

Is it possible to be UNOFFENDABLE?

A review of the book by Brant Hansen

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Book Review: Hansen, Brandt, *Unoffendable*, W Publishing, Nashville, TN. 2023

*This will be a book review, not a traditional book study, where I will try to capture the essence of the author's message and pass it on to you. Therefore, you don't have to own or read the book to be a part of this "review."

Chapters 6 - 11

The challenge we face as believers is **not** to be offended by the broken world!

- War is *not* exceptional; peace is.
- Worry is *not* exceptional; trust is.
- Decay is *not* exceptional; restoration is.
- Anger is *not* exceptional; gratitude is.
- Selfishness is *not* exceptional; sacrifice is.
- Defensiveness is *not* exceptional; love is.
- Judgmentalism is *not* exceptional; grace is.

"So, recognize the current state of our world, and then replace the shock and anger with gratitude" (Hansen, 2023, p. 38).

Why don't we adjust our expectations of this world. See the human heart for what it is and look for the exceptions in our world.

"When you see, in the midst of all this mess, beautiful glimpses of God's kingdom, defined by love, breath it in" (Hansen, 2023, p. 39).

When the world can see love and grace and gratitude and peace in us, as Christ-followers, they cannot deny that it is not "of this world."

Grace and love and joy have no borders. "Yes, the world is broken, and selfishness is our default setting. But that's all the more reason we get goose bumps when there's a ray of light and we can suddenly see the kingdom from here, where things are set right" (Hansen, 2023, p. 41).

"When we recognize our unsurprising fallenness *and* keep our eyes joyfully open for the glorious exceptions, we're much less offendable. Why? Because that's the thing about gratitude and anger; they can't coexist. It's one of the other. One drains the very life from you. The other fills your life with wonder. Choose wisely" (Hansen, 2023, p. 41-42).

Everyone has the option to reject God's love, to fall for the lies of our culture, or we can choose to live by God's principles, because he's God and we're not. And he's good!

Jesus told us:

Matthew 16:25: *For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.*

Luke 9:23: *Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me."*

John 10:10: *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

Can you think of a time when you allowed some insult, some rejection, some wrong treatment to occupy your mind for days and weeks—maybe even years? How much time do you figure you spent—wasted—allowing it to occupy your thoughts? Was it worth it?

2 Corinthians 10:5: *We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

Choose to think about how God deals with you when you do something stupid; when you refuse to do what you know you should do. Is he patient with you? If so, what excuse do you have for not being patient with others?

When Jesus said, “Come to me and I will give you rest,” he was saying that his yoke is easy. Choosing to be unoffendable is his way; and it is so much easier than all the other ways we typically respond to life.

Living the hurried life, we’re prone to be offended much more frequently because people get in our way much more easily. “Taking offense is so often a lot of work. It can wear you out; but for some, it really becomes a lifestyle” (Hansen, 2023, p. 54).

Do you know anyone who has a lifestyle of “taking offense”?

Jesus’ offer of rest is not for rest after we die—or retire—or whatever. It is for the here and now. When you continually remember that you don’t control your life because you’ve given Jesus the control, it just really takes a lot off your plate. You are not the manager of your life; Jesus is.

Now you have nothing to prove to anybody, even to yourself. That means you don’t have to get angry over stuff that doesn’t matter—or when you do get angry, it won’t last long. Remember, anger and rest don’t coexist. You can’t have both at once.

Suppose we all belonged to a group like AA, but instead of Alcoholics Anonymous, we’ll call it Sinners Anonymous. Let’s go to our SA meeting now.

We’re all outed, right? No need to pretend any longer. Pretending is so exhausting. The truth is out and the truth sets you free.

James 5:16: *Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.*

“When you’re living in the reality of the forgiveness you’ve been extended, you just don’t get angry with others easily” (Hansen, 2023, p. 61).

Romans 2:1 – 3:

You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. ² Now we know that God’s judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. ³ So when you, a mere human being, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God’s judgment?

Matthew 18:21 - 35

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

²² Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

²³ “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. ²⁵ Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

²⁶ “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ ²⁷ The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

²⁸ “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

²⁹ “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’

³⁰ “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. ³¹ When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

³² “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. ³³ Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ ³⁴ In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

³⁵ “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

We may think we have a right to be offended—to be angry—because what has been done to us is worse than anything we would ever do. Brant points out that we can’t determine whether we have a right to be offended/angry or not because we can’t trust ourselves. As he puts it: “We are deceptive to the core.”

Jeremiah 17:9 *ESV: The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?*

Proverbs 14:12 *ESV: There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.*

Proverbs 3:5 – 7: *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil.*

“Perhaps I’m wrong on this, but I doubt people will love God more because of my list of moral accomplishments” (Hansen, 2023, p. 70).

“Refusing to be offended by others is a powerful door-opener to actual relationships. I don’t expect people who aren’t believers to act like followers of Jesus. Why should they? How about I give up the sanctimonious act and just love them, without thinking I need to change their moral behavior? Why not leave that to God?” (Hansen, 2023, p. 73).

“Christians do not condone unbiblical living; we redeem it” (Hansen, 2023, p. 77).

We redeem it by sharing the love of Christ and showing them what it means to trust Jesus for salvation. And when they trust Jesus, he is the one who can change them—not us.

Don’t condemn the culture; redeem it.