

Bitterness

Hebrews 12:12-17

We Can Control

God created man with the capacity of expressing his emotion through which character is either built or torn down

God has always required man to "rule over" his spirit and not allow emotions of bitterness and hatred to open the door to sin - **Genesis 4:4-8**

Cain failed to control his anger and he killed his brother

Bitterness is "characterized by animosity; harshly reproachful, caustic, disagreeable; to have a 'sour' disposition towards others other things that happened, whether real or imagined."

Bitterness is a cancer of the soul, it eats away all that is high & holy; a deep seated emotion that brings nothing but darkness of sin

It shuts eye of compassion, heart of love & hand of fellowship

From bitterness rises the mind of hatred that is filled with anger at the mention of a person's name or their presence

It is insidious in its nature because it will drain the joy from a person's life and destroy their soul in damnation.

Few people want to be bitter, but many slide into it over the years.

Causes Of Bitterness

Sin-filled life

In bonds of sin, Simeon was filled with gall of bitterness - **Acts 8:23**

All are susceptible to its touch - **Romans 3:9-12**

Bitterness will cause one to lie against the truth - **James 3:14**

One filled with bitterness cannot see the truth in all of its beauty for he looks at it through jaundiced eyes.

Bitterness can be a hazard of engaging in a hard battle for the truth

Especially when the struggle is within the church

We must fight against those who bring innovations, or live in sin

But when slandered, persecuted, & mistreated because we stood for truth, we must not allow ourselves to become bitter against anyone

Bitterness is deceitful & often mistaken by victim for zeal for truth

May think contending for faith, when actually slandering brother

Just mention his opponent's name, & he will quickly demonstrate

Jealousy and selfishness - **James 3:14-16**

Impact Of Bitterness

Bitterness will spread deep & far from initial cause & in abundance

When deeply hurt, if he broods long, he is apt to become embittered

At times bitterness extends beyond one who injured him, to society

This is a worse sin than the injury he received.

Bitterness disrupts the harmony between brethren.

If cannot reconcile ourselves to others, how can love of God abide?

If we cannot forgive others for the small slights they have done to us, how can we expect God to forgive us?

What has anyone done to you that is greater than what you have done to the Son of God?

How can bitterness and hatred dwell in the heart of the child of God who has been saved by the unmerited favor of God? - **Matthew 6:14-15**

Bitterness takes away the love of God from the heart - **1John 4:20**

No one can stand before God looking for salvation when the heart has been darkened by the sin of bitterness and hatred

The heart must be cleansed of all bitterness and anger and filled with the loving, forgiving spirit of Jesus Christ. - **Colossians 3:8; Ecclesiastes 7:9**

Listen to the warning of Paul - **1Corinthians 3:16-17**

Are we building up or are we tearing down?

Do bitterness and jealous drive us to bring down the work of God?

Sowing discord is listed as one of seven abominable sins - **Proverbs 6:16-19**

Solution To Bitterness

Spend time learning how sinful you are and how God loved you enough to forgive you and then go and do the same - **Galatians 5:19-21**

Know that bitterness will bring damnation if unrepentant - **Colossians 3:12-15; Philippians 4:8**

Remove bitterness from your life with all diligence

Replace with kindness, tenderheartedness, & forgiveness - **Ephesians 4:31-32**

Sinners, enemies yet Christ loved us enough to reconcile us to Father - **Romans 5:8**

Pursue peace & holiness. These qualities are the opposites of those that produce bitterness in a person. - **1John 4:11; Hebrews 12:14-15**

Understand there is no getting away with sin before God - **2Corinthians 5:9-10; Romans 14:12**

Bitterness Can Be Put Away

Bitterness cannot live in a heart that is filled with love - **Matthew 5:44**

God doesn't require the impossible of His children

Now is the time for cleansing, uproot all bitterness from your heart.

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