

Bait Satan Uses to Trap Christians Study Guide

Key Concepts:

- **Offense as a Sinful Trap:** Many Christians feel justified in taking up offenses or remaining offended, but it's a sin and the enemy's trap. Luke 17:1 warns of the inevitability of offenses and the danger they pose.
 - **Offense as a Trigger to Trap Us:** The enemy strategically designs offenses as bait to entrap believers into sin. Understanding the mechanics of this trap can help Christians avoid falling into it.
 - **Causes of Offense:** Offenses can stem from people, events, illness, or even blaming God, leading to spiritual numbness and separation from His guidance.
 - **God Cannot Tempt or Be Tempted:** Offenses and temptations come from our own desires, not from God. Recognizing this helps Christians stay vigilant against the enemy's tactics.
 - **The Biblical Standard of Forgiveness:** Unforgiveness holds the offended in bondage, while forgiveness releases both the offender and the offended from spiritual imprisonment.
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Scripture References and Key Insights:

1. Luke 17:1 (NKJV):

- "Then He said to the disciples, 'It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come!'"
- **Key Insight:** Jesus acknowledges that offenses are inevitable, but warns against becoming a source of offense, highlighting the seriousness of this sin and its consequences.

2. James 1:13-15 (NKJV):

- "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."

- **Key Insight:** This passage clarifies that temptation and offense arise from our own desires, not from God, emphasizing personal responsibility in overcoming these traps.
3. **Colossians 3:13 (NKJV):**
- "bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do."
 - **Key Insight:** Forgiveness is a non-negotiable aspect of Christian living, modeled after Christ's example. Unforgiveness is not only a sin but also a hindrance to spiritual growth and unity in the body of Christ.
4. **Matthew 18:28-30 (NKJV):**
- "But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt."
 - **Key Insight:** This parable highlights the hypocrisy and severity of refusing to forgive others after receiving forgiveness. It illustrates the bondage that unforgiveness brings to the unforgiving person.
5. **Matthew 18:33-35 (NKJV):**
- "'Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."
 - **Key Insight:** This continuation of the parable shows the divine expectation of forgiveness and the dire consequences of failing to meet that standard, underscoring the critical nature of mercy in the Christian life.
6. **Luke 17:2 (NKJV):**
- "It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones."
 - **Key Insight:** This verse emphasizes the severe consequences of causing offense, especially to the vulnerable, illustrating the profound responsibility believers have to avoid leading others into sin.

Practical Applications:

- **Avoiding the Trap of Offense:** Be vigilant in recognizing and avoiding the bait of offense. When tempted, choose unity and forgiveness over division and resentment.
 - **Forgiving Others Quickly:** Forgive offenses promptly to prevent bitterness from taking root and leading to spiritual bondage.
 - **Repenting of Offense:** Regularly examine your heart for any offenses you may have taken up, and repent to maintain a clear and open relationship with God.
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Personal Reflection and Prayer:

Reflect on areas where you may have taken up offense, whether against God, others, or yourself. Seek God's help in releasing these offenses through genuine forgiveness, and ask for His strength to live free from the traps of the enemy.

By understanding these key concepts and applying them to your life, you can avoid the traps of offense and live in the freedom and peace that Christ offers.