A New Way to Act When Offended

GLYNNIS WHITWER

"... And what I have forgiven — if there was anything to forgive — I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes." 2 Corinthians 2:10b-11 (NIV)
I called my sister expecting her normal cheerful voice. Instead, I got a flat, "Hello."
My first reaction was concern. After all, she would have known it was me. Something was
definitely wrong.
"Hey, sis, what's up?" I asked.
"Nothing," she replied. "I just can't talk right now."

We ended our call quickly, but as I set down my phone, my initial concern turned to
another kind of worry. If there wasn't something else amiss, maybe she was mad at me.
What had I done wrong?

Normally, I would have accepted her reply at face value. After all, sometimes I'm busy
and can't talk. But earlier that day, another friend ended our conversation abruptly. So
when it happened again, I figured the problem was me. I started to replay our past
discussions in my mind, looking for something I might have said or done to offend both
of these women so dear to me.

Rather than see those as two completely independent situations, I connected them and
arrived at an erroneous conclusion. It was like Satan took a Sharpie marker and drew a
straight line right from one to the other and then to a very vulnerable place in my heart.
Ridiculous thoughts jumped into my mind: They don't like me anymore. If they are going
to get mad at me for nothing, then I'm just going to ignore them. If they want to talk to
me, they can call.

I sat in my self-righteous, offended state and stewed.

After a while, perspective returned. It was clear I'd taken two separate situations that had
nothing to do with me, and turned them into a reason to take offense. It was really rather
self-centered, and showed a lack of love for my sister and friend.

Rather than think the best, and acknowledge I didn't know the whole situation in either
case, I let my mind go to a defensive, unloving place. I became judge and jury and
declared them guilty.

The same thing happened to the Apostle Paul when he chose to write a letter to the
believers at Corinth rather than visit personally. Paul had intended to journey to those
believers, but after a difficult first visit, Paul changed his plans. Paul didn’t want to inflict more pain on the members of the church or himself. But rather than think the best and trust in Paul’s love for them, the Corinthians assumed Paul’s change was due to selfish reasons.

Our key verse is part of that letter. I find it interesting that one of the first key pieces of instruction in the letter included direction on how to restore a fellow believer who had done wrong. Paul urges the believers at Corinth to forgive this man. Yet I wonder if Paul wrote this direction thinking of their offense at his choice.

Paul wrote: "... And what I have forgiven — if there was anything to forgive — I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes" (2 Corinthians 2:10b-11).

Paul knew that holding on to offenses was dangerous. It was, and is, a scheme of Satan to separate and destroy relationships. Rather than take offense, Paul encouraged the believers to forgive. And in verse 8, Paul gives these clear instructions ... a new way to deal with offense, "I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him."

That day when two conversations were cut short, Satan tried to connect the dots and convince me I had a reason to be offended. But God’s Word shed light on that scheme and told me to do the opposite. Rather than embrace offense, I needed to reaffirm love.

Later that day, I sent my sister and friend loving text messages. I got two in return.

The next time Satan tries to connect the dots, I need to remember his schemes, and refuse to play that game. Rather than jump to conclusions that could harm a relationship, I need to look for ways to reaffirm love.

*Heavenly Father, thank You for modeling love when offended. Help me choose to reaffirm love when I want to retreat in the face of offense. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.*

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**Meet the Team**
Esther Espinoza

Esther is always on the lookout for writers to contribute to the magazines.

Esther loves writing, shopping (what girl doesn’t) catching up with friends & family & reading a good book!

For the past 10 years, Esther has been working at Brisbane Adventist College Secondary Campus and loves it.

Little Lemon Dessert Cake
Ingredients

- 3 1 1/4 cups caster sugar
- 3 medium lemons
- 125g butter, softened
- 2 eggs, separated
- 1 cup self-raising flour
- 2 tablespoons milk
- Double cream, to serve

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Grease a 6-hole, 3/4-cup capacity non-stick muffin pan. Cut six 2mm-thick slices from 1 lemon. Place 2 tablespoons sugar on a plate. Dip slices, one at a time, in sugar. Turn to coat. Place in prepared pan holes.

2. Grate 2 teaspoons rind from 1 lemon. Juice remaining lemons. Using an electric mixer beat butter, 1/2 cup sugar and lemon rind until light and fluffy. Add egg yolks, 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Wash and dry beaters. Whisk egg whites in another bowl until stiff peaks form.

3. Sift flour over butter mixture. Add 1 tablespoon lemon juice and milk. Stir until just combined. Using a large metal spoon, gently fold egg whites into butter mixture. Divide mixture between prepared pan holes. Smooth top. Bake for 20 minutes or until golden and a skewer inserted in centre of 1 cake comes out clean. Stand in pan for 10 minutes. Turn out onto a wire rack over a baking tray.

4. Meanwhile, place remaining sugar and 1/3 cup lemon juice in a saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring constantly, for 3 to 4 minutes or until sugar dissolves. Bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low. Simmer for 4 to 5 minutes or until thick and syrupy. Spoon half the syrup over cakes. Cool for 5 minutes. Serve cakes warm with remaining syrup and double cream.
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GIGI RALLY 2015

'My Valentine'

TIME: 10:00am-12:30pm

DATE: Saturday 29th August 2015

ENTRY: FREE

PLACE: Church of the Nazarene Meadowlands Rd Carina QLD 4152

AGES: Girls 12+, Mums, Aunts & Friends

DON'T FORGET TO BRING YOUR OFFERINGS

CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU ALL

SAVE THE DATE