

When Offense Takes Root - June 21, 2026

Speaker 1 Lord God, we thank you for this time of praise and worship. We thank you for this time where the peace that surpasses all understanding has fallen upon us. Lord God. Lord, we thank you, Lord God, that you are not a God of chaos. You are not a God that wishes to see your people strive and work hard. Lord God, heavenly father, when you got up on that cross, you died to reverse the curse of the sweating of our brow, Lord God. Jesus sits in you. It's in you, Lord God, that we find this peace, that we find this joy, Lord God. So, Lord God, I pray this morning that each and every individual that is heavy laden, that has burdens on their heart. Lord God, I say, you break the yoke of bondage. We thank you for this tense of lingering, this tent of meaning that we call Mark two twenty two. Lord God, let your tent pegs begin to stretch. Let the people know that when they come here. This is not a place of striving or checking a box. This is a place where people come to rest in the presence of God. Yes, this is a place, Lord God, where the difficulties of this world, the things that are eating away at our soul, Lord God, are not welcome because the presence of the Almighty God, Jesus Himself, is in this place and it must go. Yes, Lord. This is a place of new wineskin where the old is not accepted any longer. The things that have held us back in our past, Lord God, are no longer welcome in this place. We press forward to the true prize of knowing you, Lord God, knowing you in a deep, intimate way. Lord Jesus. Lord God, we seek. We seek to know you, Lord God, in such a way that we become fully known to you, and you are fully known to us. Lord God, as lovers of our soul. Lord God, I thank you for each and every person here this morning. I thank you that we can come to you, Lord God, with all of our difficulties, all of our problems, anything that gives us anxiety and stresses us out. Lord God, we can come to you. We can cast our cares on you. Heavenly father, let us be a people who pour out our alabaster jars. Lord God, break them at your feet. We don't hold on to the jars, Lord God, we break them. We break them. So you could give us a new jar, a new wineskin, and fill it with the things that you desire. This is our heart, Lord God. Jesus continued to do the work of perfection in these people. Let love begin to take them over, Lord God. Let us come to a full understanding of who you are. If God truly is love, let us recognize him for the deep love that he is. This is our desire, Lord God. Our desire is not a brand, Lord God, it's not some large building. Lord God, if those things come, it'll only be because we were focused on you. Our desire, Lord God, is that you stretch us out to the capacity of whatever it is you want us to contain. Our desire, Lord God, is that the people in this community get rest. Lord God, have peace again, Lord. Yes. So, Lord God, let us be carriers of that peace. Let us be carriers of that joy. And most of all, let us be carriers of your love. These are the things that we pray for. Lord God, we pray only to know you because you are the prize. In Jesus mighty name we pray that everyone in this house said Amen, Amen. If you are in the front, you can stay wherever you want. It doesn't bother me at all. You stay wherever you need to be. We will never disrupt God's movement.

Speaker 2 Oh my five to ten year olds. You can Head to my left over here. Mama Nancy will be teaching you this morning. She is excited about the lesson that she has. Just be careful for those that are at the altar. And I'd welcome him up. But he's already here.

Speaker 1 Yeah.

Speaker 3 Jesus, Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus, Jesus.

Speaker 1 I want to welcome you to Mark two twenty two. If this is your first time here, I want you to know that this is a place of rest. And my desire is that what you've seen here? Up at the altar becomes the norm. My desire is that People begin to leave the chairs and come as close as they can to the altar, because we should all seek to get closer to Jesus. This will be a place of rest. This will be a place of peace. This will not be a place of overscheduling taking up too much of your time. The only time we want from you is the time you are ready to surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ. I just don't believe that I can do it better. I don't believe a brand can do it better. So I have a word for you, but I don't believe I could teach the word better than Jesus Christ. Whenever you come down, it's his word. It's Jesus working within you. This is the way it will always be. He's ready to do a work inside you. Man, I just thank you this morning. Jesus. I thank you, Lord God, for what you've given us. It's a gift, Lord God, to have your peace. It's a gift to be in your rest, Lord. Well, once again, I want to welcome you all here if it's your first time. Thank you for being here this morning. Above all, I want to thank the fathers today. When I was driving over here and throughout the week, I started thinking about the fathers that are in Mark two twenty two, all the dads. And it was overwhelming joy that came upon me because we have dads that are different. See, we don't have dads that need five steps to be in a better father. We don't have dads that say, I need you to read this book. It shows you how to be a better dad. We have dads that linger in the presence of the Lord. We have dads that come to intercessory prayer. We have dads that are so attached to Jesus Christ that they are good dads because they represent the dad. I'll say it again because it's worth repeating. It's always just one step. You want to be a good father? Hang around with the good father. And when that aroma of the good father gets on you, you're going to be a good father. And in Mark two twenty two, we got some good fathers. Give the fathers in the house a hand. You know, this morning I wasn't sure where God was taking us. Now I understand. And so as always, I have some notes. I never, I don't know, sometimes I see them, sometimes I don't. Matter of fact, I won't see them at all unless I take out my glasses. Got some friends of mine in a church. They're like, what are you going to be speaking on? And then they laugh and they go, well, you don't know yet. And that's true. I don't I don't always know. But I was curious as to why the Lord brought me here. And, and now I think I understand. So do me a favor. Turn if you would, to Matthew thirteen, Matthew thirteen, verses three through nine, three through nine. He told them many stories in the form of parables such as this one listen. A farmer went out to plant some seeds. As he scattered them across his fields, some seeds fell on the footpath and the birds came and ate them. Other seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow, but the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn't have deep roots. They died. Other seeds fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants. Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, even a hundred times as much as been planted. Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand. The title of this morning's message is When Offense takes root. When offense takes root. Bow your heads. Lord God, I thank you for the written word that it's a living word. That it's growing inside of us. Lord God, I thank you that your word never stops teaching and never stops revealing. It never stops illuminating in our lives. Lord. Heavenly father, I am simply a vessel. Let every word spoken, Lord God, be the Word of Jesus Christ.

Let the power of the Holy Spirit lead us to all truth this morning, Lord. Lord God, as you continue to do a work at Mark two twenty two, I feel there's something coming. We are getting ready to cross a threshold. A true crossing over purification and sanctification has taken place now for a greater work, Lord. So I pray, Lord God, that we understand this word because you are about to stretch out our tent pegs. I thank you in the almighty name of Jesus we pray and everyone said Amen and amen. If you've been with us the past several weeks, we've been talking about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and what took place in the book of acts. We've come to understand through our studies that it was more than just power. It was more than just gifts. It was more than just the tools that we need to, to, to conduct our ministries. We began to understand through our studies that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was union with Christ. It was an invitation to face to face union. We studied last week in Philippians that Paul said his greatest desire was to know the Lord, and that no is not simply having knowledge of God. It's an intimate. No, no, it's to know like a husband knows a wife and a wife knows a husband. And Paul was saying, all of my knowledge that I've accumulated everything I've done in my life, I consider it now to be garbage, because the only desire that I have is to seek him and to know him. And Paul said, that should be the desire of every Christian to know him. This is where we get the language we studied in First Corinthians chapter thirteen. Many people confuse this chapter and think it's something to. Diminished gifts. Tongues will pass away, prophecy will pass away. But it's not because when you read the passage, you begin to understand. It's about knowing God. This is what Paul was talking about. He said, right now I see in a mirror, I see in part. But then when I am face to face, I will fully know as I am already fully known. See, Paul had a desire to know something. He was talking about the perfecting process and the one thing we're learning at Mark two twenty two that needs to get into your hearts so it will get in your mind is that gospel doesn't end at salvation. That is the beginning. This is why it says in Hebrews chapter twelve, since we are surrounded by such a cloud of witnesses. Looking to Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, let us run our race, beginning after salvation and moving to perfection. This is why we've come to understand he is the author, but he's also the perfecter of our faith. It's in the perfecting process where you dig deeper, your soil begins to grow. But like anything, any soil, there are other seeds that look to corrupt. And so the Lord brought me to this passage. Along with a few of my guys. I actually tried to avoid it. A couple of my men started teaching and I'm like, okay, I got it. Lord God, I got it now. And so I started looking at this passage a little bit differently. And the Lord said, the people of Mark two twenty two are on a great trajectory. They're moving forward. They're resting in my presence. But there are a few things that I need to work out. Kevin, there's a few things I need to work out. You see, I can't stand here and preach this word and act like I'm above this word. In fact, this word is so for me that I probably should sit in the chair and receive it. I'm ready to move forward. But there are things you need to work out in the soil of your heart, right? Amen. The Lord said, I want to work out the spirit of offense. I want to take away the bitter roots. In Hebrews chapter twelve, verse fifteen, I'll be reading from the passion version real quick. Watch over each other to make sure that no one misses the revelation of God's grace. And make sure no one lives with the root of bitterness sprouting within them, which will only cause trouble and poison the hearts of many. You see, as I was studying this, I began to realize that the seed of offense, no matter how deep your soil is, the seed of offense, has this way of maneuvering itself to resentment. And then resentment has a way of maneuvering itself to

unforgiveness. And then unforgiveness has a way of maneuvering itself to a bitter root. And when a bitter root is in your soil, when the Lord tries to drop blessing, when he tries to drop revelation, when he tries to drop spiritual maturity, when he's trying to take you from one measure of glory to the next, it's that root that's eating up that seed. And so I began to see this passage differently. But before I tell you how I see it, I want to make sure that each and every person understand this. The Lord has also told me, I can't expect everyone to understand Scripture the way I do. So I want to make sure I don't leave anyone behind. For many years I've read this passage a certain way. Can you put it back up? Go to the one in Matthew. He told them many stories in the form of parables such as this one. Listen. A farmer went out to plant some seeds. As he scattered them across his fields, some seeds fell on the footpath and the birds ate them. Stop right there. The first heart pasture. The soil he's talking about is a hardened heart. When the seed fell on the hardened heart. The heart was so hard that it bounced off. And the birds came. The birds represent the enemy and took that seed away. See, this is a person that's probably experienced a lot of loss. From their perspective, life has been difficult. And so anytime someone tries to give them the Word of God, or anytime the Lord tries to meet them where they are, it's so hard that they can't receive anything. Move on. Other seed fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. These seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. These are different types of people. These are people who received the initial gospel of salvation. These are people that might even encounter the Lord. They'll go to revival and have this breakthrough. But because they don't stay attached to the one, they need to know, their soil isn't deep enough. So they get this sprout up, this quick root. They're excited about the Lord. But when the difficulties of this world come, it kind of kills that seed. It says, when the sun comes, when that heat comes, when they're tested. Let's go to the next one. Other seeds fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plant. These are people that I think are very common in this community. They attend church because they need to check a box. Sure, they love the Lord. They do. They have a love for God, but they also love this world. And so time is very important to these people. Not time for God, but time for them. They don't realize that the spirit inside of them that they're fighting is self righteousness. And so they'll go to church as long as church fits in their time. But then there was good soil. These are people joined to Jesus, attached to Jesus. These are people with the proper heart posture that when the Lord is ready to speak, they are ready to receive. They don't move on their own impulses. They move to the power of the impulse of the Holy Spirit. This soil is a fully surrendered soil, a fully surrendered soil. We're going to go over that reason later on. Now, that's the traditional view. Most people see it from the prism of salvation. I gotta tell you, I don't see it that way anymore. I'm not saying that meaning's not there it is. But there are deeper meanings to the word. As I started looking at this parable again, I started realizing I'm looking at the perfecting process. I'm looking at heart postures. No matter how long you've been going to church, you are susceptible to any one of these heart postures. You say, Pastor Kevin, wait a minute, I bear fruit. I've been in good soil for a long time. I go to intercessory prayer. I pray all the time. Let me tell you something. It doesn't matter how deep your soil is, we're all susceptible to the spirit of offense that can create a bitter root. In fact, if you have deep soil, it means the root can go even deeper and hurt you even more. Let me also tell you in the perfecting process that you need to read when you read this, God likes to take us from one measure of glory to the next measure of glory. So let me tell you something about deep soil.

What was once deep in one season may be shallow for the next. Yeah. Are you seeing the perfecting process now? Now, I find that there are people that end up in two categories, mostly in two categories. And this is what I want you to see. The two middle categories is where most people exist. The shallow soil and the soil that's occupied by the world thorny. And then they'll have seasons where they bear fruit, or they have seasons where their heart has gone hardened. But if you begin to see it, they end up in these two categories. An offense takes place. Let me show you. In the shallow soil, these are people that usually struggle with identity. They've had an encounter with the Lord. They've found a church that they like. They found some friends that they like. But what happens is because they have a shallow relationship with the Lord, because it's based on one encounter or maybe another encounter, or maybe someone prayed for them. It's not deep enough to withstand. When a person disappoints them, it's not deep enough to understand, to understand when a leader doesn't live up to their expectations. These are people because they have Experiences, and they rely on that experience, that shallow experience, that one experience instead of something that's continuing each and every day instead of living in the presence of God. They're visiting the presence of God. And so what's happening is these people have a shallow relationship. So they do what they always know, put put their trust in people. And because they don't know who they are in Christ, people tend to hurt them more and they get offended. You see, what happens with these people is if they get offended and it's shallow, they move back towards the hardened heart. Do you see the progression cycle? You can move to good soil or you can move the other way. Then there was soil, thorns, thorn representing the cares of this world and how we can be offended. I find these people to be a little bit different. I find these people to be a lot in the community. They strive for success. They need a platform. Everything in them to justify themselves comes from that world and not church. Financially, they need to be successful. They need to represent successful families. These people tend to live through their children. I'm being honest because they need to get their kids to match the same platform they have. Everything is about pushing and striving. It doesn't mean they don't love God. In fact, if you tell them, if you believe, if you have faith, if you love God, they'll tell you right away, I love God. But the reality is, is they have not dropped the things of this world. And so what happens is when the world doesn't work out for them, they get offended. Wait a minute, God, why haven't you blessed me yet? I go to church. Wait a minute, God. I'm a godly person. I go to church every Sunday. I tithe all the time. Every time there's something to serve, I'm always there. Why haven't you done this? And they become offended. And really soon they realize they can't get mad at God, so they get mad at them selves, not knowing that they are drowning in self righteousness. What did we learn when with Paul said last week I called my own self righteousness garbage taking on Christ, self righteousness. We have a decision to make. Now I want to tell you this God's grace and mercy is great. Just because you have an offense doesn't mean it's not there. It could be very real. It could be very true. You could be hurt by something you did not achieve, a platform you did not earn. It could be something that someone hurt you in the church, but it's no excuse to carry it, right? Because Jesus Christ did not carry it. Jesus Christ got on that cross and said, Lord, forgive them, for they know not what they do. And the ultimate goal of our perfecting process is to move towards that love for others. Amen. So we do have a choice. Where we place our focus determines how we grow. I want you to begin to see this through the lens of two seeds. One seed represents the Word of God,

leading to spiritual growth, maturity, and the fruit of the spirit. The other seed represents the world and the spirit of offense. If allowed to take root, offense can grow into the root of bitterness. Both seeds seek residence in your soul. understand that it's fighting. This is where Paul said, the spirit fights the flesh. The flesh fights the spirit. It's always fighting for territory. One produces life, transformation and intimacy with Christ. The other produces hardness, division, and spiritual stagnation, the condition of the soil, the heart and what we choose to cultivate ultimately determines which seed bears fruit in our lives. If I could get you to see anything, is that even when you've been a seasoned Christian and you move from one measure of glory to the next, you can find your heart in many of these heart postures. And the perfecting process is that we continue to surrender so we can continue to bear fruit. We do not arrive in good soil and believe that we will not be affected by this world. When we get in good soil, it is up to us to maintain that good soil by staying surrendered and staying in the presence of God. So as I was studying this and I began to see this differently, turn, if you would, to John fifteen, John fifteen, verses one through eight. I want you to see this. I want you to start recognizing the perfecting process within the parable we just read, and now see it from what the Lord Jesus Christ, his words, tells us what to do. I and I'm reading the New Living Translation. John fifteen, verses one through eight. We're going to start that way. I am the true vine, and my father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit, so they will produce even more. Stop there for a minute. I am the true grapevine. So understand? Look at the movement already. You have to take out the self-righteousness to understand? I am the true grapevine. I am the true grapevine. Listen to what he's saying. He's saying by yourself. You are not a grapevine. You are not a vine. I am the only true life. I am the only true entity that can live. If you detach yourself from me, I'm getting ahead of myself. But he's saying something here. Recognize it's about me. It's not about you. And my father is the gardener. Do you see the language? If you've seen me, you've seen the father. He's the gardener. He's the one that tills your heart. He's the one that waters it. Now you could start to see that environment matters. Where you place your soil matters. I am the vine. My father is the gardener. There are many people that place their hearts. They place their soil in areas that are not bearing fruit, and they want to know why they have a problem. Well, maybe it's not just you. It might be your surroundings. You see, because if you're surrounded with the people who just accept salvation as the end of the gospel or status quo, then guess what? You're going to produce status quo results. Your environment matters. I'll go further with that later. He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit. Who cuts it off? So if I have the spirit of offense, a seed that's come inside of me and resentment grows and unforgiveness and as a bitter root that's taken place. And believe me, we've all had it. Come on, let's be honest. We have to be honest. We've all had it. But who uproots it? Once again, there's no self-help guys. I don't care how many theologians write books, you will not get it from the book. And let me tell you something else that, um, Lord, grace and mercy here for people to understand. If you read the Bible simply from a knowledge point, you won't get it. You have to be attached to it. When people start to realize that the Bible is not for you to gain knowledge, it's for you to know the Lord. And the Bible points to Jesus Christ. That's why I get so frustrated when leaders say, oh well, always presence, always presence. Of course it is. What do you think you're going to do in heaven? It's a Bible that shows you who he is. Now go and get to know him. Yeah. Yeah. He prunes the branches that

do bear fruit so they will produce even more. He prunes. So he takes away and he prunes. Has it ever occurred to you that sometimes our offenses might actually be God's pruning process? Yes. Oh, yes. Oh, I had to learn this one. I had to learn this one good. And I had to learn this one good about two months ago. I won't share all of it, but I'll share a little bit. I was walking with the Lord and I was just frustrated. I hate being misunderstood. I love people, I want people to know what I'm saying. I pride is probably the right word actually, to be an articulate and be able to communicate well. And I'm like, Lord, I'm frustrated because people are not seeing what I want. It's all it's all projection and placing something on me that's not true. And the Lord said to me in my prayer time, oh, so you have the same trouble I had? Oh, so now you're suffering. I don't know how God talks to y'all, but sometimes he talks to me like this. So now, so, so now, because you're suffering, you can begin to be co glorified as a true son and daughter. I want, O Lord. He said, welcome to the pruning process. And he said, take a deeper look. Take a deeper look at the pruning process. Now when you realize it was always me. What are you really offended about? Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 4 Yeah. And.

Speaker 1 He says, so you're upset at the steps I had to take to get you to move? He said, good, I was too. Maybe next time it won't take as much pruning. Yeah. Here's something though. I developed an entire spirit of offense on something I shouldn't have been offended about. God was pruning me, but because I was wrapped up in self-righteousness, I couldn't see Christ's righteousness in it. Do you see what God is saying? The soil is more than salvation. It's a perfecting process. Once you move from one measure of glory, you bear fruit. I'm taking you to the next. Can I bear fruit like this? No, no no no. You got to grow again. Then you can bear fruit. No. Can I do it again? No, no, no, you got to grow again. I got to bear fruit. And what happens is he takes you from one measure of glory to the next. And you gotta watch your heart posture. You gotta keep surrendering. You gotta keep surrendering. But what you're going to do is you're going to look back and you say, I'm on level ninety six, I was on five, but now I'm on level ninety six and my fruit is real big. Yeah. But God said it's a process of perfecting. Watch the already. Not yet. You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. You have already. It's done. Remain in me and I will remain in you. Surrender to me. Stay in my presence. Intercessory prayer. Come to the altar. Quiet time by yourself. Secret place. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine. And you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. Let's read that again. You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. Now skip down for a branch cannot produce fruit. Wait a minute. If I'm already proved, then why am I still being proved? I'm going to keep proving this to you. Okay. You are already saved by the finished work of Jesus Christ. You are already perfected by the finished work of Jesus Christ. You are already sons and daughters by the finished work of Jesus Christ. The problem and what makes God long suffering is not that the work hasn't been done, it's that the Holy Spirit is trying to get you to see what you already are. You see, it's already a work been done. Christ doesn't have to do another thing. But as you spend time and you surrender your soul, your heart begins to change. The spirit of offense cannot come on you. You keep growing and growing and growing, and you are stepping from one measure of glory to the next measure of glory becoming more and more like him. And now you're becoming known because you're

knowing the one that knows you. Yes. Do you see it already saved? Still being saved. Already perfected. This is what creation. It says. All of creation is waiting for the sons and daughters to be revealed. It's not something that isn't done. God is long suffering because he's waiting for you. I'm going to skip five through eight because I've touched on it. I want to talk about good soil for a minute. Having good soil does not prevent us from exposure to offense. I told you earlier, it actually has better opportunities for deeper roots of offense. But these people are different. They may be offended. For a time, I was offended for a time. But because they attached themselves to the vine, the Lord begins to work things out in them. They begin to realize that if I truly am a righteous man or a righteous woman in God, then every step that I take is ordered by him. And so when they understand that the steps that I've taken are ordered by God, how can I get mad at anyone around me? Every step I took. These are people that spend enough time in the surrendering process. Their focus is not about who offended them. Their focus is bearing good fruit. Their focus is being attached to Jesus Christ, remaining in their presence. You know, you could tell a lot of person about where they run. I'm not trying to make it difficult for anyone, I was there. But if you run to your phone to tell someone else before you talk to God, then you're probably your heart posture is in the wrong direction. And the Lord is saying, I'm always here. I'm always available. Think about this. If we had a hurt in our lives and we ran to the Lord, he could actually tell us whether it's real hurt or it's just the pruning process and stop blaming others for what he is trying to carry us into, right? This is what good soil people do. You know, I was thinking about this. Remember what Paul said? I have a different belief than a lot of people and it's okay. No one really knows, but it refers to thorny ground. Thorny ground. Paul said, I got a thorn in my side. It was a weakness. Now, a lot of people think it could be a physical ailment. I don't. I actually don't. I'll tell you why. Because when Paul should have been referring to a physical ailment when he was in jail, he wrote the Philippians, the most positive book around. But when he wrote about the thorn in his side, he was writing to the Corinthians and they were a pain in the butt. Yeah. Hear me. People are messy. People are messy. So Paul was probably, I think the thorn in his side was offense. I think he was saying, Lord, here I am pouring out my heart to these people. I'm one of two letters in. I'm about to write a third one. I'll visit them three times. They still do not get it. He was like, Moses, take these people. And what did the Lord say? No. My grace is sufficient for you. Now you think about it. You want to know what Paul's true? What? It's just my belief, okay? It's not written. It's my belief. I don't need any emails or letters and just my belief. Okay? My belief is Paul struggle with self righteousness. He told the Philippians I had to stop. Everything I learned was garbage. So what was happening is when the Corinthians made him angry, it made self-righteousness come out of him. This is why I always say, I could tell you this, but I won't. I could say this, but I won't. It was coming out. And so Paul was like, these people, these people are thorn in my side. And the Lord said, tough. You're not going to stop dealing with him because I've been dealing with you. Yeah. Good soil allows the Holy Spirit to uproot. What did Paul eventually say? He said, you know what, though? I give up that self righteousness. I give it up. I'll I'll keep dealing with the Corinthians. I'll keep dealing with the Galatians. It doesn't matter. The people of Ephesus, I will I'll keep dealing with the crazy people, just like the Lord just keeps dealing with us. Because my goal is not about me being glorified. It's about him being glorified. I've gotten rid of my self righteousness. I operate in Christ's righteousness, and the only thing I want to do is when I get in his righteousness is to

know more and more and more. All I want to do is know him. Yeah. And when you get to a heart posture of just knowing him, your heart, your soil is going to be a place that bears fruit. It's not about effort and you trying. It's about you seeking and surrendering. And once you surrender, you can't help but bear fruits. I apologize for my intensity. I was a football coach for almost twenty years. Okay, I don't care if you're a girl or guy. I see you all with shoulder pads, helmet. That's the world. We're out there. We're going to get it. Matter of fact, we might put something on a bracelet. We all touch it and tap it. At the end of the day, I don't know, I don't know. Man, I just sometimes I just like, let's get after it. You know? I know it's not right, but I want to form tackle the devil like. You know? You guys remember first fruits lead the first fruits. Jesus Christ was the first fruit. But what did Jesus say in John twelve, verse twenty three to twenty six? Scripture now is coming to life why God brought this up to me. Jesus replied, now the time has come for the Son of Man to enter into his glory. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But this death will produce many new kernels, a plentiful harvest of new lives. Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who carry nothing for their life, who care nothing for their life in this world, will keep it for eternity. Anyone who wants to serve me must follow me, because my servants must be where I am, and the father will honor anyone who serves me. Truly a seed must die in order for it to bear fruit. I have found that the spirit of offense operates mostly in self righteousness. You believe that you shouldn't be hurt, that your cause is right. And the Lord's not here about your cause. He's about his own cause. Truly, a seed must die in order for it to bear fruit. But then his next line is, if a man wants to gain his life, he must lose it. So now what? Seed needs to die in the soil so the other soil can live? Do you see it? All offense comes from self righteousness. The competing seed is you. You're the one competing for the nutrients in the soil. You're the one creating the thorns. You're the one creating the shallow nature. You're the one that's making it hard because God said you can't do it. That's right. This is why Paul said, I am no longer myself. Rather, it is Christ crucified in me. This might be difficult, but you don't know how they hurt me. How many times? It's not about it. It's not about the hurt. It's when you have so much Jesus in you that you start to see that person in a different way, even when they try to hurt you. Yes. And then you picking up the phone turns into a prayer for them. You trying to galvanize people around you is you galvanize in the presence of God around you. Truly, a seed must die. We must surrender in order to have good soil. The only way you can bear fruit is if the selfish self righteousness seed of ourselves is killed. Amen. This is the only way. Now watch this, watch this. Everything in the Bible is perfect. It still amazes me. Actually, I, I think it's possible. No, it's definitely almost every scripture is written the same way. It's amazing because they all tie in together. It's amazing. Like I just I love the word. Now the back half of John fifteen, once you surrender in John twelve, he's like three chapters later. Might be three days. I don't know, he says. He says this, I have love. Watch where it goes. Seeds turn into love. I have loved you even as the father has loved me. Even though you offended me. Even though you put me on that cross, even though you sinned, I have loved you with the same amount of measure of love that God has for me. Remain in my. At first he was saying, remain in me. Now what's he saying? Remain in my love. Do you see what's happening to the atmosphere of the good soil? When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love. You want to obey his laws? It'll only happen in his love. Just as I obey my father's commandments and remain in his love. He's telling you the keys. I have told you these things so that you will be

filled with my joy. Yes, your joy, your joy will overflow. He's saying that when you are offended, you want to know when you got good soil. When you have joy. Now you understand. Hebrews chapter twelve. He endured the cross and all the suffering for the joy set before him. He enjoyed all your offenses, all your sins, that you were willing to beat him, yet you were willing to. He. He endured it all because he knew. On the other side I see the perfect. I see the perfect. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friend. What would happen if we all laid down our self righteousness to try and understand through love's eyes what's happening with the person that might be offensive. See with God's eyes. Heavenly father, they don't know what they've done. But I love them. You are my friends. God, you all understand this language. He hadn't even gone to the cross yet. You are my friends. If you do what I command. I no longer call you slaves because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends. Since I have told you everything the father told me. You didn't choose me. This is important. It kills self-righteousness. You didn't choose me. So what are you offended about? Because truly, if they offend you and you are me, they're just offending me. You didn't get it. Let me say it again. When you truly crucify yourself and it is Christ living in you, who are they really offending? And what did Christ do when they offended? He died for them. And so the Lord is saying, there goes your sacrifice again. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit that can only happen in good soil, so that the father will give you whatever you ask for using my name. You cannot get what you are asking for if you are filled with self-righteousness. But if you are clothed in the righteousness of Christ, you watch how the doors open and whatever door open Christ does. He can't be closed by man. This is my command. Here it is. Love each other. Does it say love each other on conditions. Love each other. Whether or not you're offended. Love each other because you had some difficulty. Or is it just say love each other. Period. Period is a period there but God period. But that period. God, I want to tell you something I was offended. Most people know my story, I was offended. And I needed to get right. Because the Lord spoke to me and said, I'm the one who put you on this path. And if you stay offended, I can't get you moving along. I need to get you going. And so as I began to spend time with him, I can even tell you almost to the day. It was almost three months ago, I felt something come out of me. Felt physical as I come out. And I was able to love again. And every now and then it flares up like a bad acid reflux. But I just take my Jesus Pepcid AC. About thirty minutes of prayer. And that acid reflux goes down. And I'm able to love again. Hear my words. I am thankful for every season I've ever been through. Every one of them. The season I came out of. Those were good people. They were good to me and they gave me great opportunity. Now I have nothing but love for those people, and I will speak nothing but love. And my expectation is the people of Mark two twenty two to speak nothing but love. Because if we are truly to be Christ followers, it will be about love. And I also believe that the Lord doesn't start a plan without having a finishing plan. He who began a good work will see it to completion. So this is the way I see it now. Let's say two sides have to run and meet in the middle. Who says how fast? I gotta run at my pace. I'll just go as fast as I can. But I'm gonna find a way to meet. Because we are one body. Yes, yes. And the power of the Holy Spirit is trying to unify us back to the one Jesus Christ. Would you please stand? My boy right over here said something. He said something and I don't even think he realized he blew my mind. He spoke on this, this, this parable, and he had these three pages of notes, and he's going through the notes and he said, go back to the beginning. So we went back to the

beginning. He said, a farmer went out to sow some seeds. And he goes, see, right there we all stop for a minute, even me, I was like, alright. He goes, it's all about the farmer. And I went. And he. He didn't realize I am the vine. My father is the vine dresser. It's all about the father. And that one word from you sprung all of this. That's what obedience looks like. Now I want to say this. I don't feel the need to be crazy weird, or I just don't. Not today, I don't, I don't, I don't feel that need today. I feel like there is a security in who we are.

Speaker 1 But I want to ask this. If there is a seed of offense, I want you to come down. I want you to come down. We're not going to. I'm going to pray for the whole group. But I want you to come down if you got a seed of offense. Because we don't want it to turn into a bitter root. And if I could pray for myself, which I will, I could be standing here myself.