

Schedule of Meeting Times:

WKAC 1080 AM Sunday 7:30 AM
Speaker, Robert Emerson
 Study Sunday 10:00 AM
 Worship Sunday Morn 11:00 AM
 Worship Sunday Eve 5:00 PM
Singing every 2nd Sunday evening
 Study Wednesday 7:00 PM

Preacher / bulletin editor:

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“Give no offense
 either to Jews or to
 Greeks or to the
 church of God...”

— 1 Corinthians 10:32

**Servants during November:**

Songleader: Peter (6), Stanley (13),
 Larry (20), Peter (27)

Reading: Peter

Announcements: Larry

Table: Marty, Stanley, Mike M, Mike B

Wednesday Lesson: Kris (2), Larry (9),

Stanley (16), Kris (23), Larry (30)

Lawn Mowing (week starting): On

Winter vacation...

Hays Mill church of Christ

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Elkmont, AL 35620

The Bible . Examiner

“Examine everything carefully...” —1 Thessalonians 5:21 NASB

Volume 5

November 6, 2022

Number 25

Are You Offended?

by Philip C. Strong

It’s no secret, and therefore should come as no surprise, that people sometimes use words differently than the Bible does. “Offend” is just such a word. Many use “offend” to mean: I disagree with you, therefore your statement “offends” me; I disapprove of your conduct, therefore it “offends” me; or, you hurt my feelings, therefore I am “offended.” I didn’t consult a common dictionary, since they sometimes define a word by its common usage more than its true meaning. However, since this is intended to be a Bible-based article, I did do some research into the Biblical (NT) meaning and usage of the word “offend” and some of its derivatives...

When Paul urged the Corinthians to “give no offense” (1 Cor 10:32; 2 Cor 6:3), the word translated as such is *aproskopos*, which literally refers to a smooth road, or having nothing to strike against; as in not leaving or placing a stumbling-block over which one would (spiritually) stumble and fall into sin. Thus, giving offense is, by specific actions or general mode of life, causing another to sin. But what about being offended?

The other NT word sometimes translated as “offend” (or “offense”) is the Greek term *skandalizō*. Obviously, it bears

resemblance to our word scandal, and shares somewhat in meaning also. *Skandalizō* appears 29 times, and carries the idea of either being caused to fall/sin, or causing another to fall/sin, by word, deed, or manner of life.

What does this mean to/for us? Primarily, that either when we offend or are ourselves offended, some word, action, or lifestyle has caused sin/apostasy to occur, e.g., Mt 5:29,30; 13:21; 18:6,8,9; 26:31,33; 1 Cor 8:13; 2 Cor 11:29. Thus, if we are to use “Biblical words in Biblical ways,” when we are or have been “offended,” another’s words or deeds have caused us to sin. Likewise, if we “offend,” we have, by our words or actions, caused someone else to sin. The Biblical words do not, in contrast to common usage today, mean that someone got their feelings hurt, or simply disagrees, and therefore disapproves.

I’m NOT suggesting that a Christian cannot use the word “offend” to mean something other than what it means in Scripture. I AM suggesting that we should be more careful how and when we use the term. If someone says or does something that hurts your feelings, and you feel they should know as much, say so. Likewise, if you disapprove of what another has said

or done, and feel they should know as much, say so. And, if you disagree with what another has said or done, and feel they should know as much, say so. But can we please stop being “offended” by everything? If we weren’t caused to stumble and/or led to sin, then we weren’t really “offended;” we probably just disagree, disapprove, or got our feelings hurt.

Since every effect has a cause (or causes) adequate to have produced it, why are we so easily offended these days? I’ll proffer a couple possibilities and you can decide their relative validity and worth:

We use the word, even in a spiritual context, without really knowing what it means. Such is unwise and even dangerous, 1 Pet 4:11.

We are too easily provoked and perhaps are even seeking to take into account wrongs suffered, both of which are contrary to living by Divine love,

1 Cor 13:5.

We’ve succumbed to a culture of “victimhood” that sees benefit in being offended in as many ways and as often as possible.

What should we do instead of the above? When speaking of being offended or offending in a spiritual context, use it correctly or utilize other more appropriate terms. If it didn’t lead someone to sin, they probably just got their feelings hurt. Toughen up. We live in a sinful world. If we spend all our time and energy being “appalled and offended” by every sin, we’re a lot less likely to see and utilize ways we can influence others for truth and righteousness, Mt 9:10-13. Stop playing the Christian “victim” card. It just makes you look weak; and remember that “God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline,” 2 Tim 1:7.



Selective Service

by Dee Bowman

Service is the essence of discipleship. It is the cross-bearing Jesus describes when He says, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me,” Mt 16:24. According to this definition a disciple is one who serves his master, one who is so disposed to do that service that he is willing to subordinate else everything in his life to do so; even his own will.

Man is fitted for service. He was created for that purpose. Even in the paradise garden Adam and Eve were instructed to perform certain services pleasing to God. Their failure to do so resulted in their failure to glorify God and sin came into the world; “...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”

Rom 3:23. God’s purpose in man’s existence is thwarted by his failure to serve Him, or, in other words, bring Him glory.

All service is commendable, but the highest form of it is voluntary service. When someone is instructed to perform a certain duty and he does it, that is commendable; but when one does what he does voluntarily, that is better—a higher, more noble form of action. For instance, dogs and cats, plants and heavenly bodies all do what God designed them to do, but by a law of necessity. They have no choice in the matter. Man, on the other hand, can deliberately choose to do good or evil and when he deliberately chooses to do what God says, that glorifies Him in a way that no other part of nature

can do, simply because it has no choice.

Man is never more noble than when he places himself at the disposal of God. He is near that same nobility when he intentionally puts himself at the disposal of his fellows. It is on this principle that the first and second greatest commandments rest, Mt 22:37. To love God is the supreme service maneuver; to love his neighbor is near to it. And when man consciously obeys God knowing that to do so will surely place him in an adversarial predicament or an uncomfortable situation, he not only operates at a high level of manliness, but he simultaneously brings the very highest honor to God. Service in the face of persecution is service at its finest.

Service, as we have intimated, is a choice. A man makes up his mind that he should do it, that he has some special obligation to it, that it will benefit someone or some situation, and that it will, in the ultimate reality, bring honor to God. In order to make wise choices man needed to know for a certainty what is true and what is not. “There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death,” Prov 14:12. No matter how wise man becomes, he can never find his way to truth and piety without the revelation of God, 1 Cor 2:9; Jer 10:23, but “...to us God revealed them through the Spirit...” 1 Cor 2:10. Furthermore, it is by this revelation of truth that man becomes accountable. He cannot plead ignorance, for God can be known, His truth ascertained. Based on that truth, then, man can make intelligent choices to serve.

Remember in Prayer

Joyce continues to deal with cancer. **Hazel’s son-in-law, Shane Reed**, is still undergoing chemotherapy. **Betty** has had more cancerous spots found on her leg; **Robert** will be wearing another heart

He not only knows how to serve, but when and where.

Humility is the predicate on which all service rests. Until a man sees that when he is divorced from his relationship to God he has no real value, he will likely serve himself, buying what pleases him, enjoying what the world offers to slake his thirst for pleasure and enjoyment. In doing so, he values himself too highly and trusts in temporality. He builds a pyramid with I at its pinnacle, Me next, Mine after that, and Myself at the base. He bows down to it regularly for it constitutes the object of his service. Even the Son of God saw the need for humility when He “emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant... He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross,” Phil 2:7,8. Humility underscores all service.

In His personal ministry, Jesus everywhere illustrates the connection between humility and service. When He is headed toward Jerusalem to meet His demise, He stops and stoops to wash the feet of His disciples. Following that pensive and unnecessary act, He said, “If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him,” Jn 13:14-16. Service is never more beautiful than when the greater stoops down to help the lesser.

monitor looking for different issues; in addition, they suffered damage to a couple outbuildings due to fire last week. Please continue to remember **Carolyn Dennis** and **Dot Hice**.