



## LOVE'S #1 ENEMY

Let me dive right in and put the bottom line up front. Bitterness stems out from anger.

I want to begin this week's teaching by quoting Hebrews 12:14-15 where it says, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: 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".

I will attempt to give you some understanding about bitterness. If you are going to fight this enemy, you must understand *everything* you can about him. As a young man, when I played sports, I understood that the best defense was a good offense. Good teams and players study their opponents. They learn their play strategy. They study the competition's moves.

I know that many of you that are reading this right now have gone on the internet and searched for information to diagnose an illness because you had a need to know. Who hasn't "Googled it"? We need to be as diligent, if not more diligent than we are about some of our physical illnesses, in diagnosing the symptoms of bitterness which is destroying our lives. I have prayed for many people that were dying from an illness that the doctor could have diagnosed rather easily, if only they would have gone to the doctor and shared their symptoms earlier.

### THE SILENT KILLER

In the New Testament, the word we need to look at is *pikria*. *This means bitter gall or extreme wickedness; a bitter root and producing bitter fruit; bitter hatred.* The word has a very bitter and spiteful aspect. The seed of bitterness has been rooted in fertile and hostile ground. What appears harmless at first, begins to take root, and will produce bitter fruit. If a person allows bitterness to

grow in their life, they really need to know what they are embracing; what they are introducing to their spirit. Embracing bitterness is like kissing the devil. One should realize that his kiss may seem sweet, but it will suck the very life from your existence. It will change your outlook toward life and even living. The weight of bitterness is a heavy load to carry, but the choice is made every day by Christians to pick it up and carry it. The fact of the matter is that the wounds of bitterness are never allowed to heal, because they are opened up daily and salt is constantly poured into the wound.

A bitter person carries with them a pill bottle of strong feelings. Feelings like hatred, resentment, and cynicism. I have tried to help people who were bitter and then they would spew hatred toward me; the one who was trying to help them and pray for them. It is a foolish person that makes a poisonous snake his friend. I was told that a person went into a business to purchase a venomous rattlesnake. When he made the purchase, he was also given a mouse to feed the snake. As he opened the bag that the snake was in to feed it the mouse, the snake latched on to him and bit him. It latched on to its owner; the very one that was trying to feed him (sound familiar?) He almost lost his life.

Imagine the snake as bitterness who is ready to strike at anytime. Just like the man who was feeding the snake was ignorant of the danger in the bag, when we feed the snake of bitterness in our lives, we are putting ourself in harm's way. The way to keep this adversary at bay, or away from you, is to walk in love. The road to bitterness will lead you to a dark, lonely place in life. It is sad to say, but this road is a chosen course that is made by many people each and everyday. The cost of traveling this road is also a costly course that will reduce your faith **and** your number of friends. If you are traveling down this road, you have got to decide if the price you are paying for the toll is worth the end results. The road of bitterness will imprison even the strongest person. It is like choosing to burn your house down because you are trying to kill a rat.

I am convinced that bitterness begins with an offense that is not handled correctly. If left untreated, it leads to anger. If we do not expose it, then it leads to bitterness. The path to bitterness is more harmful than the most violent winds of the most destructive tornado. You don't have to look very far to see it in scripture. Pick up your Bible and turn to the third Chapter 3 of the very first book, Genesis. Sin comes in Chapter 3 and bitterness caused him to kill in Chapter 4.

## **OFFENSE -> UNFORGIVENESS -> ANGER -> BITTERNESS**

*Bitterness will always hurt the anointing on a person's life, a family's life, and even a church's life.*

I know that you have been anticipating what is next. We will now restrict red meat from our diets. We continue to rededicate, rekindle and refocus by dying daily to self. Like we restrict certain food items from our diet, let us also restrict bitterness from our life. **Forgive and Walk In Love.** Please walk with me in this. This is in addition to what we have already decided to sacrifice for this month. I look forward to seeing you here for prayer Monday at 7 PM & Friday at 7:30 PM.

### **Prayer Objectives**

**God Help me to Walk In Love**

**Give me the strength to forgive those that offend me.**

**Keep my heart humble before you.**

**Ask God to save our lost loved ones.**

**Give us an increase in the Word; greater desire.**