



OVERCOMING OFFENCE

By Dr Cecil Stewart OBE



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Overcoming offence brings release of new life, health, harmony and endless benefits. On the other hand, allowing offence to overcome us will rob us of all these and steal our joy, peace and power to live a vibrant life of purpose.

Offence is like a road block! It stops good things coming to us! It arrests progress until it is removed!

In this hope builder, I believe we will see how to remove it. In **Romans chapter 5 v 17** we see how one man's offence brought death, but those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Christ Jesus.

The Oxford dictionary defines offence as follows 'annoyance or resentment brought about by a perceived insult to or disregard for oneself'.

This is a life changing revelation and I have experienced the reality of it and so have millions of people all over the world. This scripture not only reveals how to overcome offence, but how we can reign in life right here and now.

Romans chapter 4 v 25 tells us Jesus was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

No matter how much offence, injustice or unfair treatment we have suffered, Jesus took it all at the cross so we can live free from offence once we repent and come to Jesus in faith. See **Ephesians chapter 2 v 8, Acts chapter 4 v 12 and 1 Timothy chapter 2 v 5**.

You may wonder 'how do I receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness?' The answer is by faith in what Jesus did at the cross on our behalf. Study **Colossians chapter 2 v**

“This is a life changing revelation and I have experienced the reality of it ...”



**13 – 15, Ephesians
chapter 1 v 15 – 23
and 2 Corinthians
chapter 5 v 21.**

**Offence must be
overcome or it will
overcome us!
Offence comes to all
of us but it is how we
handle it that
determines our
destiny!**

Not long ago I called at the local flower shop to buy my wife flowers. After the shop attendant finished serving the man in front she told me how he was so offended because his close relative had died and the rest of the family refused to let him see the remains because of an offence in the family years before. He was so heart broken, what a tragedy.

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anxiety, depression and disease. I know young people who have made wrong choices in relationships because of being offended and caused themselves great pain and hurt. Others have allowed offence to damage their relationship with God and their families, and have missed out on the wonderful life God had provided for them. **So we must face offence and follow God’s guidance to overcome it!**

1. Origin of Offence

Through the disobedience of one offence came, please study carefully **Romans chapter 5 v 17 – 21**. Offence came through the disobedience of Adam at the beginning. He acted independently of God and opened the door to the enemy, which brought sin and death upon all men.

Isaiah chapter 53 v 6 reminds us that we have all turned to our own way but



the Lord laid on Jesus the iniquity of us all. See also **Romans chapter 6 v 23 and Romans chapter 3 v 23**. Frank Sinatra wrote the song 'I did it my way' – that is the road to ruin. See **Proverbs chapter 16 v 25**, 'There is a way that seems right unto a man, but its end is the way of death'.

1 John chapter 2 v 10 shows us how to overcome offence by walking in love and forgiveness. Paul prayed in **Philippians chapter 1 v 10** that we would be without offence until the day of Christ.

Romans chapter 14 v 17 – 21 shows us how to follow after the things that make for peace and avoid offence. The value of overcoming offence is immeasurable and when we highly value

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the word of God we will find the time to study it until it is birthed within our very hearts.

2. Effect of Offence

Offence damages vision and creates strife. It destroys fellowship and brings isolation! Offence takes our focus off our goals and turns us aside from the purpose God has ordained for us to walk in!

Offence can hinder our personal development and spiritual growth. **Romans chapter 16 v 17 – 18** encourages us to note people who cause division and offence and avoid them. Offence is a distraction and can lead to deception. It can spread like an evil disease and poison ourselves and our relationships.

I remember a young lady who had a wonderful passion to serve the Lord and had real gifting to communicate



that passion, but she made the mistake of developing a relationship with a young man who was pretending to love Jesus. Soon she was offended as the relationship ended and so did her passion to fulfil the call.

3. Outcome of Offence

We can decide the outcome by choosing to forgive those who offend us and release them. **It is not a feeling, it is a choice!** We benefit greatly when we forgive and so do all concerned. Holding offence and grudges is like drinking poison, it will destroy us!

The stumbling block of offence can be removed through genuine forgiveness and reconciliation.

Not everyone who we

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seek to forgive or be reconciled with will co-operate but we must do our part and then release them to the Lord, believing God to bless them no matter how much they have hurt us. See **Revelation chapter 12 v 11**, ‘they overcame Him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony’.

I am aware that we cannot do this ourselves, but through the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit we can overcome, even when we suffer the worst possible kind of offence and loss.

Matthew chapter 6 v 12 reminds us that we must forgive as God has forgiven us. **Matthew chapter 5 v 44** exhorts us to bless and not curse. There is no future in holding grudges or harbouring hatred, it just limits our own potential for the future. It contaminates our families and all those we have contact with and this can go on from generation to generation unless we put a stop to it.

Satan is often behind offence in the



hope that he will have access into our lives to destroy us and others.

James chapter 3 v 16 reminds us that wherever there is strife there is confusion and every evil work.

Offence creates an atmosphere for satan to work and all the time we are being robbed and our precious days and years are wasted as we miss out on rich fellowship with God, our families and those God has connected us with.

Jude chapter 1 v 21 exhorts us to keep ourselves in the love of God. **Romans chapter 8 v 38 – 39** shows how strong God's love is – 'For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the

love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord'.

I knew a young believer who was following the Lord and then through being disappointed over a girlfriend he was greatly offended and cut off fellowship with believers and church connections. Then he went on to make poor choices, which have been a great disadvantage to him and his family in the years that followed.

In **Matthew chapter 18 v 21 – 22** Jesus was asked 'how often should we forgive our brother? Seven times?' Jesus said 'until seventy times seven'. So we must keep on forgiving and releasing those that offend us if we ourselves are to enjoy the full freedom of walking with Jesus and ruling and reigning in life.

In **Matthew chapter 5 v 24** we are told to be reconciled with our brother before we give our tithes and offerings, 'leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother,

“ ... wherever there is strife there is confusion and every evil work. ”



and then come and offer thy gift’.

So it is top priority to keep our hearts clear of offence and keep forgiveness flowing. **We must remember always that Jesus forgave us far more than we could ever be asked to forgive anyone.**

4. Turn Offence into Opportunity

Good things happen when we release offence and decide not to have it in our lives in any form whatsoever.

Romans chapter 12 v 21 says ‘do not be overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good’.

God’s love enables us to overcome offence. We cannot do it on our own. **Many times those who offend us do not even realise they are doing it.** Most of us have

“Remember God kept giving even when we offended Him.”

offended someone without realising it.

As a young believer I made the mistake of judging another believer because I wrongly thought he was proud and behaving foolishly. Even though I said nothing to him, I developed a wrong attitude towards him and spoke to one or two others in a negative way. Later I realised this was so wrong and damaging to all concerned. I repented of that and learned a valuable lesson. We must be extra careful as to how we handle thoughts that are dishonourable about others and refuse them any place in our minds or our mouths. Our words can bless or curse people, see **Proverbs chapter 18 v 21, 1 Peter chapter 3 v 10 and 2 Corinthians chapter 10 v 5.** We are on this earth to lift people up, not put them down.

Remember God kept giving even when we offended Him. He gave His only Son when we were yet sinners and walking in offence against Him. Even on the cross Jesus said ‘Father forgive them, for they know not what they do’.



When we forgive others and refuse to harbour offence we make a way for the river of God to flow through us and our families, so that we can rule and reign and not be a victim of our enemies. We must do what we can and leave the rest to God and continue to pray for those that have offended us.

Ephesians chapter 4 v 27 exhorts us to give no place to the devil. If we harbour hatred and offence or hold on to grudges, resentments or disappointments then we are really giving a place to the devil.

In one of our recent events in Belfast a gentleman came forward after the meeting and told me how he and another brother had suffered severe offence and had broken off relationships for many years. But when he

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looked behind him at the meeting he saw the same man who had been offended and both of them came together and forgave each other and were reconciled. He was so excited about how the weight was lifted and the offence was gone.

The apostle Paul who had offended God and others many times, testified to how God had given him exceeding and abundant grace, see **1 Timothy chapter 1 v 14**.

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One of the most outstanding examples of overcoming offence is seen in the life of Joseph, see **Genesis chapters 37 – 50**.

Joseph was hated by his brothers because he had a dream and was sold into slavery. He was isolated, rejected and alone.

He suffered the unbearable pain of being taken away from his family as a young man. He was falsely accused and put in prison, but he managed to keep his dream and hope alive even when he had lost everything, even his freedom.

Joseph experienced loneliness and fear but refused to harbour hatred and offence. He remained faithful and forgave in the worst of times. When his master's wife tried to entice him to commit

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adultery he said ‘how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?’ **See Genesis chapter 39 v 9.**

He could have said ‘I’ve been mistreated, unjustly sold into slavery, rejected by everyone so therefore I will do what I like’. He could have fallen to the depths of sin and become a slave for the rest of his life. That would have hindered him from ever reigning and the whole future God had for him would have been lost, including that generation.

See Proverbs chapter 14 v 34 – ‘Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people’.

Joseph was promoted everywhere he went, even in the prison!
 He remained humble!
 He was put in key positions to bless others!
 He did the right thing even when he was wronged!



He refused to punish
his brothers who had
hurt him so badly!
He refused to repeat
his misfortunes and
blame others!
He overcame offence
by keeping his heart on
the vision that God had
given as a young man
of ruling and reigning!
He returned good for
evil!
He reached his destiny!
He reigned!

Other hope builders available include:

- Sights, Sounds & Seasons
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Christian Communications Network
547 Antrim Road, Belfast, BT15 3BU
Tel: +44 (0) 28 9077 9552
Email: ccn@ccnorg.com



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Tel: +44 (0) 28 9077 9552 **Email:** ccn@ccnorg.com **Web:** www.ccnorg.com
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