

How to Get Out of Your Own Way Part 3

We've all done it; become our own worst enemies. Let's face it, life is hard enough without making it any tougher on ourselves. If we can eliminate the areas where we get in our own way we free up energy to fight other battles and make real head way in our walk with God. Here are some ways we may unintentionally hinder ourselves.

- 1. We allow offense to linger.** The enemy will work overtime in bringing offense. The word offend or offended from the Bible means; to be made to stumble. It also denotes the "tripping of a trigger" on a snare. We unknowingly have walked into a situation where we "react" the wrong way and trip the lever that brings about our own bondage. Here are the relationships the devil works the hardest at; **A) Those we love the most.** No one can hurt us like those closest to us. Especially those we love the most. Offense in this area can turn a beautiful life into a nightmare. It's impossible to live without offense and without offending. **Even Jesus said in Luke 17: 1- "It is impossible that no offenses should come."** But the Apostle Paul encourages us in **Ephesians 4:26 – Be angry, and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.** The Living Bible says; If you are angry, don't sin by nursing your grudge. **Don't let the sun go down with you still angry—get over it quickly; for when you are angry you give a mighty foothold to the devil.** **B) Those we receive the word from and those we worship with.** The enemy works overtime to get you offended at the person in spiritual authority over your life or who feeds you the word of God. Many are not aware of this trick. Satan is a predator and as a predator he knows there is safety in the herd. His goal is to get you "cut out" of the herd and isolated. **C) Anyone in authority in our lives.**
- 2. We get stuck by sticky people.** This is very connected with the first point. Who are "sticky people?" People who are always caught up in some kind of drama. They are always mad and offended at somebody about something. The problem is since you love them or have to be close to them they pour their offense out to you in order to get validation for their offense from you. If you are not careful you get the sticky stuff of their bad attitude on you as you try to be the good friend and support them. Debbie and I have had this conversation numerous times in our marriage because as a "mercy" driven

person she is easily touched by people's pain. When you combine this with a deep sense of loyalty towards anyone you love you can find yourselves in a lot of "sticky" situations. **But here's what we need to remember;** We have no grace from God to carry someone else's offense. You only have grace for the things that offend you and that is only IF you and I respond in a biblical way. And lastly, You have to set clear boundaries that must be respected or you may have to make a decision about that relationship. There are so many scriptures warning about strife and I'll list some below but here are two very distinct ones; **Titus 3:9 – Avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and stirring about the law (or the word of God) for they are unprofitable and useless, (this reminds me of the endless arguments among believers I see on Facebook and other social media platforms). Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned (in other words; he is in his own way!)** We must remember this is from the same man who exhorts us to "suffer long" and that "love covers and multitude of sins." What does this mean? There are certain people you need to get unstuck from and get the sticky off of you. The other scriptures are **James 3:14-16 – But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.** The Amplified says; **unrest, disharmony, rebellion and all sorts of evil and vile practices.** Living Bible says; **there will be disorder and every other kind of evil.** The reason this scripture is so scary is because there is not another like it that explains that strife literally opens the door for every kind of evil there is. That's a lot of evil. And it's also why it is especially dangerous to get stuck with sticky people. **Proverbs 15:18; 16:28; 17:1,14,19; 20:3; 22:10; 26:17,20,21; 28:25; 30:33.** Paul list strife right after murder in **Romans 1:29.**

- 3. We allow shame to keep us from getting help.** We know the Genesis account that Adam and Eve "hid themselves" from the presence of God. Why? Because they were naked and afraid. But what made them to know they were naked and what made them afraid; shame. Shame is sneaky. It can appear humble but actually it is hiding a form of pride. We don't want to expose our problems to anyone because of pride. We don't want others to know just how imperfect we are. This keeps us from getting the help we

need. So we suffer in isolation not knowing that many of our fellow brothers and sisters are suffering in much the same way. **Example** – I once knew a man who went to a turkey calling seminar to learn how to call and hunt wild turkeys. The same man would not attend a marriage seminar to save his marriage. He would not buy a book or listen to any podcast that would help instruct him be a better husband. But he would pay money and buy materials to learn how to call a turkey. Shame makes you stupid. We must be willing to humble ourselves and admit where we are struggling and what we are dealing with. Find a counselor, a mentor, a trusted mature believer you can confide in and have pray with you. Become part of a strong local church and find a bible study or cell group you can attend. You might be surprised to know how many people struggle with the same things you are and have found a way to overcome.