



September 5, 2022

It is God's heart that we live free from any obstruction that can thwart our spiritual growth. Our adversary, the Devil, would like for us to take our eyes off God's promises and stumble in our growth. He does not want us to be free mentally to enjoy learning and growing in God's Word. One of the ways that the adversary tries to slow our growth is by tempting us to focus on how hurt we've become because of another person's words or actions. He would like to keep us boxed in and make it hard for us to untangle ourselves from the situation that offended us. God's Word shows us how to overcome any offence we may face in life by keeping God first in our thoughts and actions.

The Word of God gives us everything we need to overcome offence. As we keep our hearts rooted and grounded in God's Word, we can overcome this attack by showing forgiveness and controlling our emotions. Forgiving others as Christ forgave us is an action we can take to overcome offence.

Colossians 3:13:

Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

As we keep our hearts centered on God and keep Him first, we do not allow anything to come before God or idolize someone or something above Him. We can keep God, not man or anything else, as our sufficiency, and therefore avoid falling into the trap of offences.

Matthew 6:20,21:

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The word “treasure” simply means our thoughts. Keeping God first is key to our overcoming offence. People will let us down at times, sometimes even those who are closest to us. However, since our expectation in life comes from God and not man, we can forgive one another and recognize that we will also need to be forgiven at times.

Many times, words are “stumblingblocks” (Ezekiel 14:3,4). Anything that is put before God can be a stumbling block, but we can choose to elevate God in our thinking above what someone may say. When someone says something that hurts us, this hurt can manifest itself in many ways if we allow it. Some of the feelings we may have had are anger, fear, bitterness, condemnation, and insecurity. None of these things are godly responses, are they? All they do is tie us up in knots and cause us to stumble in our growth. Let’s think and act on the words God gives us to overcome this attack. This is keeping God first by thinking the Word. We can control our feelings instead of succumbing to them and do what Colossians 3:12 says.

Colossians 3:12:

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.

The record of Joseph in the Old Testament is a great example of someone who kept God first under adverse circumstances. He did not allow his brothers’ offence to prevent him from doing God’s will for his life. His brothers were jealous of him and sold him into slavery. He was then bought by an Egyptian and later thrown into prison. He could have felt hurt and become angry with his brothers. After all, they were his brothers, and he should have been able to trust them. Although he was wronged, Joseph continued to stay strong. He trusted that God would care for his life, and he didn’t allow offences to cause him to stumble and be entrapped. Joseph was eventually elevated to the position of steward over all Egypt. He forgave his brothers and brought his whole family to Egypt to care for them during a famine. He kept his heart open to forgiveness all those years away from his brothers.

Genesis 45:5,7:

*Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.
And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth,
and to save your lives by a great deliverance.*

Joseph elevated God in his thinking above the actions that his brothers took. We can be like Joseph and not allow a wrong done to us to cause us to stumble.

Keeping God first in our thoughts and actions is key to our overcoming offence. As we deeply root ourselves in the Word, we learn to recognize when we are tempted to allow hurt from offence to root itself in our hearts and slow us down in our spiritual growth.

Psalm 119:165:

Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

Let's have the strength of the Word in our heart and mind in order to avoid stumbling because of offences that come our way.

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