

Marriage on the Rock 03

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[0 : 00] Welcome to Marriage on the Rock. Here's Marv Wiseman.

Introducing the offense. In introducing the offense, we certainly are not embarking upon unfamiliar territory. It is thoroughly familiar to us all.

Despite the knowledge we all have regarding offenses, man is no better at eliminating them from our conduct than were our ancestors of thousands of years ago. We've already, and extensively, dealt with the dynamic from which offenses arise.

Remember the flesh? Our self-centered self-will? This is the source for all offenses, and we all are afflicted with the Adamic fallen nature that allows us to do and say hurtful things to one another.

These are the ever-present offenses that injure and can even destroy relationships, including, of course, marriage relationships. These offenses are nothing more than the hurtful and unkind things we say and do to each other.

[1 : 10] And without exception, an offense committed towards another, whether large or small, constitutes a kind of emotional wound in the spirit of the one offended.

And you may be sure that all offenses stem from our Adamic fleshly nature. Please recall that words and deeds that negatively impact the one offended are involved in the works of the flesh, we earlier explained from Galatians chapter 5.

They are ugly and hurtful. And recall further, if you will, that every Christian has two bases of operation or origin from which all our behavior stems.

Godly behavior issues from the fruit of the spirit, also in Galatians 5. These deeds and attitudes from the spirit as opposed to the flesh are all positive and result in the edification or building up of one another.

Fleshly or ungodly deeds and attitudes inflicted upon one another are all destructive and negative, resulting in hurting and tearing down of one another.

[2 : 20] And Christians are fully capable of both. Believers who are in marital conflict usually are on both the sending and receiving end of the offenses.

We hurt each other and we resent each other for the hurts inflicted upon us. When the conflict goes on unresolved, as many conflicts do, there arises an unseen but real barrier between the parties that is caused by resentment.

Usually, the barrier is an emotional distancing between the parties, but it may escalate from an emotional distancing to a physical distancing, or worse yet, an estrangement or even divorce.

The cause is always the same. It's the offense or multiple offenses that are not resolved that creates the distancing. We plan to thoroughly analyze this destructive dynamic of the offense so we can clearly define it as the enemy.

Then we will proceed to defeat that enemy. It can be life-changing in all our relationships. And please believe us when we say, from experience, that this marriage on the rock, which is our objective, is so incredibly desirable, we need to pursue it with all our resolve.

[3 : 38] It will be well worth it when once achieved. Trust me. The offense of physical abuse, part one.

Because offenses committed against each other are only two in number, one might think there being only two, how hurtful can they be? Very. While it's true, an offense comes through only two avenues, they have always proved to be more than adequate.

We need no others. The two are hurtful things we say to each other and hurtful things we do to each other. There are verbal, emotional hurts or wounds that husbands and wives may inflict upon each other, often back and forth.

And there are physical hurts or wounds that escalate beyond the mere verbal. These we identify as physical abuse. And yet, Christian people who profess to love each other can lapse into either or both of these ugly undesirables.

It is behavior totally unbecoming and inexcusable to come from a Christian. But sometimes, come it does. And those who deny the possibility are in denial themselves.

[4 : 57] We address the problem of physical abuse before exploring the emotional areas more frequently involved. And we do so because physical abuse can even be life-threatening if not halted.

If physical abuse is occurring, whether the offender is sober or under the influence of any substance, the immediate need is to get it stopped as soon as possible.

When physical abuse occurs in a marriage, it's usually the husband who is the perpetrator and the wife the recipient victim. But not always. Whoever is the victim, steps should be taken by them in going to local authorities.

And I realize this is a drastic action, but not nearly so drastic as repeatedly being in harm's way of potentially life-threatening behavior from another.

Physical abuse is very serious and should be addressed in an immediate, no-nonsense fashion.

You should consider consulting a clergyman, an attorney, to obtain counsel about your options.

[6 : 00] And it could even result in formal charges being filed. But if that's what it takes to get physical abuse halted, the sooner the better. If no help in getting abuse stopped by a clergyman or a lawyer, then consult another.

It must be halted. Usually there are obstacles and complications involved regarding children, finances, publicity, and other factors.

But none of these matter as much as getting violent physical abuse stopped. Remember, before behavior can be turned around, it must first be stopped. That's the first step.

And it's never an easy one to take. But it is a necessary one. Some have unwisely subjected themselves to years of physical abuse, perhaps to the point of being physically maimed or incapacitated, sometimes even for life.

We are speaking of a very difficult and embarrassing situation for all involved, but if it is occurring, it needs to be addressed and halted. God grant you the courage and wisdom to get help, both for yourself and the abuser.

[7 : 10] Be reminded that pursuing legal action, if necessary, is as much for the abuser as well as the abused. The Offense of Physical Abuse Part 2 We are dealing with a very distressing subject of physical abuse occurring in a marriage between Christians, or at least professing Christians.

And it is true that physical abuse may be forthcoming from a mate who claims to be a Christian, but in fact is not at all. They themselves may not even realize that they are not truly one who belongs to Christ.

Perhaps their basis for considering themselves a Christian may stem from all kinds of sources in which their trust is placed. But if their trust rests in any source other than a personal commitment to Jesus Christ, it is a grossly and seriously misplaced faith.

Thus, being in reality then an unbeliever, their physical abuse of their mate should come as no great surprise, because they are acting out of their flesh, which is their only source of operation.

But let's be clear about something else. One who is a true believer does not have the flesh eliminated. And anyone who thinks one who is truly Christian can no longer be capable of really ugly and fleshly behavior is simply self-deceived.

[8 : 34] True Christians can be unkind, untruthful, and behave in a very non-Christian way. They have absolutely no justification for doing so. And Galatians 5 and Romans 6 make that very apparent.

And yes, one who is truly saved can engage in behavior contrary to everything Christianity is about. Yes, even to the extent of the physical abuse of their mate.

If this is occurring, it must be stopped, not tolerated. The preceding segment addressed suggested steps to be taken, and we are fully aware this is drastic action and is fraught with many complications and requires great courage to take the necessary steps that will allow for outside sources to intervene.

But it must be done. If the one abused is not willing to seek outside help, they themselves are giving the abuser permission to continue the abuse.

Such a one actually becomes complicit in the very ongoing behavior that they find so hurtful, perhaps even to the extent of permanent injury or worse. The dynamics of the love-hate relationship between the abuser and the abused are complicated and can often short-circuit the best efforts of authorities to intervene and get the abuse stopped.

[9 : 55] This is where extra courage and determination of the one who is physically abused must come into play. And right here is where the one abused often experiences an emotional meltdown in their follow-through.

They either refuse to file the charges necessary or drop charges once filed. And this merely sets themselves up for future abuse with the authorities being powerless to help them.

The one abused then effectively ties the hands of those who could stop the abuse because they have weakened in their resolve. It takes an unusually strong person to follow through with the necessary legal and spiritual steps to get the abuse halted.

But the end result will make it worth it for the abused as well as the abuser. In some cases, it can even be life-saving. Do the right thing because it is the right thing to do.

The offense of verbal abuse, part one. Even though the offense of physical abuse is far less common than that of verbal abuse, the seriousness of physical abuse required our first consideration.

[11 : 17] So the last two segments dealt not only with the seriousness of physical abuse, but also the urgency that involves it. Take the steps necessary to get it stopped and do it now.

More attention will presently be given to the problem of verbal abuse because it is a much more common offense between Christian married couples than is the physical. It should also be mentioned, however, that virtually every case of physical abuse began with verbal abuse.

When abusing one's mate verbally no longer gets the desired result sought by the abuser, the next move is sometimes onward to physical abuse. It is safe to say that verbal abuse becomes the gateway to physical abuse.

Now, this is not to say that all verbal abuse will lead to physical abuse. That is not true. Some marriages engage in verbal abuse, often of each other, for many years without it ever progressing to the physical.

Nevertheless, it is a wretched way to conduct a marriage with the perpetual war of unkind words flowing back and forth between them. Brethren, these things ought not so to be, reminds the scriptures in James 3.

[12 : 32] And we will utilize this passage as our main authority on abusive speech because James 3 speaks with such clarity and minces no words about the damage done with that small, attached-at-only-one-end component called the human tongue.

What an incredibly powerful vessel for good or ill. The contrast James makes for both good and ill is telling. This, along with equally clear passages, we will pursue about the subject of verbal abuse are forthcoming.

For a readily understood definition of verbal abuse, here is what we mean. Abusive verbal speech consists of the hurtful, injurious things we say to one another.

They are words of unkindness meant to insult, demean, devalue, ridicule, debase emotionally or psychologically injure. You get the point.

They are words intended to put down one another, tear down, rather than edify or build up. In Romans 15, the inspired apostle reminds the Roman believers, let each of us please his neighbor for his good to his edification.

[13 : 46] His neighbor? Well and good. And certainly we should do that. That is, build up our neighbor. But should we not also do the same for the one to whom we have pledged ourselves to love and to cherish?

Abusive speech has only one objective, to tear down, to belittle or demean. Quite the opposite, isn't it? So, why do people who say they love each other do this?

We've covered that. It's the flesh, remember? Our old nemesis that seeks to dominate the Christian life, rob him of joy and control his tongue to say hurtful and damaging words, even to our loved ones.

Brethren, these things ought not so to be. The Offense of Verbal Abuse, Part 2 A principal text we wish to employ in our treatment of verbal abuse is found in James 3, and it says it so clearly and powerfully.

Careful reading of it should make all Christians at least blush somewhat, because we are all guilty of what is stated here. After exploring the embarrassment of the offense, we shall then rejoice together in its remedy.

[15:07] But for the present, we are considering the potential ugliness of the tongue, as James reminds us in chapter 3. The context is talking about teachers and those who would be teachers.

James warns his audience they had better think twice before opting for the role of a teacher. And the reason is obvious. As a teacher of others, you use a lot more verbiage than others.

You talk more. You say more. And the more you talk, the greater the potential to misspeak, to put your foot in your mouth. In other words, teachers are people who talk more than others and increase their chances for saying something they shouldn't.

We all know how politicians, given to much speech, have uttered things that literally ruin them with the public. James reminds us that a teacher's potential is subject to more judgment and criticism just by his many words.

He adds to that, in many ways, we all stumble. And by this, he means we say something we shouldn't have said. He did not refer to stumbling with our toe, but with our tongue.

[16:12] He freely admits, hey, we are all prone to that. It's part of the human condition. We are all able to say things that give offense to others.

Often, when politicians speak, particularly about controversial issues, they can be sure they are applauded by perhaps half their audience while they offend the other half.

A smart politician doesn't want to offend anybody, but win everybody over. If you're willing to say nothing of substance that gives no offense, you are a typical run-of-the-mill politician.

But if you can be utterly truthful and state matters of substance without offending anyone, that is sheer genius. Some feel it can't even be done, and they may be right, at least in most cases.

In addition, we all know that today's generation is one that's gone viral with being offended. We're offended at everything, and anything. But nothing seems to offend us as much as what somebody says.

[17:16] Yet, all the while, we insist on the freedom of speech as guaranteed by the Constitution. Much of the speech today, at which people claim to be offended, is just plain nonsense.

Culturally, it seems to be the in-thing to be offended at something. These are not the offenses we speak of in the marriage between Christians.

This speech is truly damaging, hurtful, resulting in resentment and emotional distancing between husband and wife.

Brethren, these things ought not so to be. In short, we are simply not to use this speech, and if we do, we are to hasten the undoing of it.

How comes later. The Offense of Verbal Abuse, Part 3 Our key text for these present segments is James 3.

[18:23] The awesome power of the human tongue is illustrated by how very small things have very great influence over very large things. A horse's bridle is small, yet this little instrument controls the whole body of the large horse.

A ship's rudder is small, but it controls the direction of the enormous ship to which it is attached. A mere spark in the forest, almost unseen by the eye, can result in a fire large enough to destroy the entire forest.

James goes on to say, Even large wild animals have been tamed by man. Have you ever witnessed a man in a cage with lions and tigers from the wild? He's called a lion tamer.

Huge horses, ships, forests, and wild animals can all be controlled by a very small object, except, except, except for the human tongue.

It cannot be controlled even by the very person to whom it is attached. This is because our tongue, as does the rest of us, belongs to our fallen Adamic nature called the flesh, the ego, or our old man.

[19:38] And you, in your human volition, are no match for the flesh. Only the Spirit of God can countermand the flesh.

And this brings us back to Galatians 5, and the principle of walking in the Spirit, so as not to fulfill the desires of the flesh. The flesh will allow the tongue to run wild.

The tongue will spew out invectives, curses, criticisms, threats, all manner of abusive verbal offenses. How can this be? James points out the incongruity of it all.

He says, With the same tongue we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come both blessing and cursing.

My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. Please be sure to understand, James is not saying if we are truly Christians, things cannot be this way.

[20 : 42] No, no. He is saying to brethren, believers, this is the way things are. This is what's going on, and it should not be going on.

Take note of who and what you are. To conclude his argument and sore displeasure of those to whom he writes, James continues to describe the believers in contradiction by saying, Does a fountain produce both bitter and sweet water?

Can a fig tree produce olives? Does a grapevine produce figs? Or salt water produce fresh? Of course not. These all produce an output that matches what they are.

What are you, anyway? If you are what you claim to be, why aren't you producing in keeping with what you are? My brethren, these things should not be as they are.

With the same mouth you bless God and curse men? How is that? How can these contradictions possibly be rectified? The Offense of Verbal Abuse Part 4 Believers in our Lord Jesus Christ are quite capable of behaving badly, even though there is no excuse or justification for it.

[22 : 06] Our text in James 3 refers to those he calls brethren as behaving in contradiction to what they claim to be. And they were doing it with verbal abusive speech coming out of their mouth.

There is only one thing worse than using abusive speech toward one's fellow man, and that is using abusive speech toward one's mate in marriage. After all, you never made vows of love and commitment and promises to cherish and honor your fellow man, but you did to your mate.

Is your word worth anything? How else can we make good on our word than by merely fulfilling what we promised them the day we were married? Now, if this strikes a raw nerve, why do you suppose it did?

Let me guess. Could it be because things have changed? Could it be because your mate has changed? You have changed? And if any of these were answered in the affirmative, what was responsible for the change?

Could it be that you no longer feel the same way toward your mate as you did on your marriage day? And if so, is it not also likely they do not feel the same way toward you?

[23 : 21] What do you think is responsible for the changes both you and your mate have undergone, if indeed this is the case? Let me guess. Could it be because of things your mate has said and done over the years that have resulted in your feelings toward them changing?

And probably the same is true in their mind about you. Ah, yes. These we call the offenses, things they said and did, accumulated perhaps over many years, things that at the time they said and did them really hurt, remember?

Maybe they caused sleepless nights, lots of tears, agonizing days of uncertainty and insecurity, worrying about where this marriage was going or whether it would even survive.

But you made it. At least you are still together. together. But how is it? How is it really? If it's what it should be, then it's a blessed marriage on the rock and you and your mate need to be rejoicing continually and you have good reason to do so.

But, and only you can answer this, if it remains far from what both you and your mate really want in your marriage, what could be the reason you are not there?

[24 : 44] could it be because you have simply counted on time to heal your wounds and it hasn't done so, at least, not to the point where they no longer hurt.

Do they still? And, if this is true of you, it is also likely it is true of your mate as well. But, say you, if time isn't sufficient to heal my past hurts inflicted by my mate, what is?

Excellent question. And, it's well worth addressing. Upcoming. Time Alone Does Not Heal Part 1 Our goal for all listeners to these CDs is for them to enjoy the euphoric blessedness of a marriage on the rock.

And, we describe that in the main on our very first segment recorded on CD number 1. It's based upon our Lord's words in Matthew chapter 6 and you might want to hear it again to refresh your thinking.

Part of a marriage on the rock is also realized in a couple of words that come to mind. One is togetherness and the other is closeness. And, don't confuse them by thinking them synonymous because they aren't.

[26 : 07] A married couple may be together in the car or even in the bedroom and still not have closeness. The closeness of which we speak is achieved when the couple enjoys an emotional and spiritual closeness as well as a physical closeness.

They are on the same wavelength. It's a wonderful thing to enjoy. And, some Christian marriage have never had that. Some once had it but no longer do.

something happened to cause them to drift apart emotionally. They may still be sleeping in the same bed but they know something is missing.

At least the wife does. And the reason being that femininity usually seems to be more sensitive to relational issues than masculinity. If this is the case as statistics seem to show what happened? Why wasn't their closeness maintained? Now there may be no doubt multiple reasons but the culprit we are blaming in the main is that both partners had said and done things to each other that were never truly resolved.

[27 : 18] And instead of resolving their offenses they committed toward each other they let the slow burn of resentment cool off and then they left the resolution up to the passing of time to do the resolving.

But it didn't work. Instead an almost imperceptible and gradual emotional distancing set in and perhaps neither was able to recognize it.

Not able that is until one day one of them usually the wife asks herself what's happened to us? We used to be a lot closer.

Now it just seems like there is a distance or a barrier between us that I really can't explain but things are just different and I don't like it. In fact it worries me and I don't know what to do about it.

Well she may work up the courage to mention it to her husband but he likely will respond with a shrug of his shoulders and say everything is okay as far as I'm concerned you're just imagining things.

[28 : 24] Well maybe so she thinks perhaps that plus the stress and demands of daily living that seem to be increasing maybe that's it. But please don't discount the possibility maybe even the probability of an unconscious unintended underlying resentment lurking around.

Offenses committed against each other large or small may have been relegated to time for their healing and one may think time has done its job but often it hasn't. The offense is still real and resolving it how to do it is upcoming.

Time alone does not heal part two Husbands and wives both of whom are Christians are very capable of saying and doing things to each other that are truly offensive.

This is merely part of the human condition and none of us is immune to this reality. There isn't a one of us who wouldn't like to take back some hurtful things we have spoken or done to our mate.

We are all guilty of this kind of self-centeredness that prompts us to do things and say things we later come to regret. These are the offenses words and deeds that negatively impact our mate and they often reciprocate with words and deeds of their own that negatively impact and hurt us.

[29 : 51] The negativity consists of emotional pain anger disappointment confusion insecurity and often retaliation that succeeds in escalating the original offense.

Once the verbal exchange has run its course a period of silence often sets in. Neither is doing any talking and both parties are in a cooling off time.

This is good if only because neither continues to offend the other with more unkind words. But please don't regard the cooling off to be a resolution because it isn't.

A fallacy often committed by the couple is that both going silent and simmering down means that time and its passing has worked its magic and all wounds are healed all is forgiven.

No they aren't. Nothing has been resolved at all. Just because one of them breaks the ice and smiles a little and warms to a stilted conversation that is reciprocated also in a stilted fashion by their partner they should not be lulled into thinking all is well.

[31 : 01] All is not well. Cessation of sarcastic or unkind words does not mean all is well. It merely means that the nastiness has gone underground.

No real reconciliation has been affected. No apology and no forgiveness has been expressed. Each gets to save face, maintain their personal pride, and hand the issue over to Father Time to make it all better.

After all, doesn't time heal all wounds? No, it does not. Time may lessen the pain caused by the wound, but time alone is not a sufficient remedy.

The danger in thinking that is that both the offender and the offende believes the issue is resolved and behind them, and it isn't. What begins to grow, even though the offense and its response seem to be history, is the remaining wound caused by the offense was never really resolved.

This quietly begins to morph into an internal attitude of resentment in the spirit of the one offended, often without their awareness or intention. Resentment is the natural consequence toward one who has hurt you by something they said or did, and this in turn begins to create an emotional distancing between the offended and the offender.

[32 : 26] Very often, it occurs in both parties and increases the emotional distancing without even intending to do so. This is a major way couples drift apart. Solutions Upcoming.

Unresolved Offenses Produce Resentment Part 1 We are in process of exploring negative dynamics that can occur in all human relationships.

These are operable in the workplace, the neighborhood, school, but especially in marriage. And this is because no relationship provides so much opportunity for these dynamics to occur as in a marriage.

No setting contains so much potential for offenses to occur as in the marital setting. In addition, no setting contains so much potential for very hurtful offenses to occur simply because the hurts come from what should be one's most trusted source.

No one can hurt us so much as those closest to us, both relationally as well as physically. All too often, the offenses inflicted upon us by others, as well as the offenses we may inflict upon them, usually of a verbal nature, are never addressed in a way that provides for real healings.

[33 : 48] If the one who is offended does not retaliate by offending in return, it is often because they are not in a position to do so. This could be true in a workplace setting, for instance, where a superior offends an underling who is in no position to offend in return and retaliate at risk of losing his job.

So, what is his recourse? Since he cannot verbally retaliate, he resents. He can deeply resent and even try to retaliate, perhaps in an anonymous way that can't be traced to him.

In marriage, resentment may occur in addition to verbal retaliation. The one offended may engage in verbal offending of his own out of what is felt to be self-defense.

Still, resentment is likely to occur, usually on the part of both husband and wife. Resentment that may not even be that apparent to the resentful one himself can become very destructive to the relationship.

Why or how is that? It is because the harboring of resentment automatically contributes an emotional and psychological component to our attitude, attitude, that is, the feelings we entertain toward the offender.

[35 : 06] These then extend outwardly and behaviorally toward the offender. And what is more, the offender may well be experiencing the same dynamic toward the offende, thus doubly widening the emotional distance between them.

And sometimes neither party really understands what is happening. Sometimes they do, and even go out of their way to avoid the other party. Again, after the passing of time and a cooling-off period, one or both may feel the hurtful experience is behind them.

They tell themselves to forget it, let bygones be bygones. Next thing you know, they are even speaking to one another. Each tends to think it's behind them, but it most certainly is not.

Resentment lingers on, even if unseen or not acted upon outwardly. Resentment creates a rift, a distancing, a coolness, aloofness, a discomfort.

Offenses causing resentment need more than time. They need resolution in order for real healing to occur and reconciliation to be realized.

[36 : 22] Unresolved Offenses Produce Resentment, Part 2 Our immediate goal of Marriage on the Rock is to enable the listener to realize that all conflict between individuals and nations is caused by one and the same thing, always.

Offenses. To put it another way, relationally speaking, the only thing wrong with the world is the way people treat each other. So, let's reduce the world scene to a local one close to home.

The only thing wrong with a marriage is the way people treat each other. Simple, isn't it? Who can't understand that? But diagnosing the problem is not the issue.

The issue is in its correcting. James 3 reminds us that in many ways we all offend each other. He calls the tongue our main instrument of offense.

We say mean and hurtful things to one another, even to people we say we love. And as we saw earlier, we do this as Christians, acting out of and dominated by our self-centered ego.
[37 : 26] Galatians 5 calls it the flesh. As believers, it is bad enough that we all have this ability to offend and treat one another with unkindness and disrespect.

But then to realize we have God-given assets designed to resolve the offense and then refuse to use them, that's downright inexcusable. We earlier called this a squandering of the assets Christ provided through his substitutionary death.

But could it also be that many Christians simply do not know of the existence of those assets or how to implement them? They then have no recourse but to plot on in their unfulfilled marriage, dragging behind them a pile of assorted resentments accumulated from the past events of years gone by. All these resentments drain the marriage relationship of its vitality and lessens the couple's ability to maximize their marriage as God intended.

It is a tragedy in the making and it's endured by both husband and wife. What could be can never be without their shedding the accumulated resentment that prevents the couple from a loving, enriching, and thoroughly enjoyable marriage on the rock?

[38 : 47] Does anybody really want this kind of resentful marriage? Remember the equation offenses unresolved plus resentment equals an average marriage of Christians.

But who's willing to settle for an average marriage when Christians can have a marriage on the rock? The late popular radio commentator Paul Harvey used to say, never settle for average. Average means you are the best of the lousy and the lousiest of the best. And who wants to be that? Brethren, we've got to start recognizing and treating these things called offenses with more attention and seriousness.

They are relational killers. Marriages that do not identify the offenses and work to resolve them are doomed to mediocrity. Average at best.

The lousiest of the best or the best of the lousy. Wow! What a way to conduct a relationship that you and your mate thought was made in heaven. Resentment produces bitterness.

[40 : 02] When one person offends another with their words or deeds, the chain reaction, quite predictable, is set in motion. First, the offense inflicts the wound in the offended one.

The offense may be by words or by deeds. The offense, of whatever kind it is, causes emotional pain, outrage, umbrage, etc., in the human spirit of the offended one.

This is followed by resentment. It's only natural to resent someone who hurts you. Assuming the offense is not resolved and it very often is not resolved or properly dealt with, the resentment it causes over time morphs into bitterness.

Bitterness is little more than resentful and ill feelings gone the seed. Bitterness comes from resentment that is coddled, justified, the feeling that one is fully entitled to be bitter, and the feeling of justified bitterness stems from the offense never having been resolved.

Bitterness impacts the whole psyche of the embittered party. Bitterness is lodged in the human spirit when the unresolved offense is also stored.

[41 : 19] Together, they make a formidable pair. An embittered spirit directs its emotional venom toward the one who wounded them with their unresolved offense.

But it cannot confine its bitterness to that one person. Bitterness spills over. It sloshes around in the personality and demeanor of the one embittered.

And without intending for their bitterness to get out of its confines intended solely for the offender, somehow, it always does. One might call it collateral damage.

In a military confrontation with the enemy, there are often non-combatants who get hurt. Innocents or civilians, sometimes children. A wounded spirit becomes a part of who and what we are.

And it's often impossible to refrain from being who and what we are when around other people who have nothing to do with the wound that another inflicted upon us. They are the non-combatants, the innocence, or collateral damage, if you will.

[42 : 25] Husbands and wives may offend each other in a way that produces the pain that causes the resentment that produces the bitterness that we cannot keep to ourselves. And it spills over in spite of our best efforts to prevent it.

Consequently, from one's embittered and resentful spirit or attitude, one's children may suffer. Coworkers may sense it and choose to avoid the one embittered.

Family members pick up on it as well. Wow, what's wrong with so-and-so? They've got it in for someone and grouchy, testy, got up on the wrong side of the bed, I guess, and soon, the word goes out, steer clear of so-and-so.

They may bite your head off. What is this? It's anger, resentment, and bitterness oozing out of them, and depending on their personality, they may or may not even try to hide it.

Wouldn't that be someone pleasant to be married to, to work with, to answer to as a superior? It's ugly, and it all stems from an offense unresolved.

[43 : 36] Revisiting the goal of Marriage on the Rock. It is very much hoped that you, the listener, will readily understand what we are presenting here on Marriage on the Rock is not new.

It's not revolutionary, it is not culturally sophisticated, it is not psychologically endorsed, it is not complex nor complicated so that only those with sufficient IQ can get it.

Neither is this content anything original. It is nothing more than ages-old, biblically-based principles designed by God Himself to make the institution of marriage what He intended it to be for all who are in Christ.

These provisions are workable by believers even though we live and function in a fallen world. This is realized only through the power of the Spirit of God that enables believers to walk in the Spirit so as not to fulfill the desires of the flesh.

This means, of course, that relationships, especially marriage relationships, are to be governed by one's spirituality. And this coincides perfectly with our insistence that the most important component of marriage is the spiritual.

[44 : 49] only the believer in Christ possesses the potential for marriage to be all it can be. The unbeliever may have a relatively good marriage, but is not eligible for the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

Thus, the unbeliever's marriage relationship cannot attain the level of joy and satisfaction available to believers. Yet, at the same time, what is divinely guaranteed as available to all believers is often not even known to many believers, much less actually implemented by them.

And, of course, lack of implementation also guarantees a lack of realized benefits. This, in turn, results in many married believers having a marriage that does not fare as well as the marriages of many who are not even Christians.

Christians who have a marriage in disarray, one of perpetual power struggle, one where serious offenses back and forth seem to be the norm, are a negative representation of the gospel and the Christian faith in general.

All this, and in addition, they struggle with a marriage that neither mate wants or enjoys. It doesn't have to be that way, nor should it be.

[46 : 11] Such, wherever it exists, can be reversed and should be. Life is too short and has too much to offer for people who love the Lord to live in a situation like that.

If this presently describes your marriage and you seriously want to change it, you are urged, implored, to return to the initial sessions shared at the beginning of Marriage on the Rock.

And remember the two, the two only requirements that need to be met for those wanting a Marriage on the Rock. A recommitment of each mate to the other and a recommitment to God and His Word to comply with what it says.

Meet those as a couple and come with us. You will love and be encouraged by what lies ahead. It's a marriage on the rock. It's the only way to go.

How Offenses Are Registered Part 1 In our ongoing spiritual journey towards a marriage on the rock, we are spending considerable time and attention to the dissection of the offense, the hurtful things we say and do to one another.

[47 : 29] The reasons we are doing this is because the offense and its consequences constitute the very core of all injured relationships as well as all ended relationships.

This is true of relationships on every level, whether between friends and relatives, employees, neighbors, even internationally between sovereign states that may sever diplomatic relations and go to war.

No doubt about it, it is the offense or offenses that are the cause of conflict and the undoing of what was previously harmonious. Conflict that occurs in a marriage, even a marriage of Christians, always has its genesis in offenses committed.

The necessity of understanding this dynamic cannot be emphasized too much. It is crucial for resolution and restoration between those whose relationship has been injured by the offense. In thinking about classifying offenses or how they are registered in our human spirit at the time they occur, let's use a very familiar standard. For simplicity's sake, let's call offenses committed against us as coming in small, medium, and large sizes.

[48 : 42] This is because while all offenses hurt us or wound our spirit, some hurt a lot more than others. They are the large variety. These, especially hurtful offenses, wound us deeply.

They are more serious than a small offense that might by comparison be a minor irritation. Large, serious offenses inflict a pain sometimes indescribable, excruciating, causing great anguish of the human spirit.

I say spirit or soul to indicate the enormity of the impact of the offense because it affects the totality of their being. They not only hurt emotionally but physically as well.

Maybe severe headaches, loss of appetite, sleepless nights, perpetual preoccupation with the offense committed against you, and a continual mental replaying of the offense.

What might be some examples of this kind of offense that the recipient finds so painful and paralyzing? Well, in marriage, they might include a complete loss of trust in one's mate due to infidelity.

[49 : 50] It could be a financial betrayal, so serious it affects the financial stability of the couple's future. It could be an embarrassing revelation from one's past that proves very grievous and disappointing to one's mate.

Commission of a crime that may end in incarceration and dismantling of the family. The list goes on. In each of those possibilities, and many more, that could be cited, they are all offenses of the large variety.

No pettiness of offense here. These things are huge, and they tear and rip the very fabric of a relationship. Each of these involve a loss of the ever-critical trust factor.

Yet, even a loss as great as this can be rectified, and God has made provision for it. It won't be easy, but it is doable for those in Christ, and we shall see.

How Offenses Are Registered We remain in an introductory mode with our description of offenses, the way we hurt each other, by the things we say and do.

[51 : 01] For ease of categorizing offenses, we have labeled them simply small, medium, and large. Each size of offense makes a different impact or wound in our human spirit, and they all really hurt, but some, like the large we described previously, hurt a lot more.

Let's take the classification a little further to better describe what is happening when we are offended by someone's tongue or deed. Consider the small offense to be a dart, a small projectile one tosses at a dartboard.

It has a needle-like point and leaves a small hole or indentation when it reaches its target. When the verbal offense, likened to a dart, penetrates your spirit, it hurts, of course, but it is a more manageable hurt, perhaps only an irritation.

Depending on the thickness of your emotional skin, you might even shrug it off, dismiss it, and move on. On the other hand, those thinner-skinned persons who tend to feel everything in a more sensitive way may have real difficulty in shrugging off anything.

It's the difference in how people are wired and put together emotionally. We all know some who are so sensitive they feel everything, and some who are so thick-skinned they can hardly be offended.

[52 : 25] Thankfully, most of us fall somewhere in between. So much for the offense we will call the dart that hurts, but is a comparatively minor offense.

Next, we step up to the medium offense. Things are now getting more serious, and the potential for pain is significantly greater. Let's call the medium offense an arrow.

The arrow offense, penetrating into your human spirit, hurts a lot more than the small-sized dart. Its entry wound is much larger and penetrates a lot deeper than the dart.

This arrow offense really gets your attention. You don't know whether you are more hurt or more angry, perhaps both. But, brace yourself, a yet larger offense awaits us.

The large size we will call the spear. This is a hefty metal pole about five feet long with a six or eight inch pointed spearhead.

[53 : 26] Its sharp, heavy end is massive. Imagine, if you will, an instrument like this penetrating deep into your torso, perhaps right into your heart.

You would not survive this. It's a mortal wound. Anyone who has suffered the large spear wound by way of an offense may have thought they wouldn't survive it either. They may well feel the hurt is so great it will do them in.

For sure it will do the relationship in. They may not even feel they want the relationship to survive so great as the hurt. These are wounds, offenses we are capable of inflicting upon one another.

Marriages have been known to offend one another in this fashion. The pain is indescribable. Can there possibly be a recovery from this? Yes, even from this.

And we will see. How Offenses Are Registered Part 3 Hurtful things people say and do to us we are calling offenses.

[54 : 36] Nobody escapes them entirely. We have all undergone the pain associated with the deep hurt that someone caused us. It's part of the human experience of living in a fallen world with fallen people.

James 3 reminded us that in many ways we all offend one another. That is, cause one another pain by our treatment of them and their treatment of us. And while it's true some people endure more than their share of painful agony, no one we know lives such a sheltered life they escape it all.

These hurtful experiences are keenly felt in the human spirit. This is the intangible part of our personhood, where our feelings are located. The description we have used to describe offenses inflicted upon us are the small, medium, and large, just for simplicity's sake.

Each represents the degree of pain we experience. A small offense we liken to a dart, not much more than a pinprick, but it still hurts. Being a small dart, the wound it makes is small and is often not too difficult to dismiss, especially for those with a little thicker skin.

But next came the medium, and we liken that to an arrow penetrating into our spirit. It does get our attention. The wound is significant and not at all easily dismissed.

[55 : 56] We may comfort ourselves with the thought that others have been hurt and wounded a lot more than us with this arrow, this medium-sized hurt. But next, it's our turn for one of those truly major wounds we call large.

It's a spear, and it's huge. This is such a major wound, you aren't sure you'll survive it. Maybe you don't even want to survive it. That's how much it hurts. You think maybe it would be best if you didn't survive.

At least the pain would stop. So picture, if you can, this full-size javelin kind of spear with a massive pointed head attached to a five-foot-long shaft hurled at you by the offender with his offense, and it penetrates deep into your heart region of your torso.

This is pain you have never felt before. It's simply indescribable. Yet, this wound is bloodless. The spear is not seen protruding out of your body.

It isn't seen at all, and no one is calling 911 for you. It's all internal, in the depths of your intangible, invisible spirit. You almost wish it was your body.

[57 : 04] At least that could be treated at the trauma center in the local hospital. But this? How can one treat this? Where do you go to get relief from an agonizing pain like this? This is the large variety of the offense.

When they are inflicted upon us from our mate, they are sometimes terminators of the marriage.

Yes, sometimes even among Christians. Often the feeling is that the hurt is too great, too deep to even think about wanting to continue the relationship.

And the resentment factor is clearly over the top, way over the top. Forgive? Forget that.

Reconcile? Don't be ridiculous. Some listening to this right now are saying, they've been there and done that, and the pain of it still lingers on.

So does the resentment. These are ways we wound one another, small, medium, and large, dart, arrow, and spear. Verbal Darts, Arrows, and Spears, Part 1 Probably everyone remembers the standard response our mother told us to use when playground bullies made fun of us or subjected us to some sort of name-calling.

Usually they were insecure kids themselves, a grade or two above us. And our response mantra went something like this, Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.

[58 : 32] Looking back, we think mother should have known better, because there wasn't a shred of truth in her well-intended advice. And had she given it thought, she would have recalled the many times when verbal offensive words from someone else did hurt.

They hurt like all get out. Why would she tell us that if it wasn't true? Well, she was just being a mom who probably repeated what her mom said before her.

And as much as we all love our mothers, Mom, you gave us a bum steer. Words do hurt, and they hurt a lot, sometimes a really big lot.

Very often they hurt so much we still have a vivid memory of them, even though the offense was years ago, maybe decades ago. But you can still recall them, and the pain has a residual hold on you.

When a husband or wife inflicts pain on their mate with a verbal offense, it may be small, medium, and large. All in words, or if you prefer, dart, arrow, or spear.

[59 : 37] The size of the offense is determined by the degree of pain from the wound. Words that hurt run the gamut from Shut up! You don't even know what you're talking about!

Or, I don't love you anymore, and I don't know why I even married you. I don't think I ever did love you. These are very damaging verbal offenses delivered by one mate to their married partner, said no doubt in the heat of anger.

Do they hurt? Of course they hurt. That's why they were spoken. They were intended to hurt. The emotional psyche of the one wounded by these words will determine to what degree they were wounded.

For marrieds who often fight and quarrel, these words might even seem mild, because they may have heard them or words like them several times, and perhaps even returned like expressions to the one who uttered them.

In their case, these would not constitute a spear wound or even an arrow. Why? Because they've spoken with such vitriol to each other so many times over the years, it has almost become the norm for them.

[60 : 49] Are we speaking of two professing Christians speaking to each other like this? Sad to say we are, and they number far too many.

What happens to those wounds they have inflicted on each other? Do they just fade away? Are they forgotten? By no means. They are stored in the spirit of the one to whom they were spoken. There they fester and morph into an ever-growing resentment. It's only natural to resent those who cause us pain. The resentment builds and is added to by yet more offenses.

You get the picture. The emotional distance between them continues to widen. Brethren, this ought not so to be. Reviewing the offense and its origin, part one.

We earlier stated that the only thing wrong with our world is the way we treat each other. And this is, of course, the crux of all human behavior and all our interpersonal connections, the way we treat one another.

[61 : 58] When it's negative and hurtful treatment, it always causes pain to the recipient. Sometimes it's the one we dearly love. This is why it is really imperative that we understand the nature and source of hurtful behavior before we can ever hope to overcome it with the kind of attitude and behavior we should be exhibiting.

So, what is the source of our offensive bad behavior that ruins relationships and devastates millions of family settings? Scripture makes it clear in so many places, but in none is the problem so clearly dealt with as in the first seven chapters of Romans.

And in verse 13 of Romans 7, Paul uses an expression to denote how really awful is this thing called sin. He mentions the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

That's what offenses are. You know, the ill verbal language and deeds we inflict on each other, they are sins, products of our old Adamic nature flowing from our core of self-centeredness.

These offenses, these sins, so systemic to all of humanity are the very reason for the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ.

[63 : 22] Remember, thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Romans 4 tells us Christ was delivered up for our offenses, our sins, our sins against God and against each other.

They are played out in what we are calling offenses. These hurtful things come in small, medium, and large sizes of offenses. Each determines the degree of hurt and pain experienced by the one who is offended.

Just how serious are these offenses the Bible calls sins? They are so serious, they can inflict indescribable pain that deeply wounds the one on the receiving end of the offense.

They are so serious, they fracture and sometimes terminate a marriage relationship, long-time friendships, cause loss of employment, loss of health or wealth, even end in the imprisonment or execution of the offender.

What is more, our offenses are so very serious, they actually required the intervention of God himself to deal with them, to set us free from them.

[64 : 41] This is the express reason Christ the Son left the side of his Father in heaven to deal with human sin and provide the basis for God being able to forgive sin without compromising his own sense of righteousness and justice.

He could do so because Christ, his own Son, balanced the scales of divine justice. That's how serious our hurtful words and deeds against God and our fellow man really are.

Reviewing the offense and its origin, part two. Reference has been made to the indisputable fact that the hurtful and unkind things we say and do to one another not only injures relationships but sometimes ends them, as in the case of divorce.

This being the case, why do we say and do these injurious things? Two reasons immediately come to mind. One is to launch an offensive first strike.

We are the originator of the words or deeds that are designed to draw first blood. Our offensive gesture arose from within ourselves and we then inflicted it on another party.

[66 : 01] The second reason is defensive. The other party was the originator of what was said or done and the offense came directly from them. In retaliation or in defense of ourselves, we fashioned some hurtful words or deeds of our own.

Their offensiveness called for a defense of ourselves. This provides the inevitable escalation resulting in more offenses being traded as each tries to get in more decisive verbal blows on their opponent, possibly their marriage mate.

Both parties are attempting to wound the other with their words or maybe even their acts. The wounds may be of the small, medium, or large variety discussed earlier.

Remember the analogies of the dart, the arrow, and the spear? Well, because people are different in their emotional and psychological makeup, what one might consider an arrow or medium offense, another would call a dart.

Yet another might regard the medium offense of an arrow to be, in their mind, a spear. The offense doesn't register the same in everyone. Another factor that can change the assessment of the offense has to do with the frequency with which given people may offend one another.

[67 : 20] If a marriage regularly engages in negative verbal offenses toward each other, their sensitivity to each other's offenses tends to decline. They are actually getting used to offending and being offended by each other.

And as they do, the emotional closeness between them also declines, and the gap of intimacy widens. They do not realize it, but they are repeatedly infusing their relationship with emotional toxins.

And as they do, the resentment factor each has for the other becomes easy to justify. An attitude of bitterness is the predictable consequence of their resentment.

Resentful and bitter people cannot be placated. Nothing their mate does can please them. Neither is enjoying their marriage, and it becomes something to merely endure, because enjoyment is out of the question.

Very often, if they were to be asked, neither party could tell you just how it was that they got this way. What happened to us, they wonder? What happened is both were operating from their self-centered flesh, and they learned to hurt each other, maybe deeply.

[68 : 39] So deeply it seems irreparable. But it isn't irreparable. Even this hurtful situation can be turned into a marriage on the rock.

Adequate comprehension is essential. What do we mean by that, adequate comprehension is essential?

We mean that if a marriage on the rock is your goal, it is necessary that you understand with a good grasp the relational dynamics we are attempting to explain. We do not apologize for the slow, deliberate pace we are taking, nor for the built-in repetitiveness.

We regard these as essential. It is hoped listeners will not be tempted to omit any of the sessions covered. Part of the reason marriages in conflict remain in that mode is they do not clearly see what is happening between them or how it started, and they have no idea how to break out of it.

Giving diligent and thoughtful attention to these dynamics we are presenting will enable any Christian couple to do just that. Break out of the undesirable and painful mode you are in, into the incredible enjoyment of a marriage on the rock.

[70 : 02] There are only two requirements for getting started. They are those we mentioned at the outset, remember? A recommitment to your marriage mate, you know, the commitment the one you made to them when you were married, and, secondly, a recommitment to God and the principles he sets forth in his word.

Without those commitments on the part of both mates, not just one, this material can help you in gaining some insight, but it cannot deliver you to a marriage on the rock.

That takes both of you. If either is unwilling to sincerely make these recommitments, they should ask themselves, do they really like their marriage the way it is?

Do they have a more appealing plan for getting the marriage to the euphoric state it was intended to be, the one they anticipated at the time of marriage? Does God have some other plan for making marriage what it's supposed to be?

Does anyone else have something more workable than the principles God has set forth for marriage in his word? These principles we are slowly working our way through have been distilled from 50 years plus of counseling Christian couples struggling with relationship issues.

[71 : 19] We have found great commonality among them. After all, people are people wherever you find them. All are flawed and fallen creatures prone to deeply love one another and prone to hurt one another.

We all need a firm grasp as to the why and wherefore of these dynamics. Merely experiencing the hurts, the wounds, the darts, the arrows, and the spears is a far cry from truly understanding them. When you see them in their ugliness revealed by a third party, you will become far better equipped to see the way out from them, the reversal of them, and that wonderful but elusive marriage on the rock.

This is precisely why we are proceeding in a slow and methodical manner. We want each of these sessions to be ingrained in your psyche so that you will better understand the dynamics of what actually is happening, how you got there, and God's way out into a marriage on the rock.

You've been listening to Marriage on the Rock with Marv Weisner. A preview of upcoming CD number 4.

[72 : 39] We will continue on CD number 4 to explore and explain the dynamics, both negative and positive, that either prevent or promote a marriage on the rock.

Understanding what is actually taking place in a relationship, especially in a marriage, can go a long way toward turning negative and hurtful things around. Often, in a hurting marriage, one or both mates are silently wondering, what is happening between us?

I don't understand what's going on, or what has caused it, but I know it hurts and I don't like it. When, why, or how did we start drifting apart?

And, yes, these thoughts can so easily occur in a marriage between Christians as well as non-Christians. You will gain an understanding from the upcoming CD 4 that will go a long way toward addressing the issues you are struggling with.

This is because, in relationships, gaining an understanding is like making a diagnosis. The word diagnose itself literally means through or via knowledge.

[73 : 54] No doctor can prescribe treatment for his patient without first arriving at a diagnosis, usually linked to the symptoms described by the patient. And the analogies between a physical body in distress and a marriage relationship in distress is striking.

There may be injuries to our body that need treatment and healing, and there may be emotional injuries to our human spirit and psyche that need treatment and healing as well.

A stressful and anxiety-filled relationship can produce physical complications that could prove serious, especially if continuing over a long period of time.

This undeniable reality confirms the interrelatedness between our body, mind, and spirit. We want to emphasize that all this is wrapped up in the offenses others commit against us, whether darts, arrows, or spears, the frequency of the offenses, and our response to those offenses.

This, in short, is what stressful human relationships are all about in a nutshell. If you understand this, you have a helpful handle on something that escapes most people.

[75 : 07] This is why, even though it's very basic, most people in relational conflict can never see nor take the steps necessary to reverse it. Our goal is to enable you to do both, and you can.

Your motivation and that of your mate are the critical keys to doing this. Positive motivation is everything in producing a marriage on the rock.

We have often told couples in marital counseling that it is utterly miraculous as to what can be accomplished in a hurting marriage if both parties would only commit toward making it happen. This motivation factor is like the oil to a fine piece of machinery. Without the needed lubricant, it won't move forward without a lot of extra effort resulting in excessive friction.

The undue friction produces excessive wear and stress on the moving parts, contributing to its premature breakdown. This, without motivation from both parties, in a marriage, is precisely what many relationships are experiencing.

[76 : 18] Unusual wear and stress contributing to a breakdown. Let's look at a prominent example linked to motivation. Often, when a couple in a troubled marriage is assured there is a way out and they can have the marriage they both want and need if they are willing to make those two recommitments mentioned earlier.

Remember them? First, a recommitment to each other as you made it when you were married and two, a recommitment to God and His Word.

It is sad that so much can be accomplished if they will both do that, but little or nothing can be done if they won't.

This is why we say motivation, a positive activation of the will is everything. But if this is so, then why aren't all willing to put forth that motivation?

If that's what it takes, if that's the key, why wouldn't both be eager to do that? The answer is simple. They don't want to. They tell us they are too hurt, too angry, been burned too many times.

[77 : 38] We can hear them as they say, not on your life. Why should I set myself up for more hurt and disappointment? Besides, even if I were willing, which I am not, you understand, my mate would never be willing.

It's all a lost cause. All I want is out. We do have a motivation problem, do we not? And it's also a chicken and an egg problem because they can learn what they need to know to turn everything around that would result in the positive motivation, but without the motivation and recommitments up front, they cannot learn those things.

This again emphasizes the necessity of doing the right thing because it is the right thing to do, and the necessity of acting with one's will rather than one's feelings and emotions.

It's tied to the flesh and spirit concepts, and it all works together. Your volition, your ability to make choices, to do right or wrong, is an incredibly powerful instrument.

Be very careful how you use it. Use it responsibly. Do not be enslaved to your feelings. Additionally, on CD number four, we will give thought to the several responses we may employ when someone offends us in word or deed.

[79 : 04] a mate, a relative, a co-worker, whomever. Some are activated by the spirit and some by the flesh. Please listen to see if you can identify yourself as to how you respond when someone hurts you.

You may be surprised at yourself. This is Marv Wiseman for Marriage on the Rock. I sincerely hope you will follow through on this and join us with upcoming CD number four.

God bless you. has been done.