

# Does This Offend You?

by Rolfe Barnard

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*Rolfe Barnard's sermon explores the offensive nature of Jesus' teachings on sovereignty, depravity, and atonement, urging listeners to confront these truths for salvation.*

**Duration:** 21:10

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, John 6:26-27, John 6:37, John 6:44, John 6:53-54, John 6:59, John 6:66

**Topics:** "Sovereign Grace", "Gospel Offense"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses how the preaching of the word of God can have different effects on people. It can either draw them closer to God or push them away. The preacher emphasizes that the preaching of God's sovereign grace will always accomplish its purpose. The sermon focuses on three foundational truths preached by Jesus in John chapter 6, which caused many people to be offended and walk away. The preacher warns against being offended by the Gospel and urges listeners not to ignore the truth of their lostness and the need for salvation through Jesus Christ.

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## Transcript

I will open to the sixth chapter of the gospel according to John, John's gospel, the sixth chapter. There in the sixth chapter, we have a running controversy between the Lord Jesus Christ, whom you will hear, in the days of his flesh and body of his humiliation, and the religious leaders of the Jewish people. And here in this chapter, after the feeding of the five thousand, the marvelous miracle, the Lord begins to teach the people who were following him in great numbers at this time.

And in this sixth chapter of John, we find that his teaching, his proclaiming of truth about himself, was very offensive and became a stumbling stone in the way of the leaders of the people. And I want this morning to take out of this sixth chapter of John about three things that my Lord taught that were offensive then and are very offensive today. I think for the text, I'll just read beginning with verse 59 of the sixth chapter of John.

Verse 59 says, These things said he in the synagogue as he taught in Capernaum. Many therefore of his disciples, when they heard this, said, This is a hard saying. Who can hear it? When the Lord Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? Doth this offend you? You know, everything that my Lord Jesus did when he was there offended some people.

And he is offensive today. He's the rock of offense. For instance, his birth in the manger at Bethlehem was greatly offensive to the world.

My, the Lord of Glory has no business being born in a cow stable. And that is very offensive today. His common heritage offended them.

He didn't come from the high and mighty. And one, upon hearing or learning that Jesus was from the little province of Nazareth, is quoted in the scriptures saying, Can any good thing come out of Galilee? His death on the cross of Calvary was offensive then and it's offensive now. His second coming is offensive to religious people.

And it is, was then and it is today. And here in our text we find that his preaching greatly offended people of his day. On many occasions when our Lord would speak, the people would become so angry with him that they'd take up stones to stone him.

How does a modern preacher hope to get along with the world and please the unseeing crowd when they hated the Lord Jesus with such fury that they nailed him to a cross? My dear friend, the world loves its own. It hates God's people. It always has and it always will.

Our Lord sat down here, as recorded in the Gospel of John, chapter 6, and began to preach to these people. He started preaching to them along in verse 27 and 26. And after he brought his message, the people said, as I read in our text, This is a hard saying.

Who can hear it? This is just too much, they said. And the Lord met that quibble by saying, Does this offend you? And then he preached some more blessed truth. And the people, about 5,000, not counting the women and children, rose and walked off, leaving only the twelve disciples with the Lord Jesus.

They were offended at his gospel. They were stumbled at his gospel. Everything they clung to was being attacked by his teaching here in John, chapter 6. And my friends, the gospel of God's grace and the gospel of God acting in sovereignty offends people today just as much as it did these people whom we have the record here in John's gospel, chapter 6. It offended people then and it offends people now.

It will either drive people to the Savior or it will drive them away from him. It will either save or it will condemn. But blessed be unto God, the preaching of God acting in sovereign grace will always accomplish the purpose whereunto God Almighty has sent it.

Now I want us to look into this sixth chapter and see three great foundational truths. That our Lord Jesus at the height of his popularity preached and lost his crown. And as you follow me here, I hope many of you with your open Bible, I want to call your attention first to the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ preached the sovereignty of God.

Look in this sixth chapter, verse 37. Our Lord says, All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. Now there is sovereignty. There is God's will.

There is Christ coming down here appointed and delegated and set apart to accomplish the will of a sovereign God who must do as it seems good in his own sight. Now in our Lord we share as God's

prophet, as one thing dead certain, he put God Almighty on the throne. And it made those people angry.

And it does today. Any time on earth that any preacher anywhere enthrones God Almighty and gives unto him the sovereignty that belongs to him in all things, it will dead certainly offend the pride of all sinful unregenerated men. I do not care if the one who's offended be a church member, whether he's religious or not.

If he's unregenerated, the sovereignty of God, just the mention of it, will offend him. And when a preacher in this modern day up there is to stand for the great foundational teachings of God Almighty, acting as seen it good in his sight, the gospel of the glory of God, which is the gospel of the grace of God. And when today we take the crown off of the head of sinful man and put it where it belongs, on the head of a holy God, my friends, the pearls begin to fly and all hell will break loose.

Men today hate the sovereignty of God because it is offensive to their old proud hearts and because it leaves them paupers before God who does as he pleases, when he pleases, and to whom he pleases. But my friends, God's will is going to be done in all matters, whether in heaven or in the earth. The apostle Paul says God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

The apostle James says for that he ought to say, if the Lord will, we shall live and do this or do that. And the apostle John says for God hath put it in their hearts to fulfill his will. And again the apostle Paul will say, I will come to you shortly if the Lord will.

My friends, you and I need desperately to be conformed to the will of God in all things. But these people in my Lord's time grew angry and were offended because the Lord Jesus demanded that they be conformed to the will of God. And they openly rebelled against these demands, exactly as men do today.

But dear one, God Almighty never has saved a man on man's terms. God always saves sinners on his own terms. Does that offend you that there are many in the reach of these broadcasts that are greatly offended? We hear on every hand that schools and colleges and universities and seminaries and Bible schools are coming out flat-legged to say that the great doctrines that are having such a revival now will not be taught in this school or that school or the other.

And so our schools are manufacturing young preachers to go out and deny the very things that the Lord Jesus Christ solemnly set his stamp upon when he was here. And one of them was that the will of God must be done, that man must bow to the will of God, that God doesn't take men into his counsel in what he's decided to do, that God is very God, and that God is on the throne, and that man must bow to him. Does that offend you? The sovereignty of God was very offensive in the days of my Lord here on the earth, and it's very offensive now.

Let's look in this chapter and see a second great proof that our Lord Jesus taught these people, and by teaching it he lost his crowd, and they all took out on him and walked no more with him. And here in this chapter we see that our Lord Jesus Christ preached the total depravity of man and his inability. In verse 44 of this chapter the Lord said, No man can come to me in that strange language.

That's what he said. No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. And therefore the scriptures say a little later on in the chapter, Meaning therefore when they had heard this said, This is a hard thing who can bear it.

You know my Lord put man down in the gutter of this total depravity, dead in his trespasses and sin, depraved and corrupt, and this sort of preaching greatly offended them. My Lord put man in a spiritual grave, unable to rise in his own strength. My Lord put man on a cripple's bed, unable to walk.

My Lord put man on a blind man's stool, unable to see. And the people of his day were greatly offended, and the people today are greatly offended. But I tell you dear ones, it's not time now to deny these great truths.

My Lord taught them, and I do not care if every preacher in the country says, Well Brother Barnard, they just can't be preached. They disturb people and they mustn't be preached. My Lord preached them.

Well you say, Brother Barnard, they offend people. I know, but my Lord preached them. And surely we'll not be ashamed of any great truth that my Lord Jesus Christ while he was down here in controversy with his leader, he dared to preach them.

And I say to you, instead of being the time to deny these truths and skirt around them, it's time we preachers today deserted the modern day high pressure methods of trying to get men into the kingdom of God. And it's time we went back to the Bible with Holy Spirit regeneration and Holy Spirit conviction. I say it with shame that most of us preachers today will say, Oh yes, Brother Barnard.

I believe that God has elected his people to salvation from before the foundation of the world. And I believe that as we preach the word that the Holy Spirit will effectually call out God's sheep. And I believe that no man can come to the Father except the Spirit is on.

But they'll say that and then they'll turn right around and they'll use every high pressure method known to man to pull countless numbers of poor unregenerated sinners down the aisle to earn an invitation and dump them beneath the baptismal waters. Thousands of children are being sinned against in the modern day decision services held the middle Sunday of a so-called revival meeting. The Sunday school teacher sits with a little child describing how it goes on at church, or it's just that the Sunday school teacher sits with a little child and when the preacher asks who wants to go to heaven, the teacher pushes the little fellow out and down the aisle.

And I say it's a sin against God and it's a sin against the child who has witnessed no conviction nor repentance without which there's no salvation. That new sin said again, that man is a dead, depraved child and can no more save himself than a demon in hell. And the Holy Spirit must quicken him and awaken him and bring him to see his lost condition.

And then the Holy Spirit reveals the Lord Jesus to that sinner as his Savior and his Lord. And when this takes place, bless God you won't have to pull him down an aisle. He'll confess openly the Lord Jesus is his Lord and Savior.

My dear preacher brother, have you ever been convicted? You have never convicted and you never have saved a sinner and you never will. My dear one, the Lord God of heaven is the only author and the executor of salvation. Salvation is of the Lord.

All men need to hear the truth about themselves today. The Lord told these people the truth about themselves and it greatly offended them. But the Lord told them and they left them.

But the Lord told them. And they wouldn't listen to him. But the Lord told them about their awful condition.

So helplessly mired in the cords of their own lover's self and their own sinful practices that they couldn't come to the Lord except the Spirit of God drew them by his cords of love. Does this offend you? Does this offend you? Now, here in the sixth chapter of John I want to notice one other great truth that our Lord preached to these people. When they heard it, they said this is terrible teaching.

We just can't stand to listen to this. And they went away. Many therefore of his disciples departed and left him and walked no more with him.

How sad that is, yes. But the Lord didn't pull his punches. The Lord is being true to their soul.

The Lord was telling the truth. The Lord was pointing them to the kind of God God is, the kind of people they were. And I point them to the way of salvation.

For in this sixth chapter where he got in so much trouble and the people left him by the stairs, my Lord boldly preached what we call blood atonement. In verse 54, for instance, he said Whosoever eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day. Now, my dear ones, that was offensive then and it's offensive now.

The people in the days of the Lord resented what we moderns have heard of, described as slaughterhouse religion. These old people here that the Lord talked to had read in the old scriptures how that the Christ, the Messiah was supposed to live and reign forever and how that his kingdom was never to end. So they could not go along with this idea of the death on the cross and the atoning blood.

How offensive is the proclamation of the cross today. You preach works and people will applaud you. You preach baptism you can form your own denomination.

You preach church membership and you'll get along. You preach social religion or most anything you want to and the people will applaud you but God will be offended. But my brothers, you preach the cross proclaiming that death it's the death on the cross.

Preach it in all it's offense and shame. Preach it in it's humiliation. Preach it in it's goldenness, in it's bloodiness and then in it's victory.

God will applaud but the people will be offended. But Paul said what we must say I'd rather please God than men. This is one time we want to say move over Paul and let me say me too Paul.

The Lord Jesus Christ proclaimed blood atonement. He said the blood was shed. It is God's blood.

It is holy blood. It is precious blood. It is divine ascent blood.

It is saving blood. It is redeeming blood. It means the life laid down.

The life offered up of the Lord of Glory. And he said this is the basis upon which a holy God can deal with sin for men. Not upon your goodness but upon his life laid down.

My sinner friend let God speak to your heart today. Don't you join the church members and preachers all over this country that are fighting, spitting mad at the word of God. How they do hate these great truths that we've mentioned to you today.

How they do scoff at anyone who dares to try to preach that God Almighty is very God. How they do make fun of anybody who dares to talk about the desperate total conditions of lawlessness under which sinners are bound today. And how they do skirt around the awful implications of the death on the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Oh sinner friend don't join this religious crowd. The record of whom is given here in John chapter 6. Who when they heard the Lord preach these blessed truths they took out on him. They took out on him.

They said we won't listen to that. We're going to skedaddle away from here. We're going to get us a preacher that will prophesy unto us smoothing.

Don't you be offended sinner friend. Not do so. Don't you do it.

It'll cost you your soul. I tell you the cost of being offended at the cross as it is that flows from the lips of Christ is to go to hell. Don't be offended at the proclamation of the gospel of grace.

I say to you there is no other way for the sinner to be saved. I say to you that man is lost. That man is corrupt.

That man is without one thing to offer. And as dear brother Spurgeon used to say so very often in my hands no price I bring. Simply to the cross of Christ I cling.

That's your only hope sinner. You have nothing to offer. But Christ died.

Yea Christ is risen again. And said it's on the right hand of God. You could believe that he died for you and paid your sin debt and satisfied the holiness of God.

You could come to him in utter surrender. I pray that you can do so. What can wash away your sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

What can make you whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. It's still true. It's eternally true today.

And I pray for all who heard this message. Don't be offended at the cross as it is in Christ. But humble yourself in the sight of God and cry unto him for mercy.

It is my prayer in the name of him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood even the Lord Jesus Christ. And amen. And amen.

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