

Holiness & Bitterness 6-24-25
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Hebrews 12:13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

In this verse we are being instructed by Paul for the believers of Jesus Christ to walk holy. To choose our steps in Him. Proverbs 4:26 echoes the same instructions.

Proverbs 4:26 Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.

We need to hold fast to our instructions found in the Word of God and choose to walk in the Holy ways of our God. Because our lives should be an example for others to see, to encourage, and inspire others to walk closer to Him. This is not because we ourselves are great, but the God inside of us is greater and makes all things possible through Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:13) The lame that Hebrews 12:23 is speaking about is referring to those that are wounded and hurt. Those that are weak in their faith. Those who are struggling in their walk with our Lord Jesus Christ. If we don't walk a holy and consecrated life meaning set apart in Jesus Christ and one that is lame (wounded, weak in faith & such like) is watching, you can very well be the turning point in their lives that causes them to stumble and fall.

Our life should be an example to those wounded and hurt that lead them to healing through Jesus Christ who is the healer of all wounds, all hurts and such like we face in this life. We should always ask God to instruct our footsteps and all that we do.

Proverbs 3: 5-6

5 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Hebrews 12:14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

Holiness: living in moral purity and integrity in the ways of Father God out of love for him. Setting yourself apart. Being unspotted by the world and separate from sin. A consecrated life dedicated to God.

Holiness should be a priority in our lives. One such example of us being instructed in ways of Holiness is found in Ephesians 4:21-27.

21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

27 Neither give place to the devil.

Hebrews 12:15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

What is a root of bitterness? What is bitterness?

Bitterness: a destructive spiritual state caused by unresolved anger, resentment, or perceived even imagined hurts and injustices. It can be caused from disappointments, envy, jealousy and such like. If left unchecked it can grow into a root of bitterness which is poison to the heart of the person causing hatred, malice, and spiritual even physical murder for them and to others they feel are involved. It can kill relationships of all types: families, friends, coworkers, and such like. It defiles that person polluting their spirit because bitterness is sin. Its root cause is unforgiveness. We are told to put away all bitterness Ephesians 4:31-32

Ephesians 3:31-32

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Colossians 3:8 reflects this when we're instructed to put away all anger, malice and wrath. All by products of bitterness.

Colossians 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

If bitterness is left unchecked, if not repented of it can spread like an ivy vine whose roots are strong and can have shoots of growth growing and coming up all over a person's yard. Bitterness not only causes defilement in that person but it affects others. This is what Hebrews 12:15 was referring to when it said at the latter part of the verse, "... springing up (growing from the root and spreading its poison) it troubles you (causes sin, defilement, or pollution in your holiness before God) and thereby many be defiled."

Bitterness, resentment, anger, and envy are many of the reasons there are so many church hurts in church splits. Also for other types of relationships. But the offensive hurt many times is in the person's mind. It can be a thought, a whisper, and action the enemy has planted inside your mind and because the person didn't seek Jesus Christ or Father God for His truth in the matter and also didn't choose to forgive the offense where the real or not bitterness begins to grow. But it can also be a real hurt that was unintentional or intentional.

Deuteronomy 29:18 Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood;

Take notice in this first part it's talking about a root that bears gall and wormwood. Wormwood in the Bible is a symbol of bitterness, calamity and judgment often associated with the consequences of disobedience and sin. So again we see how that bitterness can spread among many per the Word of God.

Here is what a few of the outward symptoms of bitterness can be: envy, anger, resentment, desire for revenge, a hardened attitude, stubbornness, unwilling to change even when there's a need to do so, unforgiveness, rage, hypercritical, critical or judgmental spirit, criticism and such like. Bitterness affects both the heart and mind. This is where the root's poison spreads and continues to grow. It alienates us from our God putting a distance between us and Him. Bitterness is sin and we need to ask forgiveness for the sin. It is rooted in the spirit of unforgiveness. We are instructed to forgive others so we can be forgiven by our Heavenly Father.

Matthew 6:14 -15

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:
15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Forgiveness is a choice. A decision that each of us chooses to make or not to make. We are called to forgive one another in the Word of God.

Colossians 3:13-14

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.
14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

We are told to be angry and to not sin. To not let the sun go down upon our wrath.
Ephesians 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

This is because if we've opened the door to sin, we need to repent so that the enemy does not get a foothold in our lives. Also it's during the night the most witchcraft demonic attacks are assigned and sent out. If you have unrepented sin in your life that is an open door for them to create havoc for you and all that pertains to you.

The roots of our lives as children of the Most High God who've been bought and paid for through Jesus Christ's Blood are not supposed to grow poisonous roots of bitterness and sin. We are instructed to grow our roots in Christ.

Colossians 2:6-7

6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

What is a type of soil that allows bitterness to grow in us even if it's an imagined hurt? A heart that harbors hostility and does not deal with the hurt. Usually it is an older hurt someone has tried to bury but still it grows faster and can only be removed by God's grace through forgiveness and true repentance of heart. All healing, spiritual & physical comes through our lovely Jesus Christ.

The root of bitterness is rooted deep like a tree or plant, even the ivy vine mentioned prior whose roots are planted. Therefore they are hidden and camouflage to the naked eye. This is the same for the root of bitterness at first in a person's life but it will eventually become evident as it begins affecting that person's life as well as others, including their environment they live in.

Not often when you find someone who will admit they're a bitter person. They will disguise or deny it. A bitter person is hypersensitive, ungrateful, and sincere, holds grudges, has mood swings and such like. All through manipulation of their heart, mind and life from the kingdom of darkness access to it because you chose not to forgive. This is an agreement, an access door to your life.

Bitterness not only affects you spiritually but emotionally and physically. This is because it's sin and it's poisonous. Unforgiveness allows the devil access into your mind, body, your whole being. Your relationship with Jesus Christ will suffer because sin separates from a holy God who has called us to be holy.

Isaiah 59:2 but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you that He will not hear you.

A few examples how bitterness is kept alive.

Proverbs 17:9 He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.

1. Replaying over in our minds the other person's offense over and over again. This is perhaps the most common feeder of bitterness and unforgiveness. Every time we replay someone's sin in our minds, we water the seed of bitterness in our hearts...and it grows. This is contrary to the Word of God which tells us to forgive but also to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ it casting it down.

2 Corinthians 4:4-5

4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

5 Casting down vain imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

We know by these verses that repeating an offense in our mind and not casting it down is disobedience to the Word of God. So in addition of now dealing with the disobedience of not forgiving we're in disobedience for not taking control and authority over the situation that we have through Jesus Christ and the power of His Name.

2. When you keep a hurt or an offense constantly fresh in your mind, if you get into an argument with that person or any type of discussion then you will throw this back at them. What's being done in this situation whether it's intentionally or unintentionally done is making sure that the person who hurt you does not forget what they've done to you. Even if they've asked for forgiveness. This is not always the case in situations where a person is not aware of any offense or supposed offense that they've done to someone.

3. When you allow bitterness to take root in oftentimes you will find yourself repeating the hurt or offense to someone else instead of taking it to the Lord Jesus Christ. You can find yourself repeating the same thing that was done to you to someone else. Also this can be a repeating of the offense by words to other people. The Word of God calls this gossip. One thing to notice about gossip is that it harms four different parties:

It harms the speaker of the gossip.

Proverbs 25:9–10

9 Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another:

10 Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away.

Proverbs 26:10 The great God that formed all things both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors.

It harms the subject of the gossip

Proverbs 26:20 Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth.

It harms the listener of the gossip

Proverbs 22:24–25

24 Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go:

25 Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.

Proverbs 26:22 The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

It grieves the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 4:29–31

29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

Isaiah 63:10 But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.

Every time we repeat a matter in one of these three ways, we feed bitterness in our hearts. When these thoughts come to our mind we should cast them down in the Name of Jesus Christ, binding them, canceling the assignments of the enemy. Also binding the demons, throwing them into the abyss/pit in Jesus Christ Name. Then we need to think on other things such as the promises of God for us or what is lovely, pure, true and such like. If we think and rest in these promises, our hearts will become fertile ground for the Holy Spirit to work. Remember: bitterness is not something you have or don't have; it's something you cultivate. It is a choice to keep growing it or to pull it up and cast it away. The same is true for forgiveness.

Luke 6:45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Jesus Christ is coming back for a pure and spotted holy bride. That means one free from sin. It's time to ask Sweet Holy Spirit to search deep into our hearts and reveal to us anything we need to repent of and to ask forgiveness in Jesus Christ's Name. The only way to remove bitterness in your life is running into the arms of Jesus Christ and again asking Him to forgive and cleanse you. Then when He does, let it go and don't pick it up again, so forgiveness and healing can be yours.

Examples of bitterness in the Word of God:

Cain and Abel: Genesis 4:2-9

Cain becomes consumed by bitterness for his brother Abel and God when his offering is rejected by god. He feels unjustly treated and slaves his brother. We can understand this through reading the Scripture

Esau and Jacob: Genesis 25:29 - 34; 27:33-36; 41-46

Esau's bitterness toward his brother Jacob because he had lost his birthright blessing even though he sold it for a bowl of lentils. He threatens to kill Jacob but doesn't appear to feel remorse or that he is wrong because he sheds tears over the loss of his blessing from his father.

Paul and Simon the sorcerer: Acts 8:1-25

Paul rebukes Simon the sorcerer when he attempts to buy the power of the Holy Ghost spirit out of envy. Paul uses a phrase in the gall of bitterness, intending it to make Simon aware of the depth of evilness, depravity and ungodliness he was acting in. And calling him to repent. Again we see here envy is a fruit of bitterness.