



**Attacks From the Enemy
Continuing Problems with Legalism and Hypocrisy
Acts 15:35–41
Galatians 2:11–14**

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The first church counsel has concluded, and the ministry Paul and Barnabas have there in Antioch continues. That does not mean the issue of legalism is a once and done thing though since we still see it today. What we see here is the first time a tactic still in use today takes place in the church. There are those who insist on following the law who participated in the conference and as is with most who prefer



false teaching to the truth, no is not an answer, just a challenge to bypass and overcome. Paul will be dealing with this tactic later in his ministry as we do in churches today. Let's look at Galatians 2.

Galatians 2:11–14

“But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For prior to the coming of some men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and separate himself, fearing those from the circumcision. The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, “If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?” (NASB 2020)

What we see is the Satanically inspired creation of a traveling group of “teachers” who allege having authority from James and the church in Jerusalem, but they are operating on their own. What they will do in Antioch will be the cause of the first potential church split, the wounding of multiple relationships and the alteration of how ministry is done in the future.

It would wind up being a major problem in the early church and it is still a major problem today and it all comes straight from the pit of hell.

It will also form the basis of future teachings from Paul, Peter as well as John, Jude and James. It is the problem of the false apostate teacher and false apostate “theology.” This is not a simple different interpretation of scripture; this is the deliberate twisting of scripture and the teaching of another Jesus. A total false theology.

This fallout of deception results from the conference. It will impact the relationship between Paul and Barnabas as well as their ministry and relationships with the leadership in Antioch and with Peter.

This group of “visiting” teachers have a goal and it is not one from the Holy Spirit. They are apostates. Not my word, but Paul's.

Galatians 2:4

“Yet it was a concern because of the **false brothers** secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy on our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to enslave us.” (NASB 2020)

This first run of a Satanic inspired tactic takes place prior to the beginning of the second missionary journey. Of course it would. It will place Paul on one side of the issue and the leadership of the church, Barnabas and Peter on the other.

This is the first potential church split in history, and it takes place in Antioch. We do not see it in Acts, but it is recorded for us by Paul himself in the letter he wrote to the church in Galatia as they were dealing with the same issue of legalism there. The timing is around Acts 15:35.

One of the tactics of apostate false teachers is stealth. One of the things the scriptures are clear on, in both the Old and New Testaments is this, false prophets/teachers, are apostates. That definition alone means we do not give grace to them, acknowledge their teaching or even tolerate one iota what they teach.

Today, they show up online making outrageous assertions about the scriptures. And some have even embedded themselves into churches which they use as a base of operation to spread their deceptive poison across the world into other churches.



This is done with podcasts, YouTube videos, TikTok shorts, books, teaching videos and via one of the most deceptive processes I have seen, song lyrics which reinforce their false theology and teaching. There has never been a time, here in the last days, where we must be Bereans and test pretty much everything.

Peter learned from what we will be looking at as he will later say the following.

2 Peter 2:1

"But false prophets also arose among the people, just as **there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies**, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction." (ESV)

Peter is very clear; he does not tell us they may show up. Or that this might be a problem for you in the church, be on the lookout for it.

No, he is incredibly clear, "there will be false teachers among you."

Where did Peter learn this? How did come to his conclusion? Antioch.

Did word get back to Jerusalem of these false teachers alleging close support from James and the folks in Jerusalem.

Apparently so, Jude shifted his entire focus to this topic because it was becoming such a problem.

Jude 3–4

"Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. **For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God** into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ." (ESV)

This was becoming such a serious issue that Jude changed what he intended to write about to instead encourage the church to contend for the faith.

Jude is seeing these roaming packs of apostate false teachers coming into the church with forged documents and teaching as if they were the authority. It caused a lot of issues which can be seen clearly in the letters of Paul, Peter, Jude, James, and John.

They still run in packs today. The New Apostolic Reformation, Prosperity Gospel, and others. Their signature is taking the scriptures out of context to meet the eisegesis they wish to use them for and support what they are saying.

Sin is insidious, Satan is devious, why would we ever think we would not have to contend with this.

To understand a bit of how someone sneaks into the church in order to teach heresy is simple, they do not start off teaching that way. Those who engage in this activity, even though they may appear to be real and genuine teachers of the word, have ulterior motives and by watching how they were doing it then, Peter warns us of their modus operandi, and it still applies. We already learned the stealth component from him. They are okay with the long game of deception.



Things to look for include where did they go to school, where have they ministered in the past, what do they really believe. There are reasons why some denominations have those who would be servants in them memorize faith statements.

2 Peter 2:2–3

“And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. And **in their greed they will exploit you with false words**. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.” (ESV)

That leaves you the impression it is all about the Benjamins, and many times, that is indeed the case.

The King James Version translation is a bit more aggressive here in my opinion. It removes any doubt we may have of what Peter is saying.

2 Peter 2:1–3 “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as **there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.**” (The Holy Bible: King James Version 2009, 2 Peter 2:1-3)

What Did Peter Just Say?

- False teachers – read unbelievers. Treat them that way.
- Secrecy – beware of small groups with unapproved books.
- Damnable heresies – wow, that’s clear.
- Denial of Jesus Christ, they teach another Jesus.
- Their future is rather dubious, swift destruction.
- They have a following, lots of likes, television on top of You Tube, best selling books, mega churches, multimillion dollar homes and all of the toys.
- They speak evil of the truth. Or don’t talk about it at all and give you a Ted Talk instead.
- They way they treat the Bible makes unbelievers do the same.
- They want things, stuff, money, goodies and more and more of them too.
- They make you and me into nothing more than merchandise. We are used for awhile, sucked dry of resources, and then thrown away for someone newer and shinier.
- They are all going to hell unless they repent, guaranteed.

That is pretty clear. And don’t make the mistake of giving those who do this the caveat of being a Christian, they aren’t, they are apostates.

Matthew 7:18–20

“A good tree is not able to bear bad fruit, nor a bad tree to bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. **So then, you will recognize them by their fruit.**” (NET 2nd ed.)

Those who are truly born again cannot lose their salvation, but they can backslide and lose their reward but not their salvation. But an apostate, a pretender, a hypocrite, they have never experienced saving faith. Some though, do come to Christ.



Costi Hinn, a former prosperity gospel apostate, talks about what happened to him when he realized where he was and what his need truly was and he ceased to be, an apostate. “I saw in my mind the faces of so many hurting people and was broken to pieces over the role I had played in exploiting them with false hope. For so long, I had wanted answers but couldn’t find them. Now I could finally see the full truth. Over the course of what seemed to be hours, I repented of my sins, false teachings, and life of hypocrisy. I confessed to God that I had twisted his gospel for greedy gain, and I asked him to forgive me and give me a fresh start. I committed to studying the truth, preaching the truth, and standing up for the truth no matter what the cost. The real Jesus was now my Lord, and the real gospel was now my life.” (Hinn 2019, 141)

In these last days, trust me, these deceivers are here. Paul saw the first version, legalists who were teaching a different Jesus. One who demanded conformity with the Judaic law. I am going to use the term we saw in the KJV, how pernicious can these people be?

Paul and Barnabas had returned back to Antioch after the conference and were busy with ministry. Yes, the leadership was Jewish, but most of the church was gentile. Peter, at some point, arrived in town and began to minister with them. “Peter, who had apparently been staying in Antioch for some time, had been in the habit of “eating with” his Gentile brothers and sisters (the verb συνήσθιεν [synēsthien] is in the imperfect tense, signaling continuous or repeated action).” (Moo 2013, 146)

Not really a big deal, totally within the parameters of what James wrote about. But something happened when another group from Jerusalem arrived. Peter must apparently know some of them and they will indeed gas light Peter into submission. Paul says they were from James, most likely they said they were from James, but not actually sent by him. We are not told the why of why they were there.

They would relate they were there to help, but in the group, or per Paul, the entire group, were those who had been advocating for legalism and the following of the law. Let’s look again at Galatians 2.

Galatians 2:11–14

“But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. **For prior to the coming of some men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and separate himself, fearing those from the circumcision. The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.** But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, “If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?” (NASB 2020)

Before the team arrived from Jerusalem, what was going on was apparently a well-accepted practice in the church. “At the time of Peter’s visit it was already an established custom in the Antioch church for Jewish and Gentile believers to enjoy free table-fellowship with one another, apparently on an equal footing which knew no conditions or restrictions. The impression given by our text thus goes against the assumption which is sometimes made that the fellowship between Jewish and Gentile Christians was facilitated by mutual consideration, with the Gentile believers continuing to keep a group of minimal rules such as the “precepts of Noah” which they already observed before becoming Christians. The text further implies that Peter came into a situation which he found neither unusual nor uncongenial. By eating freely with the Gentiles Peter on his part was in effect declaring the Christian Jew as well as the Christian Gentile to be free from the law. (Fung 1988, 107)

Post Jerusalem conference, it was expected behavior. Brothers and sisters, sitting down and having table fellowship together.



But then a team arrives from Jerusalem to include, it appears, some of those who were so verbally inspired in the debate in Jerusalem.

“When the Judaizers saw Peter, the great Jewish apostle, eating with Gentiles...they apparently jumped all over him. They even used James’ name to support their position. Of course, James did not support their position or false teaching (see Ac. 15:24). However, Peter weakened under their attack and withdrew himself from close fellowship with the Gentiles. When Peter withdrew, the inevitable happened: the church split. The church became tragically divided just as any church does when a leader becomes a man-pleaser and begins to follow critics and cliques.” (Leadership Ministries Worldwide 2010, 45) Even Barnabas goes there as well.

And now we have gas lighting, lying about and to others, to achieve your “theological” and control goals. By the way, a church split is usually the goal of the apostate false teacher. One of two approaches take place.

If the false teacher has achieved some level of authority, or they are now the senior pastor, this sudden shift to where they were driving all along is a way to cull the herd. The goal is to get those who are wanting to be doctrinally correct, to want to leave. And yes, they will indeed do things to you to make that happen even faster.

I find it amazing that the changes begin as rather subtle things that at first, you give grace to, thinking a misspoken word here or there, but then there is the day where you hear something and when you apply Acts 17:11 to it, it doesn’t pass the test at all. Some hang in there for awhile and keep testing, others confront and ask questions.

For those who confront, it is an early exit. You are fired as a member of the congregation and it really does not matter how long you have been there or how faithful you were to the Lord. The now exposed apostate false teacher has achieved some of what they wanted and as you leave, you are accompanied by gas lighting taking place after departure as to the why you left. A twisting of 1 John 2:19.

Those still hanging in there either remain out of blind loyalty, or soon they go packing as well. The outcome being looked for is a replacement of them by more compliant wanna be sheep who are willing to be led astray, and today there are many who go there.

2 Timothy 4:3–4

“For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but **having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.**” (ESV)

Yes, Paul did learn that in Antioch. In these last days, the time is not coming, it has arrived. By the time Paul wrote this to Timothy, he had already experienced this several times.

If those who are pushing the false teaching are not in positions of leadership or authority, the goal is the same, to cull the herd. I have caught these folks teaching the youth, wanting to teach the youth, teaching goofy theology in a growth group while developing a following for themselves, or standing just outside the auditorium and cornering folks. But in this case, the intent is to steal sheep away from the flock.

Welcome to the manner in which some who represent the Hebrew Root’s Movement, hyper Calvinism, hyper Pentecostalism, Word of Faith, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons or the cult of the month have chosen to grow their congregations. And then there is always the gas lighting that takes place to draw others away from sound teaching to that which is false. Many times, a liver quiver or alleged move of the Holy Spirit is produced. It may be a move of the spirit, just not the Holy Spirit.



Unfortunately, I have lived long enough to see all the above.

Here in Antioch, Paul is literally blown away with what he is seeing. The potential for damage that he and Barnabas saw with the insistence on legalism has followed them back to Antioch and is in the process of dividing the church unless he does something about it and quickly. The infection has spread to Peter, Barnabas and all the Jews.

Paul loves the church, he also loves those who were there in the ministry with him and as he sees them, including leadership being drawn into hypocrisy, his heart is seriously grieved. Paul loves enough to confront.

Those who confront the wandering pastor or teacher as they move further south, also love enough to try for course correction. What we see here in Antioch is that there are those who are saved, and there are those who are apostate. If Christ once had a foothold, repentance is indeed possible but if it does not take place, Jesus was rather up front in Revelation 2 & 3 to those churches who were in need of repentance and what would happen if they didn't. This is why so many churches have simply disappeared.

If you confront and you are ignored, gas lighted, shunned or churched, you have stepped out in faith representing the Lord and can now join many of us who have also had our spiritual heads handed to us. Here is the thing, the one doing that, if they are believers, are on the way to a huge fall. Many who take this path are not believers, and never have been believers, but they know how to look like they are. They are listening to the devil and will drive for division no matter what. That is Satanic and has nothing to do with what the Lord wants in His church.

Paul confronts because his heart is that of Jesus.

Peter, of all people Peter, he folded. He became a hypocrite, a man pleaser. In other words, he was right back at the same place he was in when he was warming his hands and denying the Lord a third time. How in the world did he get there? He took Barnabas and all the Jewish believers with him into hypocrisy.

Enter Paul.

Galatians 2:14

"But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, "If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?" (NASB 2020)

Paul, publicly and in front of the entire congregation in Antioch, called out Peter. An early example of where he winds up in 1 Timothy 5.

If you believe you are immune from a false teacher who wants to take you and me in hypocrisy, take another look at who got sucked into this sin. Peter, "The Peter" that was with Jesus, "The Peter" who denied Jesus and "The Peter" who was restored by Jesus. Now he finds he must repent and be restored yet again because he is in the process of causing the first church split in the history of the world. He failed.

He was a hypocrite, earlier at the conference he had provided key eyewitness testimony, but he failed to follow up and do what he said.

The folks from Jerusalem showed up and applied pressure. He gave in. This is the same guy who confronted the Sanhedrin multiple times even telling them (Acts 4:19-20) he would follow God and not man.



Or another view, the folks from Jerusalem showed up and saw what was going on and said they would provide a report back to James in Jerusalem. In other words, engaged in gas lighting Peter. He knew them and assumed they had authority which they did not have, so, he changed his behavior.

What this shows us is what can happen if we do not remain close to the Lord and stay empowered with the Holy Spirit at all times. Deception today is all about getting you and me to comply.

Earlier we saw in Galatians 2 that Paul had a problem with the way some were honoring the leadership in Jerusalem. Now we know why. But Peter, maybe not so much.

Peter knew, thanks to being with Jesus (Mark 2:15-17), that eating with gentiles was not wrong. But knowing that did not stop him from the political game he was now playing. Due to his leadership position, others were copying his actions.

We see that Peter, contrary to what Jesus taught him, was honoring one person over another, or rather a group over another group. He was honoring the legalists over the word provided by James.

What Paul points out for us is this, as followers of Jesus Christ, we cannot have double standards. We cannot have a standard for others versus a different one for ourselves. We cannot have a standard for one group of believers versus another, in other words, being a two-faced hypocrite. We are not to be hypocrites...ever.

If Peter could get sucked in, all of us can. Paul even wrote about it as a potential problem.

1 Corinthians 10:12

"Therefore let the one who thinks he stands watch out that he does not fall." (NASB 2020)

Peter should remember what Jesus taught Matthew 7.

Matthew 7:3–5

"And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own? How can you think of saying to your friend, 'Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,' when you can't see past the log in your own eye? Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye." (NLT)

Paul confronted Peter. The situation was public and very urgent. As time would go by, he would think about that and make some recommendations for us if we find ourselves having to confront an elder or leader.

1 Timothy 5:19–22

"Do not listen to an accusation against an elder unless it is confirmed by two or three witnesses. Those who sin should be reprimanded in front of the whole church; this will serve as a strong warning to others. I solemnly command you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus and the highest angels to obey these instructions without taking sides or showing favoritism to anyone. **Never be in a hurry about appointing a church leader.** Do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure." (NLT)

By the way, false teachers like to gloss over this as well and will be okay with only one witness, usually a trusted follower.

Jesus gives instruction as well on confrontation of sin within the church and yes, this too is also maligned and misused by those who are false teachers as well. It has shown up in multiple accounts as prima facie evidence resulting in the removal of the pastor who had left the reservation and engaged in using it to



achieve his personal goals over that of the Lord. Again, backslidden pastors who have left sound doctrine, as well as those who were always apostate, go down in flames rather publicly when the time comes.

Matthew 18:15–18

“If another believer sins against you, **go privately and point out the offense**. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back. But **if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again**, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. **If the person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church**. Then if he or she won’t accept the church’s decision, treat that person as a pagan or a corrupt tax collector. “I tell you the truth, whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.” (NLT)

I have witnessed immediate movement to the third step without any conversation at all. Again, a clear sign of abuse and apostasy.

What happens here in Antioch? Paul was watching what was going on and apparently, very publicly, confronted all who were caught up in the apostasy.

I wish Paul or Doctor Luke had provided us more detail. Instead, we see this in Acts 15.

Acts 15:35–41

“But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also. (Galatians 2:11-14 takes place) After some days Paul said to Barnabas, “Let’s return and visit the brothers and sisters in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are.” Barnabas wanted to take John, called Mark, along with them also. But Paul was of the opinion that they should not take along with them this man who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. Now it turned into such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. But Paul chose Silas, and left after being entrusted by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. And he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.” (NASB 2020)

Did Peter repent because of the confrontation? I would say yes because he comes down so strong on false teachers in 2 Peter. He even calls Paul beloved in 2 Peter 3:15. Peter would also point out that the “untaught and unstable distort” what Paul teaches.

My opinion, Peter repented. What about Barnabas? He may have, but Paul is Paul, and he would remember what took place.

How about the leadership in Antioch? There are some who say they were more than happy to send Paul packing on another missionary trip, and satay away too. I tend to doubt that. We do not see a mass circumcision event taking place in Antioch, so Paul did indeed speak with the leading of the Holy Spirit, and the church split was stopped.

“Paul was close to the Antioch church; they did not know the visitors, Paul does not go on to denounce Antioch and highlight his own independence from them; instead, it appears that the situation was resolved and local believers again ate together.” (Keener 2019, 141)

We do not know how much time went by, but Paul is ready to get back out in the field, he still wants Barnabas with him and asks if he is ready to go. Barnabas is, but he wants to bring along John Mark, the same John Mark that went running home when he saw what the gentile world really looked like.



Whether it was Barnabas wanting to give his cousin John Mark a second chance or not, Paul did not agree with him.

What was the plan?

His plan was to retrace those memorable steps of his first missionary journey—from Antioch to the island of Cyprus, transversing it from Salamis to Paphos, then sailing to Asia Minor and Pamphylia and traveling up into Galatia, visiting Iconium, Lystra, Perga, and Attalia. These were worthy plans, and he and Barnabas were a great team. They expected to follow up on the new believers—to reprove false doctrine, teach more about God's grace, share the results of the Jerusalem Council, build up the leadership in each church. (Hughes 1996, 201)

When Paul said no, was he still also considering the hypocrisy that Barnabas had reflected earlier in the legalism problem? Was there still some of that “why?” going on in the relationship?

We are not told anything other than there was a “sharp” disagreement. “The Greek word, *paraxusmos*, is the word from which we derive our English word *paroxysm*, which denotes violent action or emotion. This was not a mild gentlemen's disagreement but an intense and passionate conflict.” (Hughes 1996, 202-203)

Is the Lord's hand in this disagreement? Actually, yes. At this point, they still agape each other, but they do not like each other very much.

Paul had just dealt with a breach of trust from Paul, Barnabas as well as the leadership of the church in Antioch and he did not want to have one more person who had breached his trust in the past and might do so again.

So, Barnabas takes his cousin and leaves on the path he and Paul were to have gone on.

Acts 15:40–41

“But Paul chose Silas, and left after being entrusted by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. And he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.” (NASB 2020)

In other words, the church in Antioch sided with Paul on this one.

We look at this and shake our heads, wow. We understand where both were coming from and for a short moment wonder why?

Then we get it, now there are two missionary teams, and we are going to see Paul and Silas answer a call to go to Macedonia.

We look at this and still scratch our heads; Brian Tabb helps us out.

“Paul and Barnabas parted ways after a sharp disagreement, and many other notable ministry partnerships throughout history have ended in similar fashion. There are various reasons that ministry partnerships end in separation. Disagreements about doctrinal convictions, theological vision, or ministry strategy may lead coworkers to part ways. Alternatively, a health crisis, personal crisis, moral failing, or changed sense of calling may prompt someone to resign from a ministry role. And ministry partnerships are by no means immune to the various challenges affecting relationships between family, friends, coworkers, or neighbors—personality conflicts, unmet expectations, hurt feelings, differences of opinion on a range of matters, and so on.



It needs to be stated clearly that Christian workers are sometimes morally obligated to separate when matters of essential biblical doctrine and practice are at stake. Some separations and divisions between professing believers are necessary to distinguish true faith and morality from counterfeit Christianity.” (Tabb 2023, 269-270)

Counterfeit Christianity is not what caused the disagreement between Paul and Barnabas, but it may have laid the groundwork.

In our culture today, the enemy is still actively working to divide churches and end ministry. In some cases, the churches go away and the flock drifts to other places. In some cases, the flock stands up and offloads the bad shepherd in favor of one who will take care of the flock. And in some cases, the only option is to separate and leave where we have been for some time.

I have had to do this more than once. It is not fun and I would really like to never do it again.

We do live in a fallen world though and we must never forget that not only does Satan want the church to fail, and yes, he still uses this tactic he tested out in Antioch even today, but he also wants to destroy each of us individually.

Satan will try and do that by making us turn to bitterness over what happened in that situation we had to separate ourselves from. Don't let him do that.

The writer of Hebrews tells us the following and it is not an easy thing he lays out for us.

Hebrews 12:14–15

“Work at living in peace with everyone, and work at living a holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord. Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many.” (NLT)

Anger can turn to hate and bitterness. We are not to go there. Give the anger over to the Lord and have Him wipe that bitterness away. How often? As often as needed.

We can thank Peter for that answer.

Matthew 18:21–22

“Then Peter came to him and asked, “Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?” “No, not seven times,” Jesus replied, “but seventy times seven!” (NLT)

Give your case to the Lord and let Him deal with the one who has offended you. Our job is to forgive, not forget, but forgive. We tend to remember things, and it is in the remembering we are tempted to bitterness.

Romans 12:19

“Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, “I will take revenge; I will pay them back,” says the LORD.” (NLT)

As followers of Jesus, we leave it with Him and if we pick it up again, and if you are like me, you will, then there is 1 John 1:9 and we do it again.

1 John 1:9

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous, so that He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (NASB 2020)



If you don't know Jesus, then there is something even more basic to do to offload the anger and bitterness, come to Christ, tell Him you are a sinner and give it all to Him. He is more than adequate to take care of it.

Romans 3:21–24

"But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins." (NLT)

Romans 10:9–13

"If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced." Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For "Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved."" (NLT)

ABC's of Salvation

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.

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