

## The Death of Bitterness

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*"The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love."* **Gal 5:6**

*"It is impossible that no offenses should come..."* **Luke 17:1**

**Col 3:13** Bear with each other and **forgive one another** if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

### I. The Dangers of a Hidden Root

**Heb 12:15** See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled.



### II. The Germination of Bitterness

#### A. The Seed—A Hurt

**Eph 4:26a** *Be angry and do not sin;*

#### B. The Soil — A heart that harbors Hostility

**Eph 4:26b** *Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,*

**Prov 4:23a** *Above all else, guard your heart,*

"Hate is the most self-righteous of all emotions... No one ever feels the pleasure of self-righteousness with such lip-smacking satisfaction as the person chewing on his own hate. This is why we love our hate, coddle it, feed it, stroke it and above all justify it. But let it settle in for a while and take over the best rooms in our souls and it becomes a disagreeable guest who will not leave when our party is over." ~ **Lewis Smedes**

**Eph 4:26-27** *"In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27 and do not give the devil a foothold.*

**Pro 4:23** *Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.*

**Mat 12:35** *A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.*

**Mark 7:21-23** *For it is from within, out of a person's heart...all these evils come from inside and defile a person."*

### **III . The Devastation of Bitterness**

#### **A. It Troubles You Personally**

**Mat 18:21-35** *...his master delivered him to the tormentors...*

**Eph 4:31-32** *31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

*"Bitterness is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die."*

#### **B. It Defiles Many**

#### **C. It Grieves the Heart of God**

**Eph 4:30** *And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.*

### **IV. The Uprooting of Bitterness**

*"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."* **Eph 4:32**

#### **1) Identify Who you are Angry with.**

**2) Decide What was Taken from you.** What specifically do you feel like they owe you?

#### **3) Make a Decision to Cancel the debt.**

**4. Dismiss the Case.** The Greek Present tenses means accomplished, and also includes ongoing action. In other words, this final process centers on a daily decision not to reopen the case. What makes this so difficult is that our feelings don't automatically follow our decision to forgive. And while forgiving someone doesn't erase our memories, it does mean "*We **take captive every thought** to make it obedient to Christ*" (2 Cor 10:5). We refuse to ruminate on and relitigate the offense, because, by God's grace the "case is closed"!

***"Forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."***

"If you want to learn about your own need for forgiveness go to the cross and if you want to learn about forgiving others hang out there for a while."

**~ Charles Spurgeon**

**Matt 6:12,15** *"Forgive us our debts /sins as we also have forgiven our debtors... <sup>15</sup>if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.*

Forgiveness is the gift that ensures my freedom from a prison of bitterness and resentment. When I accept forgiveness from God, I'm set free from the penalty of my sin; when I extend forgiveness to my adversary, there is a sense in which I am free from his sin as well.