

Proving Ground – Part 4: Offended Sunday, August 15, 2021

We all get offended – seems it's a part of life involving other people. When we are offended, we choose how we respond. We can try to escaped – and there are times to and times not to. We can launch an attack – and there are ways to and ways not to. Very often these approaches create an obstacle in relationship and life. But there is an approach that keeps an offense from becoming a fence (barrier) to the future. What if the direction and quality of your life depended on how you responded when you were offended, wronged or hurt?

Read Matthew 5:43-48

- Who do you think Jesus is referring to when he says to love your neighbor? How would you define a neighbor?
- Why might we assume that loving our neighbor infers privilege to hate our enemies? How would you define an enemy?
- Why do we find it so difficult to love our enemies?
- What do you think it means for love to be a compassionate desire for the good of another person?
- How would you describe prayer? What benefit might there be in praying for our enemies?
- Why is it easier to pray for our enemies to get what we think is coming to them than something good for them?
- What does it say about God's love that he doesn't distinguish the shining of the sun and falling of the rain based on who is for or against him?
- What challenges are sometimes found in loving those closest to us? How are those challenges expounded with someone we consider and enemy?
- If being perfect means being complete (rather than flawless), how does loving like God help make us complete?
- What next step will you take to love your enemies as Jesus described?

Freedom Comes in the Context of Authority