

The Attackers: The Pharisees & Scribes Are Offended by Jesus, Matt 15:10–14; Outside Pressure Should Never Offend a Mature Believer; Special Interest Groups Gain Power & Privilege by Being Offended; Knowing He Is a Target of the Dark Side, the Christian Warrior Is Never Offended, John 15:18; Standing Fast Inside the Bubble; Aorist Participles in Eph 6:14 ff.

Matthew 15:10 - After Jesus called the crowd to Him, He said to them, “Hear and understand.

v. 11- “It is not what enters into the mouth that defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man.”

v. 12 - Then the disciples came and said to Him, “Do You know that the Pharisees were offended [aorist passive indicative of σκανδαλίζω (*skandalizō*)] when they heard this statement?”

v. 13 - But He answered and said, “Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be uprooted.

v. 14 - “Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit.”

12. The Pharisees and scribes were desperately trying to trap the Lord in violation of the oral law (v. 1). On this occasion they protested that His disciples did not wash their hands before eating.
13. Jesus’ retort was to tell the crowd that consuming food with dirty hands does not defile a man but rather what come out of his mouth from the source of his defiled inventory of ideas.
14. This response challenged the oral code and upon hearing it the Pharisees and scribes are reported to have become “offended.”
15. The word “offended” is the aorist passive indicative of the verb **σκανδαλίζω (*skandalizō*)**. Its use in this passage is the subject of this excerpt:

Here *skandalizō* is more than just “feeling hurt.” Naturally this is part of it in view of Jesus’ personal attack on them (v. 8f.). But the primary meaning is “deep religious offense” at the preaching of Jesus, and this both causes and includes denial and rejection of Jesus. One may see this from the reply of Jesus. By their *skandalizō* the Pharisees show that they are a devilish plant which is to be rooted up. The presupposition is that he who is from God will show this ... by hearing and receiving the Word of Jesus. The metaphor of the blind leading the blind carries the same stress as *skandalizō*. For blindness means unbelief. As blindness and falling into a ditch are inevitably connected, so are unbelief and destruction.¹

16. This is another constative aorist. It views the unbeliever under attack but who is unable to stand fast under the pressure.
17. The passive voice indicates that the Pharisees and scribes receive the action of being offended, while the indicative mood establishes this as a statement of fact.
18. Usually those who claim they are offended are really using it as a tactic to defend their own status quo.
19. The Pharisees and scribes are experts in the oral law and with it they have acquired power over the people of Palestine.

¹ Gustav Stählin, “σκανδαλίζω,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), 7:350–51.

20. They oppose Jesus because He consistently challenges their power by simply telling the truth.
21. In the highly politicized environment of our day, those who wish to game the system for their collective advantage form “special interest” groups.
22. These organizations claim minority status under the free-exercise clause found in Section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment.
23. Characteristics that segregate these groups from other members of society are claimed as reasons why they should receive special dispensations from government.
24. This imputes to them a form of power over the larger population whenever an assumed violation of their unique characteristics occurs.
25. To access this power, each group is ever alert to learn of any comment or act that in its view besmirches their privileged standing.
26. Once identified, leadership claims that members of the group have been “offended” and legal action is taken.
27. Therefore, the act of being offended becomes a rhetorical veil to conceal while advancing their hidden agenda: additional privileges, easy money, and, most of all, greater power for their leadership.
28. Note in our passage, the Pharisees and scribes received the action of being offended by Jesus’ comments. They are cunningly using the alleged slight by the Lord to communicate their opposition to those who are being influenced by Him.
28. A mature believer should never be offended by another’s comments. It’s the devil’s world and his emissaries are in the business of pestering the pesterable.
29. The prepared Christian warrior knows he is a target of the Dark Side. He has oriented and adjusted to the reality of being the hunted and the despised.
30. The reason he is not offended is because he realizes he is a representative of his Lord Jesus Christ, who warned us with this verse in:

John 15:18 - “If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.”

31. The Lord states that the world hated Him first, yet there is no report in any passage of Scripture that the Lord was offended by His attackers.
32. He also indicates that we will be hated by the world. With the required panoply dressing our souls we should never be offended either.
33. Therefore, in the face of these attackers we are commanded in verse 14 to “Stand fast in our rank!”
34. The question arises as to where is our place in the ranks? Filled by the Holy Spirit and being led by inculcated doctrine, we live our lives according to divine guidance.
35. Our place in the ranks of the Lord’s army is inside the bubble. As we do battle in the Invisible War, we are to stand fast wherever we encounter opposition from the world.

36. We are commanded to produce the action of the verb *hístēmi* by utilizing the elements of our armor to stand fast and resist.
37. Verse 14 continues with the conjunction **οὖν (oún)**: “consequently.” This is followed by the aorist middle participle of the verb **περιζώννυμι (perizōnnumi)**: “to wrap around,” “to gird.”
38. There are four aorist participles that occur in verses 14–17. These are relatively rare since they are also imperatives.
39. The principle that governs the aorist participle states that the action of the aorist participle precedes the action of the main verb.
40. This may also be stated, “the aorist adverbial participle usually denotes antecedent time to that of the controlling verb.”²
41. The main or controlling verb is **ἵστημι (hístēmi)**: “Stand fast.” This is a command to hold your ground against the attackers. They may be categorized as assaults that occur from thought, system, people, and disaster testing.

² Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 614.