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Message Title メセジタイトル	offenses

Question 1 質問 1	What have you been offended of lately?
Question 2 質問 2	what causes offenses?
Question 3 質問 3	How can we have better unity?
Question 4 質問 4	What should we do if we hear gossip?
Question 5 質問 5	Did you make any contacts, prospects, bible studies have you got this week? あなたは、今週、誰かに連絡、見込み、聖書の学びを行いましたか？

Notes:

ノート:

Lately, every time I stand up to preach, I feel like there is some big world problem that I need to discuss. I feel like ministers are being pressured choose a side on every issue in the news.

I worry that we will fall into a bad habit of only preaching about what is in the news. I don't want the world, or the media, to decide what we preach about. The news of the world changes every week. As Christians, our news doesn't change.

We have the same Job Jesus gave us over 2000 years ago, to preach the "Good News" of the Gospel. Remember "Gospel" actually means "Good News". The world needs good news right now, and we have it. The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Forgiveness of

sins. Salvation. The Way to live forever in Heaven. That's what I want to get back to preaching!

But I feel like I am being held back. Not by God, but by people, by us, by the spirits in the world today. These spirits, and philosophies that cause us to keep look inward, but not inward at ourselves. Inward, at each other.

These spirits are not just in the world, but they are also in the church. So I feel like I am forced to speak about the spirits behind the issues going on in our world today.

We have a church that is mostly a mix of Americans and Japanese. Some of the Japanese people might not know about what is going in America. But you may know that there is a lot of discussion about racism in the news. And don't tell me that Japan doesn't have any problems with racism.

But I am not actually going to preach about racism today. I want to talk about the spirits behind the problems.

- They are the same spirits that cause us to be offended against each other
- I have preached against offences so many times at this church
- These are not spirits that come from God, they come from man- and from the devil
- Disunity. Selfishness. Hatred. Pride. Pride. Pride. Pride.

Right now people all over the world are offended.

- People are quick to become offended
- People are offended just by words, when you say something the wrong way
- Brother is offended against brother, sister against sister, mother against son, friend against friend.
- Worst of all, brothers and sisters in Christ are offended against each other.

This church is not the same church I came to 7 years ago. We don't pray as deeply, or as often. We don't fellowship as often. We don't have joy.

- Do you know what has changed? Offences.
- What causes offences? Pride.

Nehemiah 8:10 King James Version (KJV) 10 Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this

day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength. We think we cannot have joy because we are tired.

- No. We are tired because we do not have joy.
- We don't have Joy because we have offences
- We have offences because we are full of pride.

These crises have shown me that there is much more disunity in the church than I ever thought, and it is not just here, it is everywhere. We need unity, or we are going to die. And I do not just mean our church organization will fall apart, but that could happen if we are not very careful, but if we don't change direction, many of use will face eternal death in Hell. This is absolutely serious.

Racism and offences:

- We all make mistakes. We all tend to trust people who are close to us, people from our own culture. We all do that.
- We all judge each other unfairly sometimes.
- We all say hurtful things, sometimes.
  - o Sometimes it's an accident. Sometimes we know that what we are about to say is hurtful, and we say it anyways.
- We have all been selfish, unfair, greedy... rude.

Only God judges accurately all the time.

- Can we tell Jesus that our brother's offence is greater than the sin that He dies for?
- Is it greater than our own sin?
- Is racism some special sin that is worse than all others?
  - o So if a brother says something that even sounds like racism, we have the right to hate him?
  - o Brothers and sisters, I'm not saying that we should allow racism or other offences to continue, but I am saying that we should trust the heart of brothers and sisters in Christ.
  - o If something they say sounds offensive to you, first assume that is not what they meant.

▪ First trust that they love you ▪ If you have known a brother or sister for years, and you know they are a man or woman of God, it is not right to forget all of that because one thing they say makes you angry.

▪ We need to give each other the “benefit of the doubt”

• That’s an English expression.

• It means, if you don’t know your brother is meaning to do good or evil, start by believing that they want to do good. Give them extra trust because they are also children of God ▪ What if someone came up to me and said “I heard Pastor Higa hates Canadian people.

• I might want to get angry • My flesh might actually want to believe that gossip o Why? Because of pride.

• Maybe the gossiping person will even tell a story o Maybe they will say “all these other people agree with me”

• Maybe my mind will start to find reasons to believe the gossip o “oh, he was mean to me that one time

• So, what should I do?

o Should I believe the gossip?

• No. I will remember that I know Pastor. Higa is a man of God. He is a Brother in Christ.

o Even if I had some reason to believe the gossip, I’m going to think good about Pastor Higa first.

o If I have to make a decision. Decide whether to think good things or bad things about Pastor Higa, I’m going to try to always choose good first.

• What if, the next day, Pastor Higa is in a bad mood and gives me a mean look.

o I’m already thinking about the gossip o Now I can believe it right?

o Even if my flesh really wants to think bad things about Pastor Higa, I’m going to try hard to choose to think good things o I’m going to prefer Pastor Higa over myself o I’m going to humble myself and assume that Pastor Higa is a better Christian than me.

▪

Do not start with hate. Pride wants you to get angry first, until they make it right.

• That spirit does not come from God

We need to stop focusing on our suffering, on how we have been hurt.

- Romans 12:19

- We can't make it right. We can't fix this world. We can't bring justice to this world, but we can bring this world to God and God WILL bring justice to every man woman and child.

stop seeking out hate

- Romans 12:21

seek ye first the kingdom of God

- the Kingdom of God is-

Stop declaring all your sufferings and persecutions, declare your healings and salvation.

Not I deserve I deserve- I received mercy!

stop borrowing each other's trouble stop getting offended about things that didn't even happen to you!

"here, I have some extra trouble, do you want some?"

"hey bro, I'm going to go be offended, do you want to come?"

We can grieve over sin. We can grieve with our brother or sister. We can, and should try to do better. But, it is not our place to make things "even"

that is called justice, or vengeance, and that job belongs to God alone.

Matthew 6:34 King James Version (KJV) 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Nehemiah 8:10 King James Version (KJV) 10 Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength.

Romans 12:9-21 King James Version (KJV) 9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; 13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written,

Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.