

"THEY DID THAT ON PURPOSE":

The Lies of Shame & Offense

I. The Shackles of Shame and Offense

A. What Shame Says

Shame is ruthless in its attack.

-Guilt is what we experience for the wrongs we make...

-When we internalize SHAME :It's an attack on WHO WE ARE.

-Shame tells us we are always at risk of being hurt and always at odds with God and each other.

B. When We Listen

-When we allow shame to define who we are, we easily believe that there is always someone who is out to hurt us and our wounds are exposed.

C. What it Causes

-Shame creates a filter of offense

-Out of the unwillingness to receive forgiveness for ourselves, we create a filter of offense in which we view the world around us and the relationships in which we encounter on a daily basis.

SHAME CAUSES US TO BECOME
QUICK TO JUDGE,
ALWAYS ON THE DEFENSE,
AND EASILY OFFENDABLE

II. OUR TRUTH! THE CROSS OF CHRIST COMMISSIONS US TO FORGIVE

SHAME IS RUTHLESS
BUT CHRIST IS RELENTLESS

A. Accept the forgiveness of your Heavenly Father (**Ephesians 1:7**)
(also see week 3 of our current series)

FORGIVENESS STARTS WITH OUR HEAVENLY FATHER
AND IS COMPLETE IN JESUS CHRIST.

B. Commit to Conflict (Mt 18:15-17)

Step 1: **One on One**

15 *"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.*

Step 2: **Bring Another**

16 *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.*

Step 3: **Involve the Leadership**

17 *If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church.*

Step 4: **Release the Expectation**

And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

NEGLECTING CONFLICT CAUSES DIVISION
BUT HEALTHY CONFLICT BREEDS INTIMACY

C. Extend Forgiveness (Mt 18:21-35)

1. Forgiveness Defined

a. What it **doesn't** mean:

- "trying to forget" a wrong done
- saying what was done is "Okay"
- saying there are no consequences for the offense

b. What it **does** mean:

- "I admit my hurt, but, I stop my resentment and anger focused on the one who hurt me."
- "I give up my desire for administering justice and release it to Christ: who is the judge" (Jn 5:22)

FORGIVENESS IS A CHOICE MADE THROUGH FAITH
NOT AN OUTCOME PRODUCED THROUGH EMOTION

2. Forgiveness Granted

1. The Consequences of Holding On

- root of bitterness (Heb 12:15)

WITHOLDING FORGIVENESS CHAINS US TO THE OFFENSE
AND DOES NOTHING TO PUNISH THE OFFENDER

What we say when we refuse to forgive is: "the finished work of Jesus on the cross *really isn't finished!*... it's not enough- there is more payment required!"

3. The Navigation of Letting Go

Loosening the chains of bitterness and unforgiveness and walking in the forgiveness of Jesus

a. Get Honest

Ask yourself, "Has someone truly sinned against me, or have I actually chosen to be offended?"

b. Let Go

Confess and receive forgiveness for holding on to this offense rather than letting it go.

c. Relinquish Control

Choose to hand the role of Judge back to its rightful owner: Jesus Christ.

d. Speak it Out

Offer forgiveness, specifically and audibly, toward the one who offended you.

e. Choose to Bless

Make the choice to pray blessings, not speak curses, for the one who offended you.

f. Get some Rest

Abide in your own undeserved and complete forgiveness received through Christ.

g. Rinse and Repeat

Remember forgiveness is an act of faith, not feeling. As we choose obedience through extending forgiveness, God does the work of changing our hearts.

D. What it Brings When We Do

As we do the hard work of navigating offense with grace and through faith,
Christ leads us towards reconciliation *not* condemnation.

Forgiveness...

- is our greatest need
- is humanly unattainable
- is freely given through Christ
- is thorough, awe-inspiring, and life changing

When REAL PEOPLE walk in forgiveness, it brings the REAL LIFE gospel
into the REAL WORLD around us.