



Community Groups are used extensively as the primary vehicle for discipleship at The Gathering and run on a quarter system. There is one in the fall, one in the winter and one in the spring. During the summer weeks we don't meet in Community Groups but we still offer the Growth Guides as a tool to help you grow personally. The Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family and are available each week along with the note sheets at church as well as online.

### USE THIS GUIDE TO PREPARE FOR THE DISCUSSIONS IN COMMUNITY GROUP.

## Consider...

*Use the summary and discussion below to review and apply this week's message:*

### Message Summary

*Have you noticed how offended everyone is today? A tweet, a post, a misspoken word in an article, interview, or sermon is all it takes to send people's "offense meters" through the roof! The problem, though, isn't people BEING offended because the Bible says that's ALWAYS going to happen. The problem is that people - and especially believers - STAY offended! This week, Paul offered 3 steps we can take to help us overcome offense. We can recognize the season, realize the source, and release the Spirit.*

### Discuss

*Use the following questions to review and apply the points learned in the message.*

- Talk about the differences between BEING offended and STAYING offended.
- Paul talked about recognizing the season as the first step toward overcoming offense. Have you noticed times or situations in your own life when you tend to get offended more than others?
- Offense appears to be horizontal (in other words, between 2 people dealt with through argument and discussion), but if we're going to overcome offense, we need to realize the source of it is vertical (in other words, a spiritual attack from the enemy dealt with in the spirit). Not sure who's behind offense? Read Matthew 24:10. The bad progression starts with "turning away" and that Greek word is the same one for being offended.
- Most people stay offended simply because they keep offense on the horizontal (earthly) instead of realizing the source of it and dealing with it vertically (spiritually). Read Acts 16:16-18. When Paul was offended in verse 18 (it's normal, remember?), who did he speak to? If he had never realized the source and kept the offense horizontal, who would he have spoken to?
- Little did Paul know that his actions would get him arrested, beaten, and thrown in jail, but they did! What would we expect to find an offended person doing after a day like Paul had? What do we find Paul doing?
- The plan for overcoming offense will always end with releasing the Spirit into the situation that caused the offense to begin with. How did Paul and Silas release the Spirit (see Acts 16:25)? Who got released as a result of them releasing the Spirit into the situation?