First Fruits First The Spirit of Offense November 1, 2021

*We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed* [2 Corinthians 6:3].

The spirit of offense has long been our adversary’s means of dividing people. Offense causes us to lose control, to lose our temper, to lose track of who we are. The result is that we overlook how to minister to those in need. We overreact to statements. We stop acting like Yeshua.

There is a beauty to those who can withstand criticism. We admire people who keep their cool when things fall apart. We know this because it’s tough to keep silent and collected when the people we care about lower the boom on us.

Yet it is the one with the controlled demeanor who gains the lasting allegiance of those at risk. While it’s easy to rally around folks who are supportive, bruised and wounded emotions invariably lead to misguided thoughts. Immature believers, who have not learned how to take “*every thought captive*,” make poor decisions. These have yet to master how to stay in touch with their own sense of themselves.

Ministry in the Kingdom of God requires us to move into dark places. The Spirit of God teaches us how to stay the course when the going gets rough. We must learn the art of self-control.

Ask yourself, “Can I take an insult, misunderstanding, or jab without taking offense?” At such times, the prayer for divine protection needs to be employed. When you have learned how to exercise this response, you exhibit self-control – a much sought-after gift of the Spirit.

Ultimately, the challenge to grow in this gift presents itself to everyone. When test comes to our own doorstep, our Lord gives us the chance to flip the spirit of offense from a diabolical infectious insult into an opportunity to minister the love and forgiveness of God.

Our Father sent His Firstfruit to give His life for our sin. That sacrificial death and miraculous resurrection accomplished something none of us could do without His grace. Yeshua modeled in His own flesh the ability to withstand the most devasting, undeserved torture imaginable. Make no mistake, He did this for you and me.

God’s witness of absorbing the spirit of offense is His eternal testimony that no sin is too great for Him to overcome. Our fruitfulness flows from our willingness to take a hit and not hit back.