

## **“Bitter or Better”**

Matt 18:21-35

*Renewal – A Series Inspired By Eph 4:17-32*

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**Who is that person...** who you would have a hard time with if he or she visited this church service? \_\_\_\_\_

- This person would cause your blood pressure to spike because you're \_\_\_\_\_.

**We can all relate to this...** because Jesus said, “It is impossible that no offenses would come.” (Lk 17:1 – NKJV)

- The word offense is taken from the Greek word *skandalon* (SCAN-dah-long), which means a snare or \_\_\_\_\_.
- Being ensnared to \_\_\_\_\_ is very \_\_\_\_\_. It is a significant spiritual root to disease. It negatively affects every area of your life, not to mention generations to come. (Exod 34:7)

**“This is a *really* big deal.** (Mt 6:14-15) And I want to be \_\_\_\_\_, not bitter. *Help!*” Happy to be of service.

**Matt 18:21-35**

### **YOUR FORGIVENESS IS NOT...**

1. ignoring, denying, enabling, or continuing what happened
2. enabling someone to continue to harm themselves or others
3. forgetting (Jeremiah 31:34)
4. trust and reconciliation

### **YOUR FORGIVENESS IS...**

1. replacing demonic strongholds with Holy Spirit anointing
2. forgiving a debt owed to you
3. an act of faith in God to deal with them justly
4. getting the sin/hurt/burden away from your future

#### **The wisdom I learned on my journey to experiencing A NEW FREEDOM from unforgiveness:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ that your offender did the best they could with what they had. Pray, “Forgive them, Lord...”
2. \_\_\_\_\_ in the understanding of the price God paid to forgive you of your sins. The greater revelation of this, the easier it will be to forgive others.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ with the action steps below.

*SIDE NOTE: The lists regarding “What Forgiveness Is/Is Not” are credited to the message “What Forgiveness Is and Is Not” on the YouTube channel “Pastor Mark Driscoll.” The video is on his playlist, “Real Men.”*

#### **Your action steps to take:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ a letter to your offender. Pour out your heart. Keep going and going until there's nothing more to share regarding how you were wronged, how you suffered, and so on. Then, write down “BUT I FORGIVE YOU.”
2. \_\_\_\_\_ the letter as an act of worship, thanking your Heavenly Father for the grace you needed to forgive.

**In closing:** You have an opportunity to experience A NEW FREEDOM *right now!* Pull out the ¼” sheet of paper in your info packet. Write down how your offender wronged you. Then, write down “BUT I FORGIVE YOU.” Then, walk up to the garbage can as you're tearing the paper into tiny pieces. Throw it away! Thank God for giving you the grace to do so!

**TURN OVER FOR THE GOING DEEPER QUESTIONS**

## GOING DEEPER QUESTIONS FOR “BITTER OR BETTER” – 1/21/24

Go through this note sheet and discuss with your growth group and/or family at the dinner table... as well as friends, relatives, coworkers, neighbors, and/or school mates. Bring this note sheet to your work or school and discuss it with your co-worker or school mate over lunch. Read the main passage and look up all of the supporting verses on the other side of this note sheet. Pray with one another.

1. If you have a pulse and a properly working frontal lobe, then you can relate to being offended. When this happens, we'll either end up trapped or not.
  - a. Please share with your group the details behind the last time you were offended. (Don't share any names, please.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Did you end up finding yourself struggling with any bitterness/resentment/unforgiveness? Y/N If yes, then how did you get free from that? Or are you still struggling? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Please remember that what is shared in the group stays in the group. NVC has a strict confidentiality policy.
2. On the note sheet, there are four things that forgiveness IS NOT. Which one of the four made the greatest impression on you and why? \_\_\_\_\_
3. On the note sheet, there are also four things that forgiveness IS. Which one of the four made the greatest impression on you and why? \_\_\_\_\_
4. In the box with the statement, “The wisdom I learned on my journey...” had three points. Be encouraged to discuss all three points with your group. How specifically could applying those bits of wisdom help towards the goal of achieving A NEW FREEDOM from unforgiveness?
  - a. How specifically could applying point #1 help? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. How about point #2? \_\_\_\_\_
5. The third point points you to the action steps at the bottom of the note sheet.
  - a. Regarding these two action steps, do you feel like it's necessary to follow through with this in this present season of your life? Y/N Why or why not? If no, do you feel like a family member might disagree with you? Y/N Please share your thoughts on this. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. In the “In closing...” section, an opportunity was provided for you to experience healing and deliverance by simply writing on the ¼” paper, tearing it up, and throwing it in the trash can.
  - a. If you took advantage of that opportunity, please share your testimony as to how your Heavenly Father responded.