



Grace Fellowship of Morehead, KY

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The Words of Your Mouth

The Series

YOUR MOUTH vs. OFFENSE

Message preached on Sunday, September 17th and 24th

We have been on a series on the words of your mouth...we must take God at HIS WORD...

Proverbs 18:21 – “Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.”

BELOVED: You are either providing death or life with your mouth.

NOW: We have been focusing on things like turning your life around by your words, or ruling and reigning by your words or walking in favor by your words...etc.

But there is an area of your words that is producing death that we overlook or even embrace... especially now days.

Luke 17:1 – “Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!”

“It is impossible but that offences will come...”

BELOVED: You can call it what you want to call it...”hurt feelings” or whatever, but offense is offense.

Offense is a trap that the enemy LOVES to catch people in...

Dangers of Offense

Psalm 119:165 – “Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.”

NOTE: Offense will steal your peace! Shalom! Which is more than just tranquility... prosperity, etc.

Matthew 6:14-15 – moves you from your position in God

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

YOU SAY...but Pastor Thad, that is unforgiveness, not offense.

BELOVED: That is what offense is...it is holding on to things that people have done to you.

John the Baptist (Mark 11:6)...it will make you lose your head

“**Offences**” – skandalan – scandle, stumble, trip up

Why do offenses come?

- 1.) What someone did or said that was below your expectation of them.
- 2.) What someone did NOT do or say that was below your expectation of them.

EXAMPLE: Someone in the hospital and is offended because the pastor didn't come and visit them in person.

Offense will always cause you to stumble!

“Stumble” – wobble emotionally

ILLUSTRATION: Drunk goggles – distorts your vision so you see things weirdly (like drunk), loss of depth and distance perception, double vision, etc.

Offense is like a pair of these goggles...you put them on and you see everything in the view or light of these glasses (though they may not be truth).

This is what happened with Judas Iscariot...we know he already had character flaws.

John 12:6 – He was a thief.

John 12:1-8 – Mary poured VERY expensive ointment on Jesus.

Judas didn't like it...he protested (**NOTE:** not because he cared).

THOUGHT most people who protest the loudest about church issues or theological issues don't really care about the poor or other issues...they just care about the way THEY see things.

Jesus' response? Vs. 8 – The poor you will always have with you, me you won't!

What an opportunity to get offended at Jesus...how selfish!

BELOVED: This may have been THE point that the enemy actually took up residence in Judas. Probably was!

John 13:2 – **“put into”** – quickly injected, swift movement

In one split second the enemy took an opportunity to put something in Judas that would change the course of his life. Offense!

This happens with friends, spouses, pastors/sheep, or just sheep.

Woe to Him

The first point I want to make regarding your mouth is found in verse 1...

“...but woe unto him, through whom they come!”

(AMP) – “...but woe to him by or through whom they come!”

This part of offense does NOT get enough attention. **HOWEVER:** It is just as important as being offended...and Scripture points out that **WOE** is to this person who causes the offense.

IMPORTANT: You don't always understand that someone has become offended...so that would mean it was they, themselves, who caused the offense...but there are times where it is clear that others have wronged you (that is what this passage is talking about).

AS CHRISTIANS...we **MUST** guard ourselves that we are not the ones who are causing offense to others...because we can shout all day long that they shouldn't get offended...but the **WOE** goes to you!

You say, “How would I cause offense?”

Let me show you a couple ways.

1.) You offend someone with harsh, mean or rude words.

You may hide behind, “Hey, I am just being real.” Or “Hey, I am just being spiritual.”

ILLUSTRATION: A lady who had attended a church since its beginning days recently had her brother die. It shook her up...as it would anyone. She called her pastor (of many years) to get some encouragement and the ONLY THING the pastor said was “get in the Word.”

QUESTION: Is that good advice? Sure!

Is that the only thing she needed at that time? No!

One of the things the Holy Spirit will help you with is lack of tact or rudeness.

Ephesians 4:29 – “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”

Words that don’t enable or strengthen the hearers are considered corrupt communication.

UNDERSTAND: I am NOT saying we talk like walking on egg shells, again, that would be their offense being brought on by themselves.

1 Corinthians 13:4,5a (NLT)

4 Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud

5 or rude....

“**Speak the truth in LOVE** (Ephesians 4:15)...” – so speak the truth with tact.

Proverbs 15:1 – “A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.”

Proverbs 16:24 – “Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.”

AGAIN: The Holy Spirit that is in you will help you to not just say the right words, but in a way that causes peace and health.

2.) You cause offense by keeping the story going.

THINK ABOUT THIS: Sally has offended you...truly offended you...dirty and downright offended you. You are fighting offense (sounds better). Sally has not offended Margaret, but you go to Margaret and tell Margaret EVERYTHING that Sally did that made her a bad person. Now, Margaret is offended at Sally!

Guess who caused the offense in Margaret? Sally? Nope!

Proverbs 17:9 – “He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.”

BELOVED: Gossip or slander is wrong! And the more you spread the story...the more offense you may be causing!

I am not saying you can’t share things with close confidants, but they better be trusted to handle the situation and not make judgements on the people. Pray with you...guide you, etc.

UNFORTUNATELY most of the time when we are sharing what someone has done to us, we are not looking for direction or even counsel...we are looking for someone to get as mad at them as we are...**that just cannot be!**

Proverbs 11:13 – “A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.”

Proverbs 26:20-22

20 Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth.

21 As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife.

22 The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

BELOVED: Yes, there are actions that we need to be aware of, too...but we **MUST** guard our lips. They are either producing life or death in others...make sure they produce life.

Luke 17:2 – “It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.”

NOW: Jesus takes two verses to cover this area...but then He turns back to the ones who have been offended.

Luke 17:3 – “Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.”

When offense comes...we want to take care of it! Deal with the other person...get them straightened out. Change them! **AFTER ALL woe to him...not me, right?**

“Take heed to yourself”

“Heed” – give regard, beware, GET A GRIP

BASICALLY get a grip on yourself...not on the other person!

USUALLY we want to get a grip on THEM...not on ourselves! Especially their necks!

MARK HANKINS (God told him): “You can’t control everyone, but I would appreciate it if you would control yourself.”

You may not be able to change others, but you can change you!

“If your brother trespass (violates) against you...”

1.) Rebuke him...simply, confront him. Don’t hide it. Talk to him about it. You will notice many times that people don’t even know anything happened.

2.) If he repents, forgive him.

“Forgive” – completely release, dismiss, permanently send away,
BEST TRANSLATION? **Let it go!**

You have forever released them from what they did to you.

THINK OF GOD...took our sins and moved them as far as the east is from the west.
He sent them away!

QUESTION: What if they don’t apologize? What if you talk to them and they say, “tough luck, buddy! Get over it, precious!”

I guess I don’t have to forgive them?

Luke 17:4 – “And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.”

If he violates seven times...repent seven times...let it go!

This reveals who you are...what you are after!

This reveals your desire to operate in God's kingdom...to obey and live in His system.

Too many people are too connected to the hurt and offense to LET IT GO. If you took away their offense...they would lose their identity.

ILLUSTRATION: When Jessica and I were looking for buildings to rent in Brownsville, TX for the church, we looked non-stop for 2+ years...every time we were in the car. We finally found a place...but we still found ourselves looking, when we were driving, because we were in the habit of doing it.

Offense can be a habit...we need to break it!

UNDERSTAND: If he says with his mouth, "oops", but continues to do it...he is NOT in fact sorry, but you are not responsible for him...you are responsible for you...getting a grip on you!

Luke 17:5

The disciples answer? "**Lord, increase our faith!**"

NOTE: He wasn't talking about faith...he was talking about forgiveness, offense, etc.

What they were saying? "If we had the same kind of faith (as much faith) as you have...we could forgive people."

They were looking at their lack of faith as the reason or excuse they were not forgiving others.

Luke 17:6 – "And the Lord said, **If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree**, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you."

Jesus didn't want to hear any of their excuses.

Mustard seeds are SMALL and GROW quickly...if planted and watered.

If you choose to use your faith (no matter where it is now), you can do anything. It is your choice!

QUESTION: Why did He use a Sycamine tree?

Five things about the Sycamine tree:

- 1.) It has the deepest root structure of all trees in the Middle East.
- 2.) It grows best in dry conditions...where there is no water.
- 3.) The wood of the Sycamine tree was the preferred wood for building caskets.
- 4.) The fruit of the Sycamine tree looked similar to the mulberry tree...
Mulberry tree's fruit was sweet and expensive (eaten by the wealthy).
Sycamine tree's fruit was bitter and eaten by the poor.
NOTE: It was so bitter that it could not be eaten in one sitting. You would come back and revisit it over and over again.
- 5.) It was not naturally pollinated.
It was only pollinated when a wasp stuck its stinger into the fruit. It is the sting of the wasp that pollinated the Sycamine tree.

What does the Sycamine tree have to do with unforgiveness, bitterness and offense?

- 1.) Bitterness has a deep root structure.
Hebrews 12:15 root of bitterness.
- 2.) Bitterness and unforgiveness grow BEST where there has been no recent rain of the Holy Ghost or watering of the Word.
- 3.) Bitterness/unforgiveness/offense are casket material! They will kill you.
- 4.) It's fruit is bitter and for poor people...poor spiritually...poor relationally.
You will keep working on it over and over again!

- 5.) They are like a sting of the wasp! Hurts!
 "I will never get stung by that person again."

How do you get rid of offense/bitterness/unforgiveness?

This is a main question that we have...if that person doesn't change. If that memory is still there...I will always have that feeling in me.

HONESTLY: Often we like that feeling...we feel justified.

Luke 17:6 – "And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ***ye might say unto this sycamine tree***, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; ***and it should obey you.***"

"Say to the Sycamine tree"

The Greek make up of that word "say" is to say and keep saying...don't stop! Tell it to go!
 You make the decision and tell it to go.

YOU ASK: Well, what if it doesn't go? Keep using your faith and speaking to it...say it over and over again.

YOU ASK: What happens when the memory pops back up...keep speaking to it.

PERHAPS Matthew 11 – Speak to the mountain...the obstacle!

Your voice represents your authority.

Rather than talking to yourself about the issue, talk to the issue where it should go, too many sit around and listen to their thoughts.

There is a time to tell your brain to SHUT UP!

QUESTION: Why didn't He tell them to throw it in the garbage dump? Why the sea?

ANSWER: The Sycamine tree will grow anywhere! In a matter of time it will reroot in a garbage pile.

HOWEVER: In a sea of salt water a tree will be killed...dead!

Jesus doesn't want a temporary pause of this thing...He wants it dead in you.

"It SHOULD obey"

"Should obey" – to hear as a subordinate and obey

The emotions and flesh are like children...if you don't take control of them, they will take control of you.

Our flesh is waiting for us to act like parents and take authority. Be who you are supposed to be. Use your authority...

You may have a good reason for offense...but you do not have an excuse to stay the way you are.

Who doesn't have a story of abuse or disfunction?!

But we have been delivered.

- * The hurts are real!
- * But it is your choice to let it go!
- * Start talking to yourself!

YOU SAY: But I just can't get over it.

BELOVED: That is NOT how you want to use your authority!