



*What do You Want?*  
THE SIX WEEK  
*Pursuit*

## *“Are You Offended?”*

Has anyone or anything this week made you uncomfortable or frustrated? As things are, offense is a large topic in today’s culture. Everywhere you look the debate on what is offensive and what is inoffensive is raging. Whether you watch the news, listen to radio, read articles, or hear of topics on social media, the subject of offense is discussed and argued. So back to the question:

## *“Are You Offended?”*

Was it something your family member said? Was it something your neighbor did? Or perhaps lack of action of people in your church? Maybe your school was negligent. How about the actions of our president and/or government? What about your community? Offense can come from anywhere. But no matter where offense comes from, it tends to have the same result.

## *“Offense Pushes Away”*

When are offended, we push back or push away. More often than not, offense becomes a wedge that drives people apart. But what causes this offense? Most of the time, offense comes from a lack of communication or understanding. And instead of seeking understanding, we simply reject and push away in frustration. I am right! They are wrong!

The problem with being right, is that our definition of right does not match God’s definition. And when our FLESH based perception clashes with God’s perspective we get offended.

## *“Jesus is Offensive”*

Throughout history, Jesus has remained offensive. In John 6, Jesus teaches a large crowd of his disciples secrets about the Kingdom of God. “This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.” Upon saying these words, Jesus’ large group of disciples grow agitated and become offensive. Jesus responds to their grumbling with: “Do you take offense at this? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.”

After Jesus’ words, every one of Jesus’ disciples, save for the original 12, leave offended and complaining.

## *“Has Jesus Offended You?”*

This is a tough question because it requires honest reflection and a humble heart. Many of us who are Followers of Jesus would immediately answer: NO! NEVER! But is that true? Even the 12 disciples were often confused and even bothered by Jesus’ words. But why? Why is Jesus both confusing and even offensive?

## *“The Limit of Flesh”*

The problem we face is our limited FLESH perspective. Our FLESH is broken; prone to bitterness, anger, hatred, pride, and all manner of attitudes and inclinations. Because of our FLESH, we lash out and easily become offended with one another. Imagine how much more offensive someone of the SPIRIT would be? Jesus comes from an entirely different reality, and He speaks in terms of that reality. The SPIRIT reality offends us, because we cannot understand.

1 Corinthians 15:50 says “I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.” FLESH cannot comprehend SPIRIT. That is why so many were constantly offended by Jesus. He disturbed them as He was SPIRIT.

## *“The Helping Spirit”*

“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.” At another time, in John 14, Jesus informs His disciples further, stating the Holy Spirit is our Helper and will lead us into all truth and wisdom. In fact, the Holy Spirit transforms our minds from a FLESH perspective to a SPIRITUAL viewpoint. This includes an increasing understanding of the Scripture and words of Jesus. Without the helping Spirit, we are stuck and limited to a small FLESH perspective.

## *“Flesh vs. Spirit”*

We get offended and seek to be right. We push away those who offend us instead of seeking restoration. Our FLESH makes our world grow small and limits us. But the Holy Spirit moves our thoughts from FLESH to SPIRIT; expanding our perspective and growing our world. 1 Corinthians 10 states: “Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved.”

## *“What Do You Want?”*

Do you want Jesus, or do you want to be right? Jesus is offensive only when we need to be right. People offend us only when we need to be right. It is time to lay aside the need to be right, the way of the FLESH, and instead seek to the loving SPIRIT perspective through the Holy Spirit. This is God’s plan for your life, and it is good and right.

# GROUP DISCUSSION

*Take a few minutes to discuss the following questions with your group.*

- What offends you most? Why do you get offended?
- Why do you think we prefer to be offended rather than pursue restoration?
- Have you ever been offended by something Jesus said? How about something God did? Has the Bible ever offended you with either a teaching or story?
- How do you feel about God being right and us being wrong? Does that bother you? Why?
- Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10: “Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved.” What do you think of this?
- Jesus speaks from a spiritual perspective and is Spirit. Jesus even went as far as to say that it was better for physical Jesus to leave and for the Spirit to continue His work. Why do you think this is true? What does a Spirit-led life look like for you?

# QUESTIONS FOR KIDS

*If you have children, here are some questions you can go over with them.*

- What makes you angry? What annoys you?
- Do you believe God is always right? Why or why not?
- What do you think Jesus would do if He got annoyed by the same things that annoy you?
- Why didn't Jesus stay with us? Why did He go to heaven? Jesus said He would stay with us by His Spirit. His Spirit can live in us so Jesus is with us all the time.

# CLOSING PRAYER

*Close your time together in prayer. Here are a few ideas of what you could pray about based on the topic of today's discussion:*

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to change the way you see things. Ask for Jesus' perspective.
- Ask God for understanding in your difficulties and struggles.
- Ask God for help in your offense. Share with Him your struggle in getting past offenses.
- Tell Jesus "I surrender my need to be right." Ask Jesus for what He knows is right.
- Pray for a greater awareness of the spiritual.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to a spiritual life. Ask for Him to invade your day-to-day schedule and to lead you in everything you do.

## THIS WEEK...

The way to seeing things from a spiritual perspective is through Jesus and Jesus alone. We need to see things the Jesus way; the Holy Spirit way. How do we accomplish this? It begins with wanting to see things differently. Do you want Jesus' perspective? Let Him know that. This week, let's sit down with Jesus in prayer, and try to let go of an offense. Let's daily take a moment and ask for God to change the way you see things to Jesus' perspective. Ask for Jesus' eyes in regards to your offense. It's time to turn our offenses over to Jesus and be free from our fleshly perspective. I want to see things the Jesus way. Let's do this together! God bless!