

Session 11: Loving Jesus without Offense (Mt. 11:6)

I. LOVING GOD WITH ALL OUR HEART REQUIRES WE OVERCOME OFFENSE

- A. One of the primary foundations of the kingdom of God is that Jesus' leadership is good. In other words, Jesus uses His power with perfect love and infallible wisdom. Understanding this foundational truth causes us to be filled with trust in and gratitude for His leadership.
- B. We are empowered to love Jesus to the measure that we have this trust and gratitude. Satan's strategy to hinder us from loving Jesus is by accusing His leadership, so as to convince us that He is not loving or wise. We will be hindered to the measure we are offended at Him. Satan tells us we are being mistreated by God. The truth is that He treats us far better than we deserve.
- C. Many sincere believers have unperceived offense at Jesus' leadership. The residual effect dulls their ability to love Him. This will be one of the major battlefronts in the end of the age.
- D. Jesus warned John the Baptist's disciples to not be offended at His leadership in John's life. Many are offended at Jesus both for what He does and what He does not do, or what He allows.
- ² John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples ³ and said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" ⁴ Jesus answered ... "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: ⁵ the blind see and the lame walk [Isa. 35:5-6; 61:1]; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. ⁶ And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me." (Mt. 11:2-6)*
- E. Jesus vindicated John the Baptist's unwavering commitment and set him forth as the model of spiritual violence. Overcoming all offense about Jesus' leadership requires spiritual violence.
- ⁷ Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind [a man wavering under pressure]? ... A man clothed in soft garments [a man seeking comfort]? ... ¹¹ Among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist ... ¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers [allows] violence, and the violent take it by force. (Mt. 11:7-12)*
- F. Jesus offends our mind to reveal our heart to cause our hunger to grow and to bring our offenses with Him to the surface so that they can be healed and so we can love Him with all of our heart.
- ¹⁵ When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple ... poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables ... ¹⁹ Jesus answered ... "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰ Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" (Jn. 2:15-20)*
- G. There is a special blessing in trusting Jesus' leadership before we see the final outcome of a situation. This is the only time in history we can express this aspect of love to Jesus.
- ²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (Jn. 20:29)*

II. ABOUNDING LOVE THAT OVERCOMES ALL OFFENSE

- A. We pray that our love would abound as we set our heart to confront all offense in our heart.
⁹ *I pray that your love may abound still more and more ... ¹⁰ that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be ... without offense till the day of Christ. (Phil. 1:9-10)*
- B. We ask the Spirit to reveal pockets of unperceived offense working in our heart.
¹² *Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret (unperceived) faults. ¹³ Keep back Your servant from presumptuous sins ... Then I shall be blameless. (Ps. 19:12-13)*

III. OUR CONFESSION: IN PERSONAL OR CORPORATE LIFE (IN TIME AND ETERNITY)

- A. Our anchor is our confession that “the Lord is good, His mercy endures forever.” The good leadership of Jesus speaks of His perfect love and infallible wisdom. His mercy enduring says that no one is disqualified from the benefits of His leadership if they come to Him.
- B. This song was sung at strategic times in redemptive history. For example, it was sung at the dedication of the tabernacle of David (1 Chr. 16:34, 41), temple of Solomon (2 Chr. 5:13; 7:3, 6), and in the war led by Jehoshaphat, which prophetically foreshadows the Armageddon campaign (2 Chr. 20:21). The end-time battle comes to a head at the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:2, 12), or the Valley of Berachah (2 Chr. 20:26, 16), also called the Valley of Decision (Joel 3:14).
²¹ *He [Jehoshaphat] appointed those who should sing to the Lord ... they went out before the army and were saying: “Praise the Lord, for His mercy endures forever.” ²² When they began to sing ... the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon. (2 Chr. 20:21-22)*
- C. Our confession is that Jesus’ loving leadership works all things for good in our life. Jesus overrules the evil that others plan against us (Gen. 50:20), as well as our own bad choices.
²⁸ *We know that all things work together for good to those who love God. (Rom. 8:28)*
⁴ *He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love. (Song 2:4)*
- D. We declare that Jesus is worthy of our unqualified trust and our sacrificial obedience.
¹² *Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power ... and honor and glory. (Rev. 5:12)*
- E. Our true view of Jesus’ leadership comes to the surface in context to His redemptive judgments.
² *Those who have the victory over the Beast ... ³ saying: “Great and marvelous are Your works ... Just and true are Your ways ... Your judgments have been manifested.” (Rev. 15:2-4)*
- F. This confession is our war cry against the Antichrist’s accusation against Jesus’ leadership.
⁶ *He [Antichrist] opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name ... ⁷ It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome [physically] them. (Rev. 13:6-7)*
¹¹ *They overcame him [Satan the accuser] by ... the word of their testimony. (Rev. 12:11)*