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# Overcoming Offenses To Love (The Inevitability of Being Offended)

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## The Power of God's Love

Pastor Wil Nichols

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**Victorious Praise Fellowship Church of God in Christ**

2116 Page Rd. Durham NC 27703

WEBSITE: [www.VictoriousPraise.org](http://www.VictoriousPraise.org)

EMAIL: [PastorWil@VictoriousPraise.org](mailto:PastorWil@VictoriousPraise.org), [Info@VictoriousPraise.org](mailto:Info@VictoriousPraise.org)

PHONE: (919) 957-7500

***Sermon: The Power of God's Love: Overcoming Offenses To Love (The Inevitability of Being Offended)***

***Lesson Text***

Matthew 24:10–13 (KJV) <sup>10</sup> And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. <sup>11</sup> And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. <sup>12</sup> And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. <sup>13</sup> But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

Matthew 11:2–6 (KJV)<sup>2</sup> Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, <sup>3</sup> And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: <sup>5</sup> The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. <sup>6</sup> And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

Luke 17:1–4 (KJV)<sup>1</sup> Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe *unto him*, through whom they come! <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. <sup>4</sup> 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.

***Introduction***

The theme for 2026 is “The Power of God’s Love” based on a New Commandment from Jesus: John 13: <sup>34</sup> A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

On New Year’s Eve we talked about the next verse and how we should be Identified by Love:

- John 13: <sup>35</sup> By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.
- Love doesn’t use criticism to condemn, but lovingkindness to save.
- Love doesn’t use the law to destroy, but the light to fulfill.
- Love doesn’t use suffering to hurt, but glory to reveal.

This new commandment to love is new because now we will be empowered by the Holy Spirit to obey it. The old said, “Love your *neighbor*,” but the new said, “Love your *enemies*.”

Now in our first lesson text, Jesus predicts something quite troubling would happen during the end times: Matthew 24: <sup>12</sup> And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

Because of the iniquity or unbridled and out of control wickedness, human affections will be less and less evident as acts of unlove will become commonplace.

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He then says three things will happen as a result of this iniquity and loss of love: Matthew 24: <sup>10</sup> **And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.**

This is the world we now live in and what we've been given to combat it is The Power of God's Love. Supernatural power to overcome being offended, betrayed, and hated.

Next week we will look at how God's Love empowers us for betrayal and hatred, but today let's explore offences.

How many of you have ever been offended by someone to the point that it crushed or broke your heart? How many of you have ever offended someone that it broke their heart?

The truth is offenses are inevitable, persistent, and impossible to avoid. And although we may be Christians, we are not immune to its effects to cause our love to wax or grow cold.

In our lesson text we see the love of two cousins (John the Baptist and Jesus), family, co-laborers establishing what would eventually be known as Christianity, growing cold because of offense.

Offenses cause the love for our marriages to grow cold, the love for our families grow cold, the love for our friendships to grow cold, even the love for our brothers and sisters in the Lord to grow cold.

And although it is impossible to avoid these offenses, God's Love gives us the power to overcome them!

### ***Series and Sermon: The Power of God's Love: Overcoming Offenses To Love (The Inevitability of Being Offended)***

(Love That Overcomes the Iniquity, Inevitability, and Persistency of Offenses)

#### ***I. Love That Overcomes the Iniquity of Offenses (Goodness)***

Matthew 24: <sup>10</sup> **And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.** <sup>11</sup> **And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.** <sup>12</sup> **And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.**

To overcome offenses, we must first use God's Love to deal with iniquity!

Iniquity is defined as an offense against religious or moral law; transgression of the law of God.

When people offend us, the question is not whether it is a sin or not against us, but the iniquity we have to deal with is our response to the offense.

Matthew 11: <sup>2</sup> Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, <sup>3</sup> And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

We see two offenses here: first, John's disappointment that Jesus did not come to rescue him from prison; second, Jesus' authenticity as the true Messiah is called into question.

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The veracity of the offenses is not the point; it is how one responds to them that determines if you are allowing God's Love to overcome them.

John lashes out at his perceived offense, whereas Jesus responds with Love.

Matthew 11: <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered and said unto them, **Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: <sup>5</sup> The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.**

Jesus' response was to show him that I'm the same person after the offense as I was before the offense. He didn't become defensive, he didn't attack back, he simply responded in Love.

To overcome the iniquity of offenses, respond with the goodness of God's love.

Romans 12: <sup>21</sup> Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

And when you overcome the iniquity of offenses with God, you become blessed!

Matthew 11: <sup>6</sup> **And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.**

### ***II. Love That Overcomes the Inevitability of Offenses (Forgiveness)***

Luke 17: <sup>1</sup> Then said he unto the disciples, **It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!**

To overcome offenses, we must next use God's Love to deal with inevitability!

Many relationships, friendships, and partnerships have been destroyed over offenses. And what generally happens after that is we leave that relationship to look for another one that doesn't offend us. And therein lies the problem!

Intentional or unintentional, we all experience offenses, and we all are guilty of them. And the more we seek relationships that don't offend, the more we will become disheartened.

This speaks to the inevitability of our human failure.

Isaiah 64: <sup>6</sup> But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Romans 3: <sup>23</sup> For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

To overcome the inevitability of offenses, respond with the forgiveness of God's love.

Luke 17: <sup>3</sup> **Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.**

Offenses create hurt feelings and broken hearts which make it difficult to forgive, and yet we must forgive. And the key to forgive is the power of God's love.

Luke 23: <sup>34</sup> Then said Jesus, **Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.**

The same power of God's love that forgives us, we must use to forgive them.

### ***III. Love That Overcome the Persistency of Offenses (Longsuffering)***

Luke 17: <sup>4</sup> 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.

- To overcome the iniquity of offenses, respond with the goodness of God's love.
- To overcome the inevitability of offenses, respond with the forgiveness of God's love.
- To overcome the persistence of offenses, respond with the longsuffering of God's love.

Sometimes we can overcome one offence, or maybe three strikes and you're out. But what do you do when it just keeps happening over and over again.

You forgive, but then it happens again. You pray and cry, but then it happens again.

The answer is the power of God's Love comes with Longsuffering.

Galatians 5: <sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, <sup>23</sup> Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Isaiah 40: <sup>31</sup> But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint.

Job 14: <sup>14</sup> If a man die, shall he live *again*? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

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## Midweek Study Lesson Plan (Sermon: Overcoming Offenses To Love (The Inevitability of Being Offended))

### Lesson Text

- Matthew 24:10–13, Matthew 11:2–6, Luke 17:1–4

### Sermon Outline

- I. *Love That Overcomes the Iniquity of Offenses (Goodness)***
- II. *Love That Overcomes the Inevitability of Offenses (Forgiveness)***
- III. *Love That Overcome the Persistency of Offenses (Longsuffering)***

### Questions: (What was your main takeaway from this message?)

#### **I. Getting to Know “Me”**

1. Which emoji sums up your 2025? Which emoji describes your outlook for 2026?
2. If your life had a remote and you could add one button to it, what would it do?

#### **II. Into The Bible**

1. What did Jesus mean when he told Peter in Matthew 18:22 that he must forgive his brother seventy times seven?
2. Read Matthew 18:32-35. What do these verses teach us about the source of our power to forgive?

#### **III. Life Application**

1. What does it reveal about your faith if you struggle to forgive someone who repeatedly offends you?
2. What are practical steps to confront someone who has offended you without becoming an adversary?