



...I HAVE OFFENDED YOU...

There is something that the Holy Spirit really dealt with me about this week. I talked a little bit about it last Sunday. I titled the message, “IF I Have Offended You”. This particular statement is made quite often by us in church, on our jobs, and in all of our relationships. What the Lord said to me is, that oftentimes, and I will go so far as to say most of the time, we KNOW that we have offended, and we also KNOW that we have been OFFENDED. This statement, “If I have offended you”, is usually said by the person who *knows* they have offended, but they do not want to tell the truth about it. They know they have done it, but it is pride that keeps them from admitting the truth and being forthright about it by saying, “I have offended you, please forgive me”.

In 1 John 1:5-9, it states,

“This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”

WHICH PATH WILL YOU CHOOSE?

The path toward the freedom of forgiveness is the path of honesty and humility. As we face the truth about the harms and offenses that we have caused/committed, and confess the many ways that we have failed to love and make amends to those we have harmed, the darkness will pass and the true light will shine. The text quoted earlier, confronts our denial about our hurtful, destructive and self-serving ways and causes us to acknowledge the truth of our sins. It reassures us of God's forgiveness and instructs us to take ongoing inventory of our failure to love, even as it calls us to live more fully in the light and love of God. This text begins by presenting us with a contrast between lying to ourselves and the sin in our lives and telling the truth about our sin.

Not only is it hard to admit that you have offended someone, but it is equally difficult to admit that *you* have been offended. When the statement is made, "If I have offended you", I believe most people would respond by saying, "No." However, that is not always the truth. Oftentimes, we miss the forgiveness of God and the power that comes along with that by not being honest with ourselves. If you want the power of God to radiate through your life, you must walk in the light. The Bible tells us in Ephesians 5:13, "But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light."

We will now remove all dairy products out our diets. This is in addition to what we have already decided to sacrifice for this month. I look forward to seeing you here for prayer on Monday & Friday.

When we refuse to tell the truth about feelings, then those things remain in the dark. They *can and will* be used by the prince of darkness. They will be used against us; no doubt about it. We hinder our fellowship with God by willingly walking in the dark. When we refuse to be honest with ourselves and honest with God, it fuels the fire, and we cannot be honest with others. The Bible makes it clear that we wrestle against the rulers of darkness in this world. Darkness conceals and hides.

In 1 John 2:8, God said, "Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." This is talking about a process of change that should be going on in you. The scripture that the Lord gave me for this year is dealing with Jacob wrestling to the Breaking of Day. I do believe that during our time of fasting and praying this month, that there is a breaking that is going on inside of us, both individually and corporately.

Again, which path will you choose: to hide or confess, shine or fade out?

God, help me to walk in love.

God, save our lost loved ones.

God, give me the strength to forgive those that offend me and to confess my faults.

God, keep my heart humble before you.

God, give us an increase in the Word; greater desire for you and the Word.