



Word of God Ministry Church Under The Son

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Bitterness

Bitterness is a product of hatred, characterized by cynicism and ill will. Resentment is indignation and ill will over an insult or injury or other wrongdoing, whether intentional or unintentional, real or imagined. Bitterness and resentment often go together, the dual results of unresolved anger.

Pent-up emotions can be emotionally and physically debilitating, impairing a person's ability to function, sleep, or relate normally to others. Some become so obsessed with an urge for revenge that they may be driven to violence, even murder.

Peace with God and others is not possible outside a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. If you are not a Christian, your attempts to resolve bitterness will probably have no lasting effect. Only by the grace of God can you know the freedom and peace that come from being forgiven and forgiving others. Without God's saving grace, bitterness will continue to grow, spreading its poison to all it touches. Your first step is to admit your sin to God, asking Him to forgive you and make you His child. Then, you will have His power and indwelling Holy Spirit to help you overcome bitterness.

- Cain's Revenge

Genesis 4:1-8 ¹Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the Lord." ²Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. ³And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. ⁴Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, ⁵but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. ⁶So the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? ⁷If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it." ⁸Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

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The story of Cain and Abel is a classic case of revenge, Cain was angry because his offering was not accepted while his brother's offering was. It really wasn't a matter between Cain and Abel at all, but between Cain and God, for it was God who had rejected Cain's offering. But Cain became resentful and depressed. Instead of repenting and asking forgiveness of the Lord, he turned on his brother.

Many people have the attitude of Cain. They will tell you they have been misunderstood, maligned, and mistreated, never realizing the sinful implications behind their own behavior. As the story unfolds, what lies underneath is the sin of resentment and bitterness. God's Word says, *"But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth"* (Colossians 3:8).

- The Root Of Bitterness

Hebrews 12:14, 15 ¹⁴*Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: ¹⁵looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;*

Bitterness is referred to as a "root"; unless dealt with, it grows out of control like a weed. Christians can avoid bitterness and resentment by heeding the advice found in Romans 12:14-19: *"Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord."*

Sometimes long-standing bitterness is hard to let go, especially if you are certain that you were the one who was right in the situation. God knows the truth of every situation. Even if you are the one who was wronged, His Word says: *"Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you"* (Ephesians 4:31, 32). Reflect on this passage and pray for your enemy in the light of its truth.

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God expects us to forgive those who have wronged us: *“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (Matthews 6:14, 15).*

- Letting Grudges Go

Isaiah 38:17 ¹⁷*Indeed it was for my own peace That I had great bitterness; But You have lovingly delivered my soul from the pit of corruption, For You have cast all my sins behind Your back.*

Bitterness is a sin. To ignore it prevents any real solution. But to repent from it and confess it to God will result in forgiveness and restoration of your fellowship with God.

When you have made yourself right with God, then it is appropriate to make things right with others as much as possible, as well. If a relationship has been damaged, seek reconciliation with that person so that you may have *“a conscience without offense toward God and men” (Acts 24:16).*

If reconciliation takes place, God will be pleased, and both you and the other party will be spiritually healed. If your attempts to reconcile are not successful, you have been obedient to God in your effort and can live with a clear conscience. Pray and ask God to fill you with love for the other person whether or not reconciliation occurs: *“Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth” (1 Corinthians 13:4-6).*

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