

The Institute of Self-Worth®
Teaching Notes

Borrowed Offenses

Mark 4:14-20 gives us one of the most important subjects for the believer's success, the "parable of the sower". In these verses we find instruction for allowing the Word to be planted in the soil of our heart and not allowing offenses to enter the soil of our heart and hinder or destroy the seed we have planted.

An offense is a spiritual principle used by the devil to cause people to become bitter. An offense is often so subtle it goes undetected. It's like a cancer that grows a little at a time and steals our joy.

Our heart is our soul, which consists of our mind, will, emotions, thought and feelings. Our emotions, thoughts, and feelings affect our will especially if our mind is not renewed to the truth of the Word. When we have the opportunity to be offended it affects our emotions, thoughts and our feelings. If we don't know the Word and we embrace the offense, our will is affected. When this happens, the offense becomes the seed that we plant into the soil of our heart instead of the Word.

It's important to note that soil or dirt only produces the seed planted. Our soil will use the same amount of energy to produce the seed of the Word or the seed of an offense. We are the keeper of the soil. Proverbs 23:7

Psalms 19:14 gives us two key principles; words and meditations. It's the meditations of the heart that produce the words of your mouth. It's the meditations of the heart that create the way you feel. A meditation is a thought that has hung around long enough to produce a feeling.

Mark 4:16 Jesus said that after we've heard the Word, we become glad. Glad is an emotion, which affects our actions.

Proverbs 23:7 "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." The word **thinketh** means a "gatekeeper". We are the keeper of the gate to our heart or soul. Whatever we allow inside the gate of our heart or soul becomes ours. If we let an offense in, we become offended. If we don't let an offense in, we won't become offended. When we become offended we begin to alter our focus. The purpose of an offense is to completely capture our focus and turn it toward our own destruction. What we see will be our destiny.

Proverbs 4:23 "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it *are* the issues of life." The Word says to keep or guard your heart or soul (thoughts and feelings) with all diligence for out of your heart or soul (thoughts and feelings) flow all of the issues of your life. When your meditation is focused on an offense, all you can see is the offense

Hearing is Receiving

In Mark 4:9, Matthew 13:9 and Luke 8:8 Jesus made an interesting statement. He said, “He that has ears to hear, let him hear”. In the Greek it says, “He that has ears to hear, let him keep on hearing”. The more you hear something the clearer it becomes. Have you ever said, ‘I finally get it’? The reason is that you’ve heard it several times but just couldn’t see it. Then one day you see it! That’s because you’ve continued to hear.

When a person has only “heard” something they generally don’t get it. That’s why it’s important to continue hearing the Word. However, the same holds true with an offense. The more you continue to hear an offense, the more that offense becomes yours.

Three Types of Offenses

There are three types of offenses: direct, given, and borrowed. A direct offense is when someone directly offends you. They may offend you on purpose or they offend you and don’t realize what they’ve done. Whether they offend you knowingly or unknowingly, is not the issue. It’s what you do with the offense that causes the offense to become an issue. If you receive the offense, it becomes yours. If you don’t receive the offense, it’s not yours.

A given offense is something you give to someone. An offense can be given to one person or to a group of hundreds or thousands. The only way you can give an offense is when you’ve taken an offense. You only give what you have. If you don’t receive an offense, you will never have an offense to give away.

A borrowed offense is when someone is offended at another person and they share that offense with you and you borrow their offense against the person. You may not know the person you’re offended at, but now you’ve made a judgment call against someone that has never done you wrong. You’ve borrowed another man’s offense and decided to allow their offense to control your life.

The Parable of the Sower

Mark 4:14-20

Vs. 14 You and I sow words. Words are seeds looking for soil. When your words are received into the heart of another person who has ears to hear, then those words as seeds begin to grow. We chose the words or seeds we sow. This is why it’s important to speak the Word of God. When someone speaks offensive words, those words are seeds looking for soil so they can grow. When someone speaks the truth in love, those words are seeds looking for soil so they can grow.

Vs. 15 The words “by the way side” are referring to those that seldom hear the Word. When they do hear the Word, it’s so seldom that the soil is often hardened to the point that the Word or seed never gets into the soil. Seeds never grow unless they get into the soil. When seeds are on top of the soil they are easily stolen because Satan comes

immediately and steals the Word before it has the opportunity to get into their hearts or their thoughts and feelings.

Vs. 16 When the Word is spoken it has enough power to change the way a person feels, even the person who seldom hears the Word. Jesus said that when the Word is spoken it immediately brings gladness. When a person's feelings change from "sad" to "glad", the devil pays attention. His goal is to do what's necessary to keep people "sad". It's important to pay attention to "how" you feel.

Vs. 17 When we seldom hear the Word, a root system is never developed in our soul. The word "themselves" refers to a person's soul, their mind, will, emotions, thoughts and feelings. When our soul has no root system it never becomes stabilized. When our soul is unstable, we can only endure the mental challenges of life for a short time and are unable to handle the afflictions and persecutions of life. Afflictions are circumstances that life brings. Persecutions are people problems. The devil only has two tricks that he uses on people, saved or unsaved, afflictions and persecutions. However, an unstable person will become offended when they are forced to deal with either of these issues. Once you embrace an offense your joy begins to be stolen. When that happens you go back to being sad.

Vs. 18-19 These verses give us four things that the average Christian deals with:

1. The Word
2. The cares of this world
3. The deceitfulness of riches
4. The lusts of other things

When a person hears the Word, the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things; the Word never grows and produces fruit because everything else chokes it out. However, when your focus is on the Word only, the issues of life become dim and have no value to them at all. The Word brings joy, but everything else brings sadness.

Vs. 20 The condition of the soil has everything to do with the harvest. We are the keepers of the soil. Remember, the soil is our soul: our mind, will, emotions, thoughts, and feelings. Please note the person in verse 20 did three things:

1. He made sure his soil or soul was good.
2. He was "hearing" the Word only
3. He received what he was hearing.

This man did not have to worry about his harvest. The harvest will take care of itself. You don't have to try to make things grow. A lot of believers let too many other things into their soil or soul and then the soil is not good; it has some dirt, some stones, some weeds, et cetera. They have only heard the Word; they are not hearing it. Finally, they decide to receive another report instead of the Word's report. Results: no harvest!

How We Feel Is Important

In Isaiah 61:3, the Word says that we are to put on the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. The spirit of heaviness will make a person “feel” sad. Consider this question, “have you ever been sad?” If so, how did you know you were sad? You knew you were sad by the way you felt. When a believer has a spirit of heaviness on them they are to put on the garment of praise and the spirit of heaviness (or feeling sad) will leave. How will they know the spirit of heaviness has left? By the way they feel.

As we begin to offer up praise to the Lord, sadness leaves and gladness comes. We need to pay close attention to the way we feel. If you are glad, that’s a red flag for the devil to create an affliction or persecution for the purpose of stealing your joy or gladness.

Here is an important statement to remember. “If you have lack in your life, find gladness and lack will leave.” “ If you are sick, find gladness or joy and sick will leave.” Whatever you embrace, lack or gladness, the other will leave. You find joy in the presence of the Lord in offering up praise and entering into worship.

The Progression of An Offense

An offense has a progression. It first starts out as a seed, then develops a root system, and from that root system it will produce fruit. The seed of an offense is a critical word spoken either to you or about you. That seed or word is looking for soil. The soil is your heart. You are the gatekeeper of your soil. If you let that seed of offense in to your soil, it begins to take root. After it takes root, it begins to produce the fruit of unforgiveness. Unforgiveness left unchecked will lie, cheat, slander, steal, and even murder. Unforgiveness has no boundaries.

In Hebrews 12:15, the writer says that the root of bitterness troubles you first and then because you are troubled, you will trouble many others. This is called sowing seeds of discord. We need to remember, all of those seeds or words of discord are looking for soil so they can reproduce after their kind. Everything reproduces after its kind.

How Do You Know If You Have A Root of Bitterness?

In Ephesians 4:31, Paul writes about bitterness and wrath. Wrath is your speech. What ever is in your heart will always come out your mouth through your speech. When you listen to your speech and it is full of wrath, it’s because there is bitterness in your heart or soil. The reason the root of bitterness is there is because of the seed of an offense. Somewhere you allowed a seed of offense to enter into the soil of your heart and it took root and its first signs were your feelings and your speech. If you don’t deal with this bitterness, it will produce the fruit of un-forgiveness.

There is another area we need to consider about our speech. In Luke 10:25 - 26, a lawyer asked Jesus a question and Jesus answered his question with two questions:

1. What does the Word say?

2. How do you interpret it?
Please remember, how you say something is as important as what you say because how it is said affects how it is interpreted.

The Sins of Our Fathers

I asked the Lord one time why the sins of our fathers are passed down to the third and fourth generation. He gave me the scripture John 20: 19 – 23. Jesus said whose sins you remit or release will be released but whose sins you retain or embrace will become yours. Once you embrace another man's sins, you receive them into your soil and they reproduce.

When people say, "I'm this way because of the way I was raised", they need to remember the "real" reason they are the way they are is because they have embraced the sins of another person and their sin is finding them out.

Always remember, when Jesus went to the cross, He took your sickness, your poverty, your sadness, your confusion and your reason to become offended. When we become offended, we have made a decision to be sad and unhappy.

The Institute of Self-Worth®
Exam

Borrowed Offenses

1. There are three types of offenses. What are they?
2. A meditation is a thought that has hung around long enough to produce a feeling.
True or False
3. What is the progression of an offense?
4. All seed must have soil in order to grow. Is our soil in our spirit, soul, or body?
5. As a Christian, do you have a right to be offended?
6. What is the difference between “hearing” and having “heard”?
7. What are the four areas of life we deal with in Mark 4:18 – 19?
8. What is the difference between the person in verses 18 and 19 and the person in verse 20?
9. In John 20:23, what do the words remit and retain mean?
10. Has this session helped you?

Name: _____

Date: _____

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Answer Sheet

Borrowed Offenses

1. Direct, Given, and Borrowed
2. True
3. Seed: Offense; Root: Bitterness; Fruit: Un-forgiveness
4. Soul (mind, will, emotions, thoughts, and feelings)
5. No
6. Hearing is receiving and having heard is not receiving.
7. The Word, cares of this world, deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things.
8. The person in 18 and 19 has not focused on the Word. They are still concerned about other things.
9. Remit means to release and retain means to embrace.
10. Has this session helped you?