


Arrows When Offended



(Part Two – Arrows 6-10)

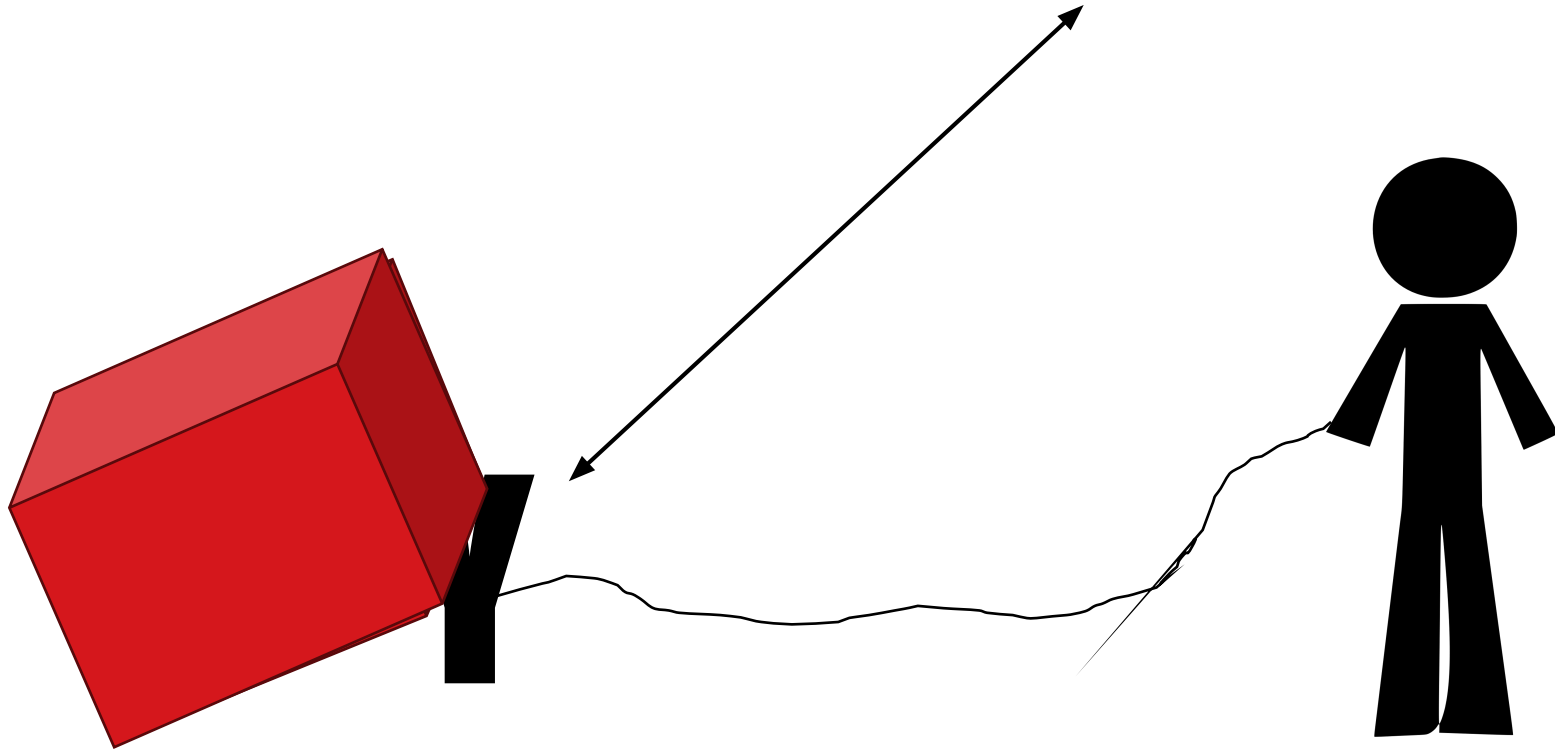
Ten arrows from the bible from which to choose when you've been offended or have offended someone else



Offense = Skandalon (Strong's 4625)

- A stick for bait of a trap; a snare, a stumbling block, an offense.
- The **trigger of a trap** closing on a victim; to **shock** or **horrify** by real or imagined violation of property or morality.

Skandalon = the trigger of a trap



Reproducible Discipleship – share these

- 1) Proverbs 19:11 – glory to overlook an offense (i.e., new believers, etc.)
- 2) Luke 17:1-5 – take heed to yourself, God forgives and so should we
- 3) Luke 17:5-6 – greatest miracle is restoration of relationships
- 4) Psalms 119:165 – how thin is your skin? (love God's law, nothing offends)
- 5) Proverbs 25:23 – how an angry look is supposed to work
- 6) 2 Cor. 12:7-10 – sometimes offenders hang around
- 7) Galatians 2:20 – (Are you) crucified with Christ?
- 8) Matthew 7:1-5 – judging motes (what things really matter?)
- 9) Matthew 5:23-26 – go quickly
- 10) Matthew 18:15-20 – can't jump to this without heeding verses 1 to 14

Why not just let offenses go by?

Hebrew 12:14-15

Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and **causes trouble**, and by it **many become defiled...**”

Sometimes Offenders Hang Around

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

“...a thorn was given to me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited... three times I prayed for God to take this away...”

KJV – thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to buffet me

3 times – a Jewish idiom or figure of speech for ceaselessly or continually

What's an idiom?

Sock hop (1940s)

Soap opera (1950s)

Slip me some skin (1960s)

Bling (2000s)

Paul understood the **idioms** from the bible (words established by usage having a meaning not deducible by the individual words)

Bad thorn teaching by good people

Tertullian: headache (200 A.D.)

John Calvin: fleshly temptations (1550)

John Knox: infirmities of the mind (1560)

McGarvey: disfiguring ophthalmia (1900)

Peter Marshall: social disease (1947)

Let the Bible explain the Bible

Numbers 33:55 - Canaanites were called “thorns in the side” of Israel. (People were the thorns)

Joshua 23:13 – Nations around them would be snares and traps, scourges in sides, thorns in their eyes (people)

Ezekiel 28:24 – Israel’s neighbors were called pricking briars and grieving thorns (people)

Thorns sent to buffet Paul

Buffet or Harass – Strong's 2852

To strike with the fist (literally knuckles); to hit hard, make the blow sting and hurt; to maltreat with violence

A physical beating the same as received by Christ in Matthew 26:67 and Mark 14:65. *(Same word is used)*

2 Corinthians 11:23-25

- 1) In stripes above measure
- 2) In prisons more frequent
- 3) In deaths often
- 4) 39 stripes three times
- 5) Beaten with rods three times
- 6) Once stoned to death

Why didn't God put an end to this opposition in Paul's life?

Why do offenders sometimes hang around?

Paul understood thorns

2 Corinthians 12:7

“So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a **messenger** of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited.

Messenger (G32) – angelos, a messenger, especially an angel; by implication a pastor...(a person)

“God does not rule over the freewill or freedom to those who have elected to hate the Savior.” (Coffman)

There can often be a price to pay for serving God. Sometimes offenders hang around continuing to offend. Don't let them win or cause you to choose **bad arrows**:

1. Get angry and try to vindicate yourself
2. Get even or get revenge
3. Quit something God wants you to do

Arrow #6 is willingness to **pray continually** for the offender who remains constantly in your life – pray for those who persecute you (Matthew 5:43-46)

Arrow #6

Matthew 5:43-46

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and **pray for those who persecute you**, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?”

Arrow #7

Are You Crucified With Christ?

Galatians 2:20

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.”

Nothing demonstrates that we're NOT dead to ourselves like offenses

Read Mark 7:24-30 for the whole story:

- 1) Non-Jew asks Jesus for healing for her daughter
- 2) Jesus answered her saying it's not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs
- 3) Dog was a symbol of dishonor, not a beloved family pet; a term of contempt, a shameless and audacious woman

Her response:

- 1) She didn't respond or debate Jesus' comment with "who you calling a dog!"
- 2) She asked Jesus to deal with her on her level (pointing out that the dogs do eventually get the crumbs)
- 3) She responded with great faith and received healing for her daughter

Her prayer:

- 1) Short** – just 13 words, a few seconds in time
- 2) Humble attitude** – she was a non-Jew
- 3) Full of faith** – didn't get discouraged and quit
- 4) Fervent** – passionate intensity
- 5) Modest** – unassuming, stayed under the table w/dogs
- 6) Rational** – what she said made sense
- 7) Submitted** - God's great power and divine mercy
- 8) Persevering** – didn't leave on first rejection

What's our reaction when we're offended?

_____ Who you calling a dog?!

_____ Wallow in self-pity (my daughter just as good as yours)

_____ Learn to trust God (die to self, be alive to God)

_____ Do we cry for *ourselves* when offended, or for those who offended us who don't know how to love?

_____ Are we looking for God to prove he loves us by fixing our circumstances ? He did that by sending his Son to die for us.

Arrow #7 Takes Faith and Trust in God

Hebrews 11:6

“And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.”

Challenge: are we truly crucified with Christ?

Or is everything still about us?

Judging Motes: What Things Really Matter?

Matthew 7:1-5

“Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment that you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is a log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.”

Questions about motes

- 1) Are we ignoring our own grievous sins trying to correct someone else's small failings that offend us?
- 2) Are we creating offenses in our own minds and hearts by passing judgments on others?
- 3) Do we save our emotions, energy, and anger for things that really matter in advancing the Kingdom of God?
- 4) Can we love people doing things of which we don't approve?

More Questions

- 5) Are we judging people based only on the worst moments of their lives?
- 6) Are we carrying offenses against people that are ordained of Christ for us to help and protect? (*And weren't we on that list at one time ourselves?*)
- 7) Do we know the difference between **discerning** and **judging**, and do we know what to do with that information?

For Your Consideration And Study

John 12:47 – Jesus said he came not to judge the world, but to save the world. What's our attitude?

Matthew 7:15-20 – look at the facts. We do look at a tree and see its fruit. Judging wrongly is prohibited, discerning is not forbidden or prohibited

James 1:27 – pure religion...to visit widows and orphans in their afflictions. Who are our widows and orphans (meaning who are our neighbors in affliction loaded with motes that need the love of Christ)?

Arrow #9

Go Quickly...Now

Matthew 5:23-26

“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember your your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift...”

Often Two Problems With Offenses

Avoidance: person leaves the church or your relationship altogether, sits somewhere else in the auditorium, goes to a different home fellowship, unfriends people on social media

Insensitivity: you get used to the problem, you quit caring about how the offense affects them or others, you get hardened leading to bitterness, you're no longer convicted to obey the words of Christ

How It's Supposed To Work

- 1) Go immediately to the person
- 2) Leave your “gift” at the altar
- 3) Leave the church service, worship, communion, teaching Sunday school (any ministry in which you're involved)
- 4) Be reconciled to your brother, then go back and do your service or ministry, taking your gift again to God
- 5) Don't just continue your “service to the Lord” while you're at ought with your brother.

Matthew Henry' commentary on Matt. 5:23-26

Labor for reconciliation

Confess our faults

Humble ourselves before our brother

Beg his pardon

Make restitution

Do it quickly

Why? We're not fit for communion with God.

Two Options: Obey God Or Intentionally Disobey

See 1 Samuel 15:22 - God wants obedience, not sacrifice. Not even a “sacrifice” of praise while you’re being disobedient

See 1 Timothy 2:8 – Can you lift up holy hands without anger or disputing when there’s ought about an offense with a brother you’re ignoring?

Caught In An Offense?

Proverbs 6:1-5

“My son, if you have put up security for your neighbor, have given your pledge for a stranger, if you are snared in the words of your mouth, caught in the words of your mouth, then do this, my son, and save yourself, for you have come into the hand of your neighbor. Give your eyes no sleep and your eyelids no slumber; save yourself like a gazelle from the hand of the hunter, like a bird from the hand of the fowler.”

How Does Proverb 6:1-5 Work?

- 1) Free yourself – go to the point of exhaustion (you're in a trap)
- 2) Do it quickly with an attitude of conciliation and fairness
- 3) Do it spontaneously and early before hatred and emotions and bitterness have time to gain strength

What's It Look Like?

“Hey brother...I'm sorry for all the trouble between us.

“It may take a while for correction and direction to come to my life for my part in this, but I want to be reconciled to you and to God.

“I'm sorry, please forgive my part in this situation.”

When Other Arrows Haven't Hit The Target

Matthew 18:15-17

“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and tax collector.”

Woody Hayes on passing the football

“Three things can happen when you pass the ball, and two of them are bad.”



#1 – Receiver **drops** the pass

#2 – Defense **intercepts** the pass

#3 – Your guy **catches** the pass

Same applies with using Matthew 18:15-17

#1 – Bad to ignore it

#2 – Bad to misuse it

#3 – When used correctly restoration of relationship to a person, to the Church, and to God takes place

1st “Take Heed” Warnings With This Arrow

(You can't just skip past Matthew 18:1-14...homework)

Read Matthew 18:1-5

Find out whom the Bible says is the greatest in the Kingdom of God. It's whomever takes the lowly position of the child

You approach Matthew 18:15-17 in a **position of humility** vs. your own self-interest, busted pride, or desire for vengeance

2nd “Take Heed” Warnings With This Arrow

(You can't just skip past Matthew 18:1-14...homework)

Read Matthew 18:6-9

See for yourself the warning about causing offense to God's people and the terrible penalty implied (mill stone + neck + sea = nightmarish terror for Israelites)

You're messing with God and his kid vs. just some individual (tread softly)

3rd “Take Heed” Warnings With This Arrow

(You can't just skip past Matthew 18:1-14...homework)

Read Matthew 18:10-14

Have the right attitude toward all of God's sheep – even the bad or struggling ones. They're not alone, just in trouble

God is looking for bad and lost sheep. Don't get in His way.

Be careful how you approach God's sheep (even bad ones)

Safety Check Before Using Arrow #10

- 1) Count the costs – they're eternal
- 2) Check your attitude – see Matthew 18:21-35 on how much you've been forgiven (*See Mike Rosato's 9/17/23 sermon*)
- 3) Have you adequately forgiven? (Do the math...7 x 70)
- 4) How would you like to be treated if the roles were reversed
- 5) Understand that God is watching and that something very real takes place when this arrow is brought into use (see Matthew 18:18-19)

Matthew 18:18-20 - Jesus is there, too

“Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again, I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, **there am I among them.**”

How Arrow #10 Is Supposed To Work

- 1) Consider if you're truly scandalized (shock, horrified)
- 2) Go to the person ALONE (without gossiping to others first)
- 3) Explain how the person's actions affected your life/heart
- 4) Give them the opportunity to repentance and forgiveness
- 5) Consider other arrows. Seriously. Consider other arrows
- 6) Need this arrow? Take one or two others (suggest an authority, someone in leadership with you).

Restoration To The Body Of Christ

If a brother or sister is determined to be in a state of continual, unrepentant offense to someone or in grievous continual sin to the Church, God says to tell it to the Church.

You don't do this part – you trust the situation to the discernment of the elders and leadership.

If the person refuses to hear it, let him be as a Gentile and a tax collector (i.e., what has been termed disfellowshipped).

At times just the knowledge of this step brings repentance.

An Example Of How It Works

1 Corinthians 5:1-2

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you.

An Example Of How It Works

1 Corinthians 5:4-5

When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of Our lord Jesus you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

An Example Of How It Works

1 Corinthians 5:6-7

Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover Lamb has been sacrificed.

An Example Of How It Works – The Result

2 Corinthians 2:5-9

Now if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but in some measure (not to put it too severely) to all of you. For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough, so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him. For this is why I wrote, that I might test you and know whether you are obedient in everything.

An Example Of How It Works – The Result

2 Corinthians 2:10-11

Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.

THE PURPOSE OF MATTHEW 18 IS RESTORATION TO GOD AND THE BODY OF CHRIST.

A Quiver Of Arrows

- ➔ It's always about restoration
- ➔ Always go quickly
- ➔ Go one on one (don't gossip)
- ➔ Be humble and ready to forgive
- ➔ Help others despite their motives
- ➔ Be crucified with Christ



