I. WELCOME, 15 mins.

Plan one to two icebreakers for the purpose of mixing around and getting group participation or getting acquainted.

II. WORSHIP, 20 mins.

Prayerfully choose a few songs to lead people into God’s presence. During this time, cell leaders will encourage cell members to listen to the Holy Spirit and release the words of strengthening, encouragement, and comfort they have received for the cell group, the church and nations. Upon each word shared, the cell leader will lead members by thanking and praising God for His promise and/or praying aloud together for the needs, etc.

During this time, the cell leader will also lead the group to pray aloud for: (1) the mission organization or daughter church that the cell group adopts (2) the church ministry needs (3) blessings for new comers, the sick.

MISSION ORGANIZATION: __________________, their needs: ________________
(Please contact the church if you don’t know the needs of the mission organization.)

CHURCH MINISTRY:
1. Equipping Class: How to Improve Your Relationship @ 1pm every Sunday, room G5
2. Intern Cell Leader Training: 9/15 @ 9:30am, room G10
3. Leader’s Retreat: 10/10-12
4. Mission Conference: 10/19-21, Cindy Jacob

III. WORD, 45 mins.

A. Sharing from last Sunday’s message.
1. What is the main message from last Sunday sermon? What did God say to you from the message?
2. How would you respond to the message? What action will you take after listening to the message?

B. Discussion Topic: “Overcoming Offense”

Offense is an unfortunate and unavoidable part of life. We all get offended from time to time, and we all have offended others, usually unintentionally. Some offenses are minor miscommunications and misunderstandings. Others are major relational meltdowns. Whether minor or major, if not handled properly, all offenses have the potential to become major roadblocks to spiritual progress.

Cause and Effect of Offense
1. **Insensitive words can cause offense.**
   *We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.*
   Matthew 15:12

   *The tongue has the power of life and death...*
   Proverbs 18:21

   **Questions**
   - In what ways do you sometimes offend with your tongue?
   - When has someone spoken death to you? Please share your experience.

2. **Correction can cause offense.**
   *Then the disciples came to him and asked, “Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?”*
   Matthew 15:12

   - Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for their hypocritical adherence to external religion. The disciples seemed to be upset that Jesus offended them.

   **Question**
   - Why does correction sometimes offend people?
   - What types of people are offended by correction?

3. **Unresolved offense destroys relationships.**
   *An offended brother is more unyielding than a fortified city.*
   Proverbs 18:19

   **Question**
   - When has someone spoken life to you? Please share your experience.
   - When has someone spoken death to you? Please share your experience.
Question
- What is a “fortified city”?
- How is an offended brother like a fortified city?
- Why do offended people become defensive and closed?

How to Resolve Offense

1. If you have offended someone, you should take the initiative to be reconciled.

23 “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

Matthew 5:23-24

Question
- What should you do if you know someone has something against you?
- What does it mean to be reconciled to your brother?

2. If someone has offended you, then you should forgive and forget.

A person’s wisdom yields patience; it is to one’s glory to overlook an offense.

Proverbs 19:11

He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.

Proverbs 17:9

- It takes wisdom and patience to overlook an offense.

Question
- Why is it so difficult to overlook offenses?
- What does it mean to cover an offense?
- Why should we not talk about our offenses to people who are not involved in the reconciliation process?

Personal Application

Questions
1. Do you know of anyone who has anything against you? What will you do about it? When?

2. Are you offended with anyone? What will you do about it?

3. What have you learned from this lesson and how will you put it into practice?