



Week of October 8

Unoffendable: When Forgiveness Seems Impossible¹

Overview:

Would it surprise you to hear someone say, “We are not entitled to get offended or stay angry at other people”? That’s the premise of Brant Hansen’s book “Unoffendable.” Not only will you be challenged to love and forgive in ways you never imagined, you’ll also learn how Jesus’ teaching leads us toward a life of peace, justice, and flourishing. When you understand some of the physiological effects of anger, you’ll be more convinced that living “unoffendable” is not only possible, but desired.

Group Objectives:

Relationships and Life Transformation are the primary purpose of community groups.

- Reflect on this past Sunday’s message and other devotional reading.
- Pray together and provide encouragement for other group members.
- Identify one specific offense you need to **release** this week.

DNA statement(s) tie-in:

- *We are Empowered by the Holy Spirit.* The Holy Spirit within us enables us to live a life beyond belief – a life filled with joy, purpose, and power. We are empowered to live “unoffendable.”

Conversation Starters:

- What stood out to you from this week’s sermon?
- Share about a time you decided to “turn the other cheek” when someone offended or hurt you. What was the outcome?

Listening to God

- Where did you experience God last week? How were you able to join God on mission?

Learning from God’s Word: Bible Study Discussion

Choosing to be “unoffendable” includes learning to practice forgiveness. While there are different levels of response (*release, reconcile, restore*), when we decide to forgive someone else, Jesus heals and restores **us**. When we focus on seeing others as God sees them, we can let go of the “right” to be offended at every person (or ideology) that differs from our own.

As we allow the Holy Spirit to sanctify us, we will display God’s character in our own actions and words. Our choice to obey God and walk in the Spirit helps us to partner in our sanctification.

¹ This study guide is adapted from Brant Hansen’s Bible Study Guide *Unoffendable* and written by Dawn Gentry.

Read Matt 18:21-35

- What stood out to you from these verses as we read them?
- In verse 21, Peter seems to be hoping for a scorekeeping method – to forgive “just enough” to get by. How does keeping score (even after “forgiving”) keep us bound to the offense/offender?
- Jesus paid our debt of sin with the ultimate price – his life. How does understanding his grace toward you change your will to forgive others?
 - Why do you think it is so much easier to offer grace after we have received it?
- What are some obstacles that can keep us from forgiving “from the heart”?
- Read verse 35 again. What are some indicators that you *have* forgiven someone “from your heart”?

Read Matt 5:38-48

- When I read verses 40-42, it reminds me of our DNA statement about being “outrageously generous.” Share about a time someone you know went “above and beyond” in giving (financially or otherwise) to help you out.
- Is it harder to stay “unoffendable” with an enemy or with a friend? Why?
- In your experience, which is easier to do first – pray for an enemy or forgive an enemy? How do those two choices impact each other?
- How do these verses connect with the concept of “righteous anger”?

Leaning into Obedience:

- How do you sense God calling you to respond to these passages?
 - Is there an example to follow? A command to obey?
- How can the group encourage you this week as you respond?

Prayer Prompts:

- Invite members of the group to share requests.
- Allow time for silent reflection on the following prompts.
 - Invite the Holy Spirit to reveal the name of someone you are harboring bitterness against.
- Read this verse aloud together and pray for one another.

Ephesians 4:32

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

For further study:

- Brant Hansen, *Unoffendable*. Brant has lots of online content available [here](#) and his podcast is available at <https://www.iheart.com/podcast/263-brant-sherri-oddcas-29945421/>
- Timothy Keller, *Forgive: Why Should I and How Can I?*
- Thomas A Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*
- Bible Project videos: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/slow-to-anger/> and <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/gospel-kingdom/>