

# **THE BAIT OF SATAN #4**

## **“Escaping The Trap”**

### **I. The “Trap” Is Relational Offences With God And Man**

#### **A. Skandalon**

**“The Greeks had a special word for the portion of an animal trap upon which the bait was laid. It was called the “skandalon”.**

**Bob Mumford**

1. Jesus said “offences must come”; we cannot avoid them; so the issues is how do we RESPOND to offences?

2. We’ve been recommending John Bevere’s book, “The Bait Of Satan”; the subtitle is...

**“Your Response Determines Your Future”**

**John Bevere**

a. If I can FORGIVE offences, I can go free.

b. But if I CANNOT forgive, I am trapped!

3. Satan baits the trap with offences because he wants to destroy relationships.

#### **B. It Takes Two To Tango**

1. It takes 2 people to have a fight.

2. Offences take two! And all fall into 2 headings:

a. Our relationship with God

b. Our relationship with each other

3. Satan wants us offended with God; with each other; or both!

a. Many are mad at God

b. Many are offended by the Church

4. Unresolved relational conflict will trap you spiritually! And staying free requires effort.

**And herein do I *exercise* myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.**

**Acts 24:16 KJV**

**I myself always *strive* to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.**

**Acts 24:16**

5. Living an unoffended life requires effort!

a. Forgiveness doesn't come natural to us! So why do it?

### **C. Why Must I Forgive?**

1. Because Jesus *commands* it.

a. Up to 70 X 7!

2. **Because your own forgiveness *depends* upon it.**

a. Matthew 6; Matthew 18; Mark 11

**3. Because Unforgiveness can ruin your future as well as your present.**

a. Nothing can rob your joy like living offended.

b. Nothing can foul up your future like unwillingness to forgive.

c. The fallout from Unforgiveness goes on and on:

- 9 out of 10 men in the prison systems have Unforgiveness toward their fathers
- It's the #1 weapon of the enemy to bring disunity in the Church

3. And many of God's people don't realize that living in offences can also block your healing!

**"Bitterness is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die."**

"Over the years, I've seen people healed of all kinds of sickness and disease once they forgave offences: *especially arthritis and cancer*

## TESTIMONIES

5. So let's talk about...

### II. Escaping The Trap

#### A. Dealing With The Highest Levels Of Offence

##### **OFFENCES ARE THE BAIT OF SATAN**

1. Most offences are minor and petty and fairly easily forgiven; but some not so easy!

a. Early on in our ministry, we were very close with a beautiful family in leadership in the Church. But later we discovered that the father gambled away all the funds in the trust fund established for the kids college, (without telling his wife), and lost everything. But the wife was able to forgive him. And the marriage survived to this day.

b. Last week, Tom Cody an 80 year old man, shared his story of how his wife betrayed him with her Pastor, who was Tom's friend! Tom was able to forgive them, even though the marriage did not survive. (Lesson: just because you no longer walk with someone or trust them does not lessen your responsibility to forgive.

2. In the book "Bait Of Satan", John Bevere tells his own story of how offended he was by another minister, something I related to!

**"My extreme offence with him was not isolated but one of several with this person that intensified over year and a half.**

Everyone around me knew what was going on. "Aren't you hurt?" they would ask me. "Are you just going to stand back and take it?"

**"I'm fine", I said, "it hasn't affected me; I'm going in with the call on my life." But my answer was nothing more than pride.**

**I** was extremely hurt but denied it, even to myself...I put on a strong front when in reality I was weak and deeply injured."

Months went by. Everything seemed dry, the ministry was stale, my prayer closet lonely, and I was in torment. I fought devils daily. I thought all the torment was coming because of the call on my life, but in actuality it was the torment of my unforgiveness. Every time I was around this man I came away feeling beat up.

Then came the morning I will never forget. I was sitting on deck in my backyard praying, “Lord, am I hurt?” No sooner had these words left my lips when I hear God shout in my spirit, “YES!”

“God, please help me get out of this hurt and offence.” This was exactly where the Lord wanted me....at the end of myself. (because we can’t do this in our own strength)...

**“The first step toward healing and freedom is to recognize that you are hurt. Often pride does not want us to admit that we are hurt and offended. Once I admitted my true condition, I was able to receive the Lord’s correction.**

(He began to fast and pray...when he saw him a few days later at a funeral.)

“Lord, I forgive him; I release him from everything he has done.”

Immediately I felt the burden lift. I had forgiven him and relief flooded into me.

3. He goes on to talk about the problem of RELAPSES and how easy it is to slide back into unforgiveness; but he learned to EXERCISE himself against offences and to PRAY FOR the man.

**Matt 5:44-45**

**But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;**

**45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.**

## **B. We Grow In The Hard Places**

1. “Honeymoon” love is easy; but staying married will grow us up!

**46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?**

**47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?**

**48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.**

Matthew 5:46-48

2. Discipleship is about following Jesus, our example in all things!

**“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”**

3. And then, He saved the world!

4. Forgiveness is hard...but the harvest is worth it.

**“The bitterer the winter, the sweeter the oranges.”**

### **Famous Florida Colloquialism**

## **III. Conclusion**

### **A. Let Me Tell You The Truth: There’s No Shortcut To Maturity**

**1. There is no discipleship without obedience; there is no obedience without suffering.**

**Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.**

**Hebrews 5:8**

a. If this is how Jesus learned; how Peter learned; how Paul learned

b. And how every other Bible hero learned...what makes us think we can avoid it? Because....

**2. There is no Kingdom without tribulation.**

**a. The difference between the early church and the modern church is how ministers seek to comfort their people; today, we paint rosy pictures, but back then....**

And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, **22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."**

**Acts 14:21-23**

**3. There is no crown without a cross.**

**Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.**

**Hebrews 12:2**

a. We learn obedience (to forgive) by the offences we suffer;  
**REMEMBER** Jesus said...

**OFFENCES MUST COME!**

b. Many tribulations of offence confront us, but the pathway to the Kingdom presses through them

c. The crown we seek is on the other side of the cross we bear;

**JESUS ENDURED THE CROSS FOR THE JOY THAT WAS SET BEFORE HIM!**

**1 Peter 4:12-13**

**12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:**

**13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.**

**CLOSING THOUGHTS...**

**B. Altar Call And Prayer**

**Title Slide Up During Ministry**