

NO OFFENSE — WEEK 6: FORGIVENESS & RECONCILIATION

Sunday, October 18, 2026 | Final message in the series

Welcome back to the finale of our series, "No Offense!"

And if you've been following the MLB playoffs, I think the LA Dodgers needed to hear this series!

Over the past five weeks, we've learned that **offenses are inevitable, but taking the bait is a choice. (KEYNOTE)**

We've learned to guard our hearts against bitterness, forgive those who hurt us, pray for those who mistreat us, and allow the Holy Spirit to guide our responses.

But today, I want to take us one step further. Church, let me ask you a question.

Have you ever had someone do something that really hurt you, frustrated you, or just plain made you mad?

And as a Christian, you know you're supposed to forgive them, right?

So you pray about it. You ask God to help you forgive. You try to let it go.

And just when you think you've gotten over it...

THEY DO IT AGAIN! Anybody know what I'm talking about?

Maybe it's your spouse who keeps doing that one thing you've asked them not to do. Or a family member who keeps taking advantage of your generosity.

And you tell yourself, "I'm a Christian. I gotta forgive. I gotta show grace. I gotta be patient."

But deep down inside, you're thinking, **"God, how many times I gotta put up with this?"**

And sometimes we think the Christian thing to do is just keep quiet.

Don't make waves. Don't rock the boat. Just forgive and forget.

After all, we want to keep the peace, right? (**KEYNOTE**)

But what if keeping quiet isn't always keeping the peace?

What if we're not keeping the peace at all? We're just avoiding a problem that needs to be addressed.

And what if the most loving thing we could do is have a conversation we'd rather avoid?

Confront them.

Now, I know what some of you are thinking.

"Whoa, Pastor! For five weeks we've been learning how NOT to take offense, and now you're telling us to confront people?"

I'm talking about **loving confrontation that seeks restoration, not condemnation. (Keynote)**

You see, throughout this series we've learned that offenses are inevitable, but taking the bait is a choice.

We've learned to guard our hearts against bitterness, to forgive those who hurt us, to pray for those who mistreat us, and to allow the Holy Spirit to guide our responses.

But today, as we conclude this series, I want to take us one step further.

Because God doesn't just call us to release offenses.

He calls us to become people who help restore broken relationships.

There's a local expression we use here in Hawai'i that captures what we're talking about. **Making Pono. (KEYNOTE)**

Making things right. Restoring what has been broken. Bringing people back into right relationship. The Bible calls this *reconciliation*.

And today we're going to discover that the God who loved us enough to make things pono with Him also calls us to help make things pono with each another. And it takes courage.

Because sometimes the most loving thing we can do is have a conversation we'd rather avoid.

And sometimes the most loving thing we can receive is correction we'd rather not hear.

So today, I want to share with you **three things we can do to become people who help bring restoration and reconciliation to our relationships. You guys ready?**

And later, you're going to hear a powerful testimony from someone in our church who experienced firsthand how loving confrontation helped change the direction of his life.

But first, we need to understand why reconciliation matters so much to God. And that's where the Apostle Paul takes us in 2 Corinthians 5.

The three teaching points and the first is to (keynote)

Point 1 — RECEIVE God's heart for reconciliation

Before we talk about how to confront someone, we need to understand why reconciliation matters so much to God.

Gotta start with what God has done for us.

Listen to what the Apostle Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5, beginning with verse 17.

SCRIPTURE READING — 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17–20 (NIV) (keynote)

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God." **(Keynote)**

Dis wat the HP bible tell, "All dat stuff come from God. He wen make us guys come pono wit him cuz a wat Christ wen do. An he wen tell us fo help da odda peopo come pono wit him too.

I love this passage because it reminds us of something amazing.

We have a God who takes the initiative to restore broken relationships.

Think about it. We were the ones who sinned against God.

We were the ones who turned away from Him. Broke da rules, made him sad. Betrayed his trust. We da offendas.

Yet God didn't simply say, "You guys messed up. Figure out how to get back to Me." No! He came after us! How, Through Jesus Christ, God made a way for us to be pono with Him.

And verse 21 tells us just how far God was willing to go. Jesus, who knew no sin, took our sin upon Himself so we could be made right with God.

That's the Gospel! But notice something else in verse 18.

God not only reconciled us to Himself through Christ. He also gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

In other words, God doesn't just want us to experience reconciliation.

He wants us to become reconcilers! And dass our kuleana! Our responsibility.

And that's why this matters so much in our relationships.

Because when someone hurts us, our natural response is often to withdraw, retaliate, or write that person off.

We think, "You hurt me. I'm done with you!" But God calls us to respond differently. Not because the offense **wasn't** real. Not because what that person did was okay.

But because we've experienced a grace we didn't deserve.

And now we're called to extend that grace to others.

Of course, restoring a relationship with another person is not identical to our reconciliation with God. But God's grace becomes the example and motivation for how we pursue peace with others.

Personal reflection

I know how hard this can be. Last week Pastor Mark mentioned the incident at our softball game. I was there!

And let me tell you, the old Earl would have had some words for that umpire! Cuz I wanna win!

And I confess, that old Earl still wants to show up now and then. But thank God for the Holy Spirit who's still working on me! And that's true for all of us. God is still changing our hearts.

Transition: So here's our first action step.

Before you decide how to respond to someone who has offended you, remember how God has responded to you.

Ask yourself:

Am I approaching this person with the same heart of grace God has shown me?

Because when we remember how God made us pono with Him, it changes how we seek to make things pono with others.

But that brings us to our next question. What do we actually do when someone has wronged us? **(Keynote)**

Point 2 — APPROACH the offender with truth and love

Now, if we're honest, when someone offends us, we usually respond in one of two ways.

Some of us are **exploders**. We react immediately. We raise our voices. We let the person know exactly how we feel.

And sometimes our words cause more damage than the original offense.

Others of us are **avoiders**. We don't want conflict. We don't want to make things uncomfortable.

So we say, "Ah, no worry. I just let it go."

But inside, we're still hurt. And sometimes that hurt turns into resentment.

And just because we don't talk about the problem doesn't mean the problem has gone away. In the natural, which are you, one exploder or an avoider?

Here's something worth remembering. **Avoiding conflict is not always keeping peace.** Sometimes it's allowing brokenness to continue.

So how does Jesus teach us to handle wrongdoing?

Let's look at Matthew 18:15–17. (**Keynote**)

"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector."

This is what we sometimes call the Matthew 18 protocol.

And notice what Jesus says in verse 15.

"Go." Don't just sit on your hurt. Don't tell everybody else about what happened. Don't go on social media to share your frustrations.

What do you do? Go to the person directly.

And why? Jesus says, "If they listen to you, you have won them over."

Did you catch that? The goal isn't to win an argument.

It's to win a brother or sister back. That's the heart behind biblical confrontation. Not to shame, not to blame. Not to punish. Not to condemn.

But to restore. **Before you go, ask yourself four questions**

Now this doesn't mean that every time someone irritates us, we need to confront them. Imagine if we did that!

Some of us would be confronting people all day long!

So before we approach someone, we need to prayerfully ask some important questions. (**Keynote listing of the questions**)

1. Is this something that really needs to be addressed?

Is this a genuine wrongdoing, a repeated harmful pattern, or simply something I don't like? Some offenses can be graciously overlooked. You neva make your bed again. You not listening good!. Maybe you just tired.

2. Am I the right person to address it?

Was I directly wronged? Am I responsible for this person's care? Is this something I should bring to an appropriate leader?

3. Is this the right time?

Am I ready to have a loving conversation, or am I still so angry that I might make things worse?

4. Is my heart right?

Do I sincerely want this person to grow and our relationship to be restored? Or do I just want to make them feel bad?

That fourth question is especially important. Because we can say all the right words but have the wrong heart. (**Keynote**)

Paul reminds us in Galatians 6:1 that when someone is caught in sin, those who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently, while watching themselves.

Did you hear that? Restore them gently. Not angrily. Not arrogantly.

And certainly not with the attitude, "I'm better than you."

A time when I was confronted

I remember a time when I needed someone some loving confronting.

You know, even our strengths can become weaknesses when they're not surrendered to the Holy Spirit. Because without the Spirit, my ability to persuade people can become pushiness. And my confidence can become pride.

Well, years ago, in our pastoral staff meetings, I didn't realize how much I was dominating our discussions. I thought I was contributing good ideas.

After all, I was a senior staff member. I had experience. I wanted us to make good decisions for us to be a great church..

But what I couldn't see was how my behavior was making others feel like their ideas didn't matter.

Pastor Mike had given me feedback about this before. But I honestly didn't see it.

Until one day, when we were at our Mililani Tech Park offices, I was asked to step outside with the other pastors.

And there, in the presence of my peers, I was confronted about how I had been coming across. Now, I want you to know, they weren't mean-spirited.

They weren't trying to humiliate me. They were concerned.

But when I looked at the faces of my fellow pastors, I realized how my pride had affected them. And honestly, I was devastated.

I felt so sad about what I had done that I even thought about resigning.

But looking back, I see something I didn't fully appreciate at that moment.

My pastor friends cared enough about me, and about our relationships, to tell me what I needed to hear. They weren't trying to get rid of me.

They wanted to help me grow. And I thank God for that confrontation.

It wasn't comfortable. But it was necessary. I now do more listening than just telling what I think.

Church, that's what loving confrontation can look like.

Sometimes we need someone to help us see what we cannot see in ourselves. And sometimes God may be calling us to be that person for someone else.

But what happens when we confront someone in love, and they no listen?

What happens when they apologize, but nothing changes?

That's where the third action step becomes important. (**Keynote**)

Point 3 — PERSEVERE in the pursuit of restoration

One of the greatest challenges with reconciliation is that we can't force another person to change. We can forgive them. We can approach them in love. We can speak the truth.

But we cannot repent for them. That's a choice they have to make.

And sometimes, even after we lovingly confront someone, the harmful behavior continues.

Jesus gives us another way. Look again at Matthew 18.

If that person doesn't listen, Jesus tells us to bring one or two others along.

And if they still refuse to listen, the matter is brought before the church.

Now why would Jesus instruct us to involve other people?

Not so we can gang up on the offender.

Not so we can embarrass them into changing.

But to invite others to help the person recognize the seriousness of what's happening and lovingly call them to repentance to feel Godly sorrow, feel sincerely bad about their actions.

And the witnesses also help establish the facts. They aren't simply there to take our side.

If the person continues refusing to repent, Jesus teaches that the church must recognize the seriousness of that refusal. There may need to be consequences, including changes in fellowship.

But even then, the hope is that the person will eventually turn back to God.

Because making pono is the goal, but repentance cannot be forced.

And we need to understand that forgiveness and reconciliation are not exactly the same thing.

Forgiveness is something I can extend even if the person who hurt me doesn't change.

But rebuilding trust and restoring a healthy relationship requires honesty, repentance, and a willingness to change.

And sometimes that takes a lot of time. An important distinction

Let me be clear about something.

Pursuing reconciliation doesn't mean allowing someone to keep abusing you, manipulating you, or harming others.

Forgiveness does not eliminate healthy boundaries or accountability. Where there's abuse, threats, or danger, safety comes first, and appropriate help and authorities may need to be involved.

Church, we need both grace and truth.

Grace without truth can enable continued wrongdoing. Truth without grace can crush the person we're trying to restore.

But when grace and truth come together under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, God can begin doing a powerful work in people's lives.

And sometimes that work begins with a difficult confrontation.

Transition to Dan's testimony

I want to invite someone to come up and share a powerful testimony of what we've been talking about today.

Dan Kashima is going to share something very personal about his own journey.

Because this is not simply a story about someone being in sin.

This is a story about a man being loved enough to be called out of sin.

A story of repentance, accountability, and God's continuing work of restoration. Church, please welcome my friend Dan.

Dan's testimony — 15 minutes

1. The struggle: **What started your and your wife's spiritual journey:** How was your life before Christ came into your life and how was your marriage. Obviously, Stacey was

desperate for a change. (The patterns of deception, their impact on his marriage, and what kept him from being honest).

2. The confrontations: **How did others respond?** Unfortunately, those strongholds (deceit, deception) and the results of that were still occurring. What happened next? Share how that confrontation went, how it made you feel, and what were the results.

3. The turning point: **What changed in your heart?** Moving beyond embarrassment or being caught to genuine godly sorrow and repentance before God.

4. The restoration: **What is God doing today?** What is God doing today to help you overcome those strongholds and to bring you and your wife closer on the road to reconciliation and unity.

Congregational response — Will you help make things pono? Reflection, invitation, and closing prayer

Mahalo, Dan, for your courage and your willingness to share your story with us.

For six weeks, we've been learning about how to keep offenses from taking root in our hearts.

But today I want to challenge us to take that one step further.

What if God is calling you not just to be free from offense, but to become an instrument of reconciliation?

Maybe today you're the one who needs to forgive someone.

Maybe you've been holding on to hurt, resentment, or bitterness.

And today God is inviting you to release that offense to Him.

Or maybe there's someone in your life who has been doing something wrong, and you've been avoiding an honest conversation because you don't want to rock the boat.

And maybe God is telling you it's time to prayerfully and lovingly address what's happening.

Not to attack them. Not to shame them. But because you love them enough to want what's best for them. And then there's another possibility.

Maybe you're the person God is trying to correct.

Maybe someone has approached you about something in your life, and you've been defensive. You've made excuses. You've justified your behavior.

And maybe today, like Dan, God is inviting you to humble yourself, acknowledge your wrongdoing, and allow Him to begin changing your heart.

Three response questions Let's respond to God in prayer:

And as we come before the Lord, I want you to consider three questions.

1. Is there someone I need to forgive?

Someone whose offense I've allowed to take root in my heart?

2. Is there someone I need to lovingly confront?

Someone I care enough about to have a difficult but necessary conversation?

3. Is there correction I need to humbly receive?

Something God has been trying to show me about my own heart and behavior?

Church, as we close this series, I want us to remember something.

God doesn't just call us to forgive offenses. He calls us to become people who help restore broken relationships.

And sometimes, loving someone means caring enough to have a difficult conversation to help make things pono.

So as we come before the Lord, let's ask the Holy Spirit to search our hearts. **(Keynote)**

Is there someone I need to forgive?

Is there someone I need to lovingly confront?

Or is there correction I need to humbly receive?

Let's pray.

Heavenly Father,

Mahalo for loving us so much that You didn't leave us in our sin and brokenness.

Through Jesus Christ, You made a way for us to come pono with You.

And because You've shown us such amazing grace, help us extend that same grace to others.

For those holding on to offenses, give us the strength to forgive.

For those avoiding difficult but necessary conversations, give us the courage to speak the truth in love.

And for those who need correction, give us humble and teachable hearts to receive it.

Holy Spirit, lead us. Help us become people who bring healing, restoration, and reconciliation to our relationships.

And Lord, before we close, I want to pray especially for those who have never experienced being made pono with You.

(Transition from prayer to invitation.)

Church, with every head bowed, I want to extend one final invitation.

We've been talking about forgiveness and reconciliation today. But did you know that the greatest reconciliation is what Jesus Christ has made possible between us and God?

The Bible tells us that all of us have sinned against God. We've gone our own way, and that sin has separated us from Him.

But God didn't wait for us to make things right. He took the initiative to make things right with us!

That's why He sent Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for our sins and rose again so that we could be forgiven and receive new life in Him.

That's the Good News!

And perhaps you're here today, and you've never personally received His forgiveness or begun a relationship with Jesus Christ.

I want you to know that God loves you, and He's inviting you to come pono with Him.

You don't have to clean up your life first. You come to Him with a heart willing to turn from your sin and trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord.

So if that's your desire today, I want to invite you to pray this simple prayer with me. It's not the words themselves that save you, but your faith in Jesus Christ.

Lord Jesus,

I recognize that I've sinned against You and need Your forgiveness.

Thank You for loving me, dying on the cross for my sins, and rising again so I can have new life.

Today, I turn from my sin and put my trust in You.

Forgive me, make me new, and help me follow You as my Lord and Savior.

Thank You for making a way for me to come pono with God.

In Jesus' name, amen.

(Allow a brief pause.)

If you prayed that prayer sincerely for the first time today, we would love to help you begin your journey of following Jesus. Please let one of our pastors or prayer team members know.

Small Group Discussion Questions

- **Exploder vs. Avoider:** In the sermon, Pastor Earl noted that when people are hurt, they naturally lean toward being an "exploder" or an "avoider". Which tendency do you display most when a relationship is strained, and what is **one practical step** you can take this week to respond with a Holy Spirit-guided heart instead of your natural reaction?
- **Heart Check Before Moving:** Think about a recurring issue or frustration you currently have with someone. Before you decide if it needs a direct conversation, process it through the **four filters** from the sermon:
 1. *Does it truly need addressing, or can it be overlooked?*
 2. *Are you the right person to bring it up?*
 3. *Is the timing right?*
 4. *Is your heart motivated by restoring them gently, or just winning?*
- **The Difference Between Forgiving and Reconciliation:** The message made an important distinction: *Forgiveness is something we can extend immediately on our own, but reconciliation requires honesty, repentance, and time to rebuild trust.* In your own life, where are you struggling to see this difference, and how does this truth change how you look at a **broken relationship** right now?
- **Stepping Into Your Kuleana:** We are called to be ambassadors who actively try to "make things pono" (restore broken relationships) because of how much grace God showed us first. What is **one tangible action** you can take in your home, workplace, or friend group this week to prioritize peace and restoration over pulling away or staying silent?

The Small Group Challenge

To be read aloud by the leader or shared with the group before closing in prayer.

"This week, let's challenge ourselves to look at confrontation through the lens of God's grace.

First, let's pray for the humility to receive correction. Like the story shared in the sermon, sometimes we have blind spots and need loving friends to help us see what we cannot see in ourselves. Let's challenge

our hearts to drop the defenses and be open to being confronted in love.

Second, let's ask God for the courage to speak up. Spend time in prayer this week asking the Holy Spirit if there is someone you are avoiding out of fear of rocking the boat. If God places someone on your heart, ask Him for the perfect timing, gentle words, and a right heart to approach them and make things pono."