:21-22 - Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

- The person who can't forgive and lives in offense goes to prison.

1 Peter 2:23-24 - Jesus did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when he suffered, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; Jesus Himself bore our sins in his own body on the cross, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness — by whose stripes you were healed.

- **The greatest injustice in human history is the son of God dying for the sin of the world!**
- **Any injustice you raise above His sacrifice reveals a "heart grown cold" and that you are "trapped in offense".**
- **The greatest injustice we can do toward God is to ignore the great price He paid and the great commission.**