



Lesson Seven

“A Leader in the Making – Conditions of the Heart - 2”

Objective: To teach and equip leaders with a heart that pleases God.

6. An _____ heart

Prov 19:11 NIV *A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense.*

This is one of the most dangerous heart conditions we can have because if we become offended, we develop roots of bitterness and there is no such thing as a bitter, loving Christian. Power comes from love, not from hatred, bitterness and unforgiveness.

a. Offense is a carefully laid _____.

Offense: Greek – *Skandalon* – It's where we get our English word, “scandal.” It means; a trap stick; a snare; a stumbling.

Offense is the part of the animal trap the holds the bait... If you take the bait, you become trapped in the bondage of unforgiveness and bitterness.

b. We will constantly have _____ to be offended.

Matt 18:7 NKJV *Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come...*

The important thing is that we recognize when we have an opportunity to be offended as what it truly is... **an attack from the enemy**. The sooner we let it go the easier it is to deal with like weeds in a garden. When weeds or offenses are new, if we deal with it then, we deprive it of the ability to make us bitter and resentful.

Heb 12:14-15 NKJV *Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: 15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any **root of bitterness springing up cause trouble**, and by this **many become defiled**;*

Resentment: *To feel or express annoyance or **ill will**; begrudge; envy – Resentment causes you to have feelings of retaliation.*

c. When we allow ourselves to harbor resentment we become _____ in nature and look for an opportunity to strike back.

Prov 17:9 NIV *He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.*

We take on the nature of our enemy when we hold hatred in our hearts – sin is the final outcome. **On the other hand, when we immediately forgive an offense, we take on the nature of God – love is the final outcome.**

Psalm 86:5 AMP *For You, O Lord, are good, and ready to forgive [our trespasses, sending them away, letting them go completely and forever]; and You are abundant in mercy and loving-kindness to all those who call upon You.*

Col 3:13 AMP *Be gentle and forbearing with one another and, if one has a difference (a grievance or complaint) against another, readily pardoning each other; even as the Lord has [freely] forgiven you, so must you also [forgive].*

Life flows out of the abundance of our hearts, which is why it is so critical that we constantly clear out offenses and not allow them to take root. **It is a mark of spiritual maturity.**

d. How do we overcome offenses?

1. **R _____ it as an attack and do not take the bait.**

2. **R _____ it immediately.**

Mark 11:25a AMP *And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him and **let it drop** (leave **it**, **let it go**)...*

3. **R _____ that you need the same grace.**

Mark 11:25b AMP *(leave **it**, **let it go**), in order that your Father Who is in heaven may also forgive you your [own] failings and shortcomings and **let them drop**.*

When we focus on the wrongs that other have done to us, its so easy to forget that we have offended others and God and need the same grace from them and God! Just remember the golden rule. Do unto others as you would have them do to you!

4. **Don't R _____ it!**

Even after you forgive the person and let it go, the enemy will play it over and over in your mind like a commercial to get you to pick up what you already let go of. **Take your thoughts captive.**

5. **Choose to R _____ it with an action of love.**

It's so important that we prove we are not harboring any resentment with our actions. We must choose to not treat the person any differently. In fact an act of love towards that person would prove to the enemy and God that you are truly free from the offense.

6. **R _____ fellowship with the person.**

Matt 18:15-16 NKJV *"Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.*

Serving in ministry is a lot like a marriage. When you first begin serving in ministry there is a honeymoon phase where very little bothers you. After a while things can take place that can cause you to feel overlooked, underappreciated, or even purposefully hurt. It's important during these times that we deal with the offense without leaving our posts.

7. R _____ the urge to leave your set place.

1 Cor 12:18 NKJV *But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.*

8. R _____ the incident to the pastors if you are unable to resolve the conflict between yourselves.

In situations like this it is important to have both or all parties present in one room so that we can get to the bottom of the conflict and find resolution and restoration of all the relationships involved. The main issue is that we learn to work together and resolve conflict and offenses. Most offenses can be solved internally by simply choosing to let things go and be a doer of 1 Cor. 13.

1 Cor. 13:4-8 AMP *Love endures long and is patient and kind; love never is envious nor boils over with jealousy, is not boastful or vainglorious, does not display itself haughtily.⁵ It is not conceited (arrogant and inflated with pride); it is not rude (unmannerly) and does not act unbecomingly. Love (God's love in us) does not insist on its own rights or its own way, for it is not self-seeking; it is not touchy or fretful or resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it [it pays no attention to a suffered wrong].⁶ It does not rejoice at injustice and unrighteousness, but rejoices when right and truth prevail.⁷ Love bears up under anything and everything that comes, is ever ready to believe the best of every person, its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances, and it endures everything [without weakening].⁸ Love never fails [never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end].*

- Reading Scriptural accounts of letting offenses go brings faith to us to let our own offenses go. **Joseph - Genesis 45:1 -14 & 50:15-21 – Stephen – Acts 6:8-15 & 7:59-60 – Jesus – Luke 23:33-34**

7. A _____ Heart

Josh 1:9 NKJV *Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."*

Faint hearted people are people who give up easily. When we are faint hearted we say, "This is just too hard. I can't do this." If we are going to fill a position in the kingdom of God we cannot be wimpy or a quitter. Leaders of God's people must be strong, courageous and trusting God for the strength to lead and be victorious!

a. _____, _____ and _____ are realities every leader has to overcome in order to remain steadfast in ministry.

Prov 24:10 NKJV *If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small.*

MSG *If you fall to pieces in a crisis, there wasn't much to you in the first place.*

b. _____ a steadfast heart over yourself.

Make up in your mind right now that you are not going to be fainthearted.

Ps 57:7 NKJV *My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast...*

You might be thinking, "Well when am I not going to have to do that?" NEVER! There will always be some challenge to our lives. Our reaction to it determines whether we are victorious over it or not.

Hebrews 12:3 AMP *Just think of Him Who endured from sinners such grievous opposition and bitter hostility against Himself [reckon up and consider it all in comparison with your trials], so that you may not grow weary or exhausted, losing heart and relaxing and fainting in your minds.*

Jesus chose to look past the short term discomfort of the cross, the nails, the shame, the spitting, the whipping, beard being pulled out, punched in the face, ridicule, harassment, false accusations, hate and so much more... He chose to focus past what He presently despised to up ahead where the joy (the reward – you and me) that was His promised reward. He stayed focused on His purpose no matter how hard it got and did not become faint hearted. The one moment in the garden where He appeared to be becoming fainthearted, when He prayed for the cup to pass, He refocused on the Father's will for his life and regained His courage.

Galatians 6:9 AMP *And let us not lose heart and grow weary and faint in acting nobly and doing right, for in due time and at the appointed season we shall reap, if we do not loosen and relax our courage and faint.*

9. An _____ and _____ heart

James 3:16 NKJV *For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.*

Envy and jealousy cause us to strive after things that God will give us in His timing, if it is His will. A jealous, envious heart in no way blesses God or His kingdom or His people. Leaders have to guard against coveting what other people have, including their ministry.

a. Leaders must _____ to cultivate contentment.

Phil 4:11-13 MSG *I've learned by now to be quite content whatever my circumstances. 12 I'm just as happy with little as with much, with much as with little. I've found the recipe for being happy whether full or hungry, hands full or*

hands empty. 13 Whatever I have, wherever I am, I can make it through anything in the One who makes me who I am.

Contented: Feeling or showing satisfaction with one's possessions, status or situation; peaceful; pleased; satisfied; happy.

b. Jealousy is _____.

Song 8:6 NKJV *Jealousy as cruel as the grave; Its flames are flames of fire, a most vehement flame.*

Heb 13:5-6 NKJV *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." 6 So we may boldly say: "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear.*

c. Don't _____ your donkey! Numbers 22:22-34

If you make your **own** blessing, you'll miss the **real** blessing God wants you to have. Leaders must be "waiters." We have to be willing to wait on God's timing for promotion rather than our own! He promises us that if we are faithful over a little, He will make us a ruler over much. Our job is to remain faithful and He will exalt us in due time. He will open doors when He KNOWS we are ready rather than when we think we are. Wouldn't you rather go through the right door at the right time, rather than go through the wrong door at the wrong time and have to find your way back to where you are supposed to be?

d. _____ on God is a mark of spiritual maturity.

Isaiah 40:31 AMP *But those who wait for the Lord [who expect, look for, and hope in Him] shall change and renew their strength and power; they shall lift their wings and mount up [close to God] as eagles [mount up to the sun]; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint or become tired.*