

# Dont Drink the Poison Pt 1:

## Times Beach:

- in 1925 the town of Times Beach Missouri was founded,,,, as a summer getaway....
- the great depression hit and summer homes became a rare luxury
- so the modest river homes became primary residents for mostly lower poorer people /// Times Beach remained POOR for decades
  
- in the 1970's the residents, bothered by Dusty Roads began paying a man to Spray the roads with Waste Oil
  
- That oil turned out to be mixed with a Highly Toxic substance called Dioxin
- Animals Died,,, Residents were sickened
  
- By 1982 it became evident the town was so toxic, people could not live there
- A month later the Government bought 800 residential properties and 2000 people were displaced
  - but the damage was done, to the people and the town
- Eventually the government realized the entire town needed to be destroyed
  - EVEN THE DIRT was INCINERATED
  - that is HOW LINGERING and TOXIC this poison was....

## Pivot to today:

**-Saying: Anger or Resentment is a poison that you drink hoping to hurt someone else.**

-Anger and Resentment are a response to Offense.

**-Definition of Offense:** annoyance or resentment brought about by a perceived insult to, or disregard for, oneself or one's standards or principles

*The people of Times beach unknowingly, but willing participated in their own poisoning. It is my prayer is that we would see the danger in front of us today and not do the same.*

## **Offense has 2 Stages: Feeling Offended & Living Offended.**

-Stage 1: Feeling Offended: when someone presents you with an opportunity to be offended.

-Stage 2: Living Offended: when we decide lean into or dwell on the offense.

*-our offense then becomes a "state of being" ....*

-Stage 1 happens many ways:

- someone says something insensitive    -speaks ill of you
- overlooks you            -takes you do for granted
- disagrees with you
- someone does something Legitimately wrong
- someone uses social media to beat people up
- sometimes people dont actually even wrong us,, but just the existence of a viewpoints so contrary to ours offend us.....

-When someone presents us with an opportunity to be offended we FEEL THE OFFENSE.

**-this is not a choice**

**-the feeling is beyond our control**

*(pour a glass of poison)*

- in this moment you have a decision
- you see it::: look at what they did,,, at what they said
- "I cannot believe anyone would do that....."*

-At this moment, offense has been presented TO you, but it is still OUTSIDE of you.

**-Stage 2** is the moment we choose to drink that poison. It is the moment we internalize the offense.

- our emotions flare
- our minds race.....
- we begin rehearsing the situation.....

-The difference between feeling offending and Choosing to LIVE OFFENDED is this: Living Offended is an ongoing state.

- once "are offended", once you drink that poison,, you feel the rush of anger,, your mind goes to battle mode

- Me against them
- its me the victim
- they become the villain

-Then we begin to think and say things that fuel our offense  
-we tell others about it and are fueled by their Sense of Offense and Outrage

-When we make the choice to internalize Offense it changes us, and it poisons us.

- get short with everyone, when we are hanging onto poison for someone
- we loose sleep.      -we cut off people, places, and things
- it contorts our face and brings sickness and anxiety to our body

**-When that glass of offense has been poured and placed before you, it is so hard not to drink it.**

**The choice not to live offended is a choice for a healthy soul, a peaceful mind, and a blessed life.**

-When you started dating or looking for a spouse was *“full of bitterness and resentment”* a quality you were looking for?

- no! You weren't looking for that in Romance, Friendship, or any relationship

-We can clearly see the negative impact of internalized offense in others, but we often cannot see the way it impacts us.

-It is so difficult to pass up drinking a big glass of offense, but drinking it is COSTLY.

- you dont want to be the person bitterness and offense turns you into
- you dont want to feel the way constant offense will make you feel
- you dont want that stuff in your heart,,,,, in your mind,,, or in your relationships

**-When we choose NOT to live offended we are choosing a healthy soul.**

**-We are choosing minds of peace.**

- We are choosing to recognize the blessing we are surrounded by.
- And we are choosing to put ourselves in a place mentally and emotionally, where we will actually be a blessing to others.

## **Feeling Offended is Certain to Happen.**

-Luke 17:1 Jesus said to his disciples, "Things that cause people to trip and fall into sin must happen, but how terrible it is for the person through whom they happen. (common English version)

-Luke 17:1 Then He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! (new king James version)

-The reason I shared both translations:

-I want you to see the translation that uses the word offense, so that you would know that **Jesus warned us that FEELINGS OF OFFENSE are inevitable.**

-Then I also wanted you to see the translation that informs us that **Offense is an opportunity for us to FALL in something.**

*-someone else may sin, offering an offense to you,,, but we make it our problem and our sin when we choose to live offended*

-According to Jesus, feeling offended is unavoidable, but living offended is a gateway into something dangerous and damaging.

-Feelings of offense can come from natural, no big deal, stuff.

-stuff people didn't intend.    -stuff people were clueless about (biggest one)

-Feelings of offense can come from Hot Button Issues.

-politics.        -opinions on pandemic, masks.

-race relations and injustice.    -police brutality.    -police reform

-Feelings of offense can stem from deep and terrible wrong....

**(side bar)**

**-Racial Injustice and the desire for Societal Change is a big topic in our world.**

**-One reason I think we don't see greater progress is that: So many people are living in such a HIGH LEVEL OF OFFENSE on all sides,, so the conversations quickly get muted.**

- people get scared or angry and driven away from the conversation
- and they get exhausted with the animosity, and check out....
- Before these conversations have any chance of bringing change, those involved have to find a way forward from their offense.

## **-Regardless of the source of Offense, moving from Stage 1 to Stage 2 is a Choice.**

-Proverbs 19:11 Insightful people restrain their anger; their glory is to ignore an offense. (common English version)

-The bible is clear, we can choose to ignore an offense.

-not only is it a choice, but it is a choice that will be glorious for us

### **-Ignoring offense is a quality of insightful people**

*-You cannot keep people from pouring it. But you choose whether you walk away from or take a swig.*

### ***-What I'm describing is not an Easy Choice, but it is a choice.***

-Today's message is not for the Spiritually Lazy or Emotionally Immature.

-This is STRAIGHT TALK, for people who want more from life.

-This is a very COUNTERCULTURAL MESSAGE: Today people say the only way not to Live Offended is for people to treat me right.

-as such, our cultural norm is to LIVE OFFENDED

-TODAY we distinguish ourselves by being offended by the right things. *Sign of being woke....*

-Fashionable to be offended,,,,, Desirable to be disgusted

-Our narrative today is "You offended me",,, but , *Living under the narrative that "it is up to others, not to offend me, gives all the power over my life and happiness to others."*

*(move back to the cup)*

-Others serve up offense, but I make the choice whether or not to drink it. (live in it)

- Sometimes people are rude, self centered, or calloused, and it is your right to be offended.*
- Some people are dense, subjecting the public to their social cluelessness, and it is our right to be offended.*
- Sometimes people do Terrible Evil to you and you have every right to Resentment them.*

## **Just because you have the right, doesn't mean you should.**

-1 Corinthians 10:23 Everything is permitted, but everything isn't beneficial.

-Context:

-the Corinthian church was grappling with the freedom they had in Christ  
 -because the sacrifice of Jesus had set them free from "do this dont do that religious living"

-Following Jesus was not about "earning their way to heaven", Jesus did that for them

**-so they were testing the limits of their freedom.....**

-Paul is basically telling them that there are all kinds of things God will let them get away with, because of GRACE

-*Paul is essentially saying. "there is a lot of stuff you can do still and not go to hell, but I dont know why you would want to do those things"*

-*Illustration: there was a guy who won 1,000,000 dollars*

-he just couldn't believe it was true,,, the contest host was trying to convince him that this big pile of money was his

-He said if it is REALLY MINE you won't mind if I pour gasoline on it

-they said "dont know why you would want to, but yes you can..."

-He did it,,, then same discussion about tossing a match on it

-As the huge pile of cash went up in flames he was amazed,,, they never stopped him

-Now he was CONVINCED,,, the money really must have been his

**-People have the right to say what they want when they want. But that right is often spiritually and relationally counterproductive.**

-Just because you have the right to speak your mind doesn't mean you should.

**-Just the same, People have the right to feel offended and be offended when someone does something offensive.**

-its your right to be bent out of shape, & FEEL HOW YOU WANT TO FEEL

***-But it is your own peace of mind, and your own heart you are burning down.***

-Galatians 5:13 You were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only don't let this freedom be an opportunity to indulge your selfish impulses, but serve each other through love.

**A defining mark of Jesus people is Freedom.**

-God's intent, at so many levels, is to free us up.

-freedom from the tyranny of a life of Religious DO's and Dont's

-freedom from the corrupting effect of sin in its many forms

-freedom from Fear of God,,, from fear of Judgment

-Part of the freedom God invites us into is Freedom from Emotional and Mental Baggage.

-God wants so desperately for us to live Free. But living Offended is binding ourselves to the Poisonous Offense people present to us.

***-Ancient Punishment for Murder:***

*-they would chain the body of the person you killed to your back*

*-you lugged this body around everywhere*

*-imagine all of the implications of this*

*-how heavy and cumbersome it would be*

*- the social implication.      -smell      -the discomfort*

*-probably ostracized,,, nobody wants to be around it*

-the worst part is that as the body decomposed and rotten, you were INFECTED by the rot,,,,, and the small "things" that were consuming that corpse made their way right over to you

**-eventually what was consuming the other person consumed you.**

–When we drink the poison of offense we chain ourselves to the gross things that are eating the people around us.

**-But God wants you to be free**

*-Dont Lock yourself into that mess!!!!*

-To overlook offense is not only Glorious like Solomon said, it is a step towards the Freedom God wants for you.

Jumping back to our friends at TIMES BEACH

**There are a few underlying realities in that story that really stick with me:**

**-These people were trying to address a problem.**

**-They thought they were helping....**

**-But they were handling and passing on something far more Insidious than they had ever imagined.**

*-Their solution was FAR WORSE than the problem it addressed.*

**How do we Respond to this: How do we get FREE FROM POISON WE ALREADY DRANK? We make the Choice and we ask God to make the Change in us.**