



ACTS

The Church Empowered
for Mission



CALL TO WORSHIP

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:38-39

ACTS 25:1-27

1 Now three days after Festus had arrived in the province, he went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea. 2 And the chief priests and the principal men of the Jews laid out their case against Paul, and they urged him, 3 asking as a favor against Paul that he summon him to Jerusalem because they were planning an ambush to kill him on the way. 4 Festus replied that Paul was being kept at Caesarea and that he himself intended to go there shortly.

ACTS 25:1-27

7 When he had arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many and serious charges against him that they could not prove. 8 Paul argued in his defense, "Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I committed any offense." 9 But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, said to Paul, "Do you wish to go up to Jerusalem and there be tried on these charges before me?" 10 But Paul said, "I am standing before Caesar's tribunal, where I ought to be tried. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you yourself know very well.

ACTS 25:1-27

24 And Festus said, "King Agrippa and all who are present with us, you see this man about whom the whole Jewish people petitioned me, both in Jerusalem and here, shouting that he ought not to live any longer. 25 But I found that he had done nothing deserving death. And as he himself appealed to the emperor, I decided to go ahead and send him."



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ACT 25:1-27 EFFECTS OF BITTERNESS

Characters

- **Paul (Saul)** – Paul was an Apostles who planted churches in the Mediterranean region.
- **Porcius Festus** – The 5th Roman Procurator (governor) of Judea. He replaced Felix.
- **Paul's Jewish Enemies** – They planned to murder Paul if given the opportunity.
- **Herod Agrippa II** – Last king of the Herodian Dynasty. He ruled as a client king of Rome over several territories outside of Judea.
- **Berenice** – Sister of Herod Agrippa II. She was the daughter of Herod Agrippa I who God killed in Acts 12.



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THE JEWS TRY TO TRICK FESTUS IN AN ATTEMPT TO KILL PAUL (25:1-5):

- + While the new governor, Porcius Festus, was visiting Jerusalem, some of the prominent Jews asked him to bring Paul to Jerusalem.
- + They were planning to ambush him on the way and kill him.
- + But Festus told them Paul would remain in Caesarea, and they would need to travel there if they wanted to make an accusation against him.



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PAUL ON TRIAL BEFORE FESTUS (25:6-12):

- + A few days later, Festus returned to Caesarea and summoned Paul to hear his case.
- + The Jews from Jerusalem were present, and they accused Paul of many serious crimes that they could not prove.
- + Paul defended himself by telling Festus he had done nothing wrong, not against the Jewish Law, not against the Temple, or against Caesar.
- + When Festus revealed he wasn't going to judge Paul's case in an unbiased way, Paul appealed his case to Caesar in Rome.



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AGRIPPA AND BERNICE REQUEST TO HEAR PAUL'S CASE (25:13-27):

- + After several days, King Agrippa and his sister, Bernice, arrived in Caesarea.
- + Festus recounted Paul's trial to Agrippa and told him he was unsure what to write to Caesar regarding Paul's crimes because the Jews hadn't presented a compelling case against him.
- + Agrippa requested to hear Paul for himself, and it was arranged for the next day.
- + When they had all gathered, Paul was brought into the audience hall and Festus announced that the reason for their meeting was to understand the charges against Paul so he could write a letter to Caesar explaining Paul's appeal.

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ACT 25:1-27 EFFECTS OF BITTERNESS

1. The Rooting of Bitterness

- The seed of bitterness is a hurt; intentional, unintentional, imagined, or even connected to God's discipline.
- The soil is a heart that harbors the hurt rather than dealing with it through God's grace.



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2. The Damage of Bitterness

- The root is often hidden beneath the surface.
- bitterness is an underground root that may remain hidden while attitudes and behavior reveal its presence.



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Hebrews 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

- The effects reach beyond the individual into relationships and the wider community.



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What bitterness eventually produces →

Eph 4:31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

bitterness → wrath → anger → clamor → evil speaking → malice.

In Christ → kindness → tenderhearted → forgiving → mercy →
grace



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3. The Uprooting of Bitterness

God reveals it.

His grace removes it.

He replaces it with goodness and kindness.

The ultimate answer is forgiveness rooted in the grace we ourselves have received from God.



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Leviticus 19:18 says:

“You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.”

In Romans 13:8–10, Paul writes:

“For the commandments, ‘You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,’ and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Then he concludes:

“Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”



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This becomes even more interesting when you put Paul alongside Jesus.

When Jesus was asked about the greatest commandment, He joined Deuteronomy 6:5 with Leviticus 19:18:

Love God

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart...”

→ Deuteronomy 6:5

Love neighbor

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

→ Leviticus 19:18

Jesus says:

“On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

→ Matthew 22:40



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There is a beautiful gospel trajectory in Paul's display of it:

The Law commands:

Love your neighbor as yourself.

Jesus embodies:

Love your neighbor sacrificially.

The gospel creates:

People capable of loving because God's love has been poured into their hearts through the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5).

Therefore Paul says:

“Love is the fulfilling of the law.” (Romans 13:10)

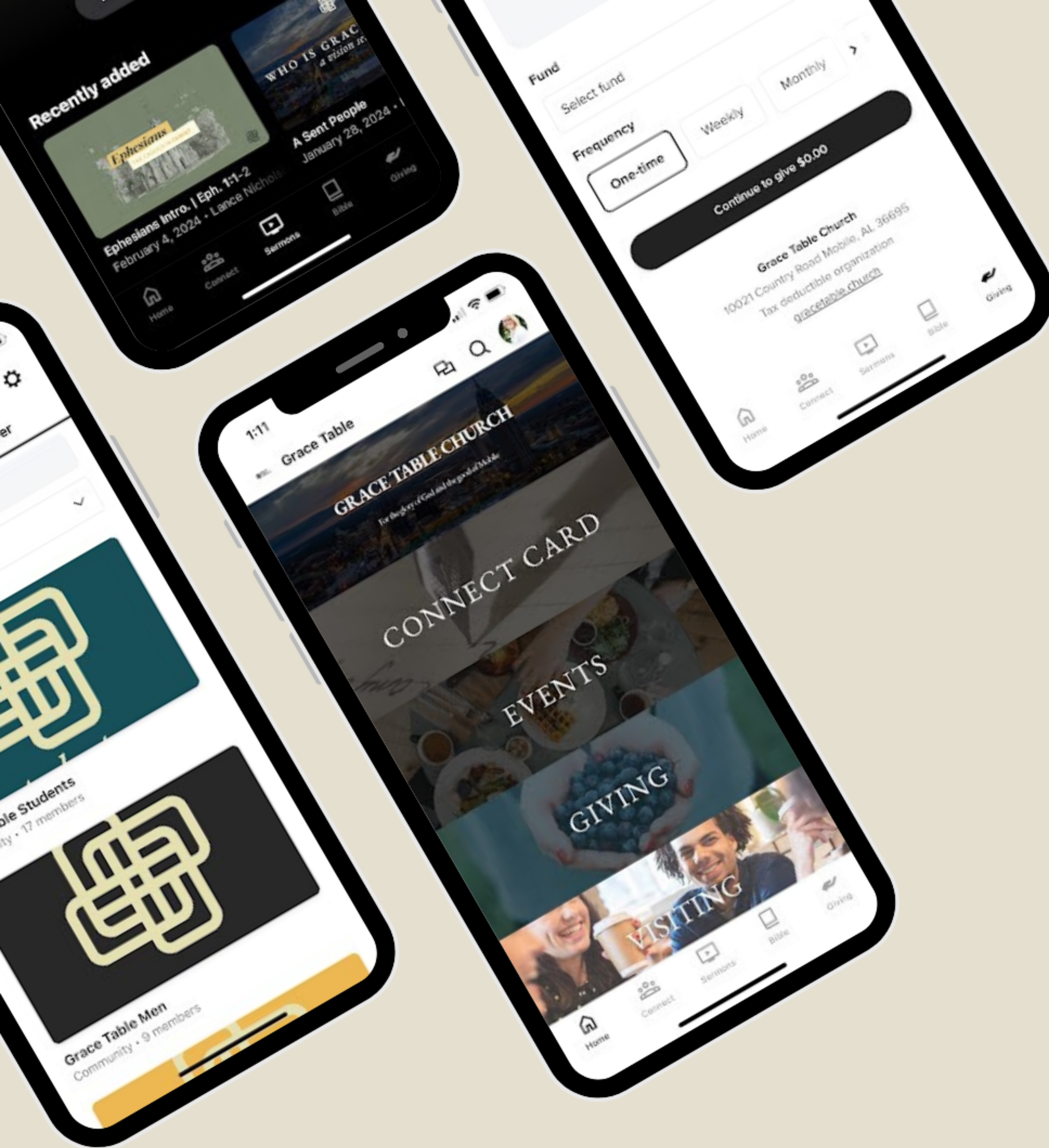
the opposite of bitterness and vengeance isn't merely “letting it go”; biblically, it is learning to love the person toward whom you could have held the grudge. 



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BENEDICTION

Leader:

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship
of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

-2 Corinthians 13:14

People:

And also with you.