

Removing Every Bitter Root From Among You

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Key Texts

Matt 5, Matt 15, Isa 29:13-14, Eze 36:25-27, Heb 12:15

Overview

Jesus brings attention to the human heart* and He is concerned with the internal rather than the external.

Ritualistic living does not equate with righteousness. 'Okayness' is not enough, instead God requires perfection.

Thought-life

The heart is fundamentally evil. Many people over the years have sought to eliminate sin from their life, eg. Monks. Jesus referred to being perfect as the Father is perfect.

Bitterness

What Causes Bitterness?

- Hardship
 - Heb 12
 - Hardship is part of the human experience
 - Christians are encouraged to view hardship as discipline; God allows it
 - In hardship, many can lose sight of the big picture
- When we are the judge
 - Luke 6:35-38, James 4:11-12, Matt 7:3-5
 - When we judge we play God's role; God is the avenger. He is just.
 - Be careful judging others, because you will be judged
 - When we judge we get bitter and we step outside of grace
- Judgement by others
 - We get hurt and bitter when we are accused
 - The devil is the accuser
- When we listen to judgement from others
 - This must be dealt with properly or it will bring bitterness
- Envy
 - When we compare ourselves to others we become bitter (tall-

poppy syndrome)

- Desires
 - James 4
 - Conflict between humans is often caused by wrong desires
 - When God is not the focus, our desires can replace good desires
- Unforgiveness
 - It can seem valid, however when hardship, judgement, envy or desires are not dealt with, unforgiveness will breed bitterness.
 - Forgiveness is the biggest key to staying bitter-free. Matt 18:21-30
 - Reflecting on Jesus' forgiveness will help you to forgive others.

Forgiveness

- You don't need to tell the person you have forgiven them, especially when they have hurt you (the aim is protect the other person's reputation)
- Even with terrible actions by others, forgiveness needs to occur. However this does not mean that there shouldn't still be consequences for those actions (Eg. Forgive, but still report the crime to the police, etc)
- Forgive yourself, because Jesus has forgiven and forgotten your sin

Dealing with Bitterness

- Passion for God should help you remove all bitterness from your life.
- The Holy Spirit will help you, especially to renew your mind.
- Capturing your thoughts and bring them under submission to God (2 Cor 2:4)
- Replace the accusations; overcome hate with love
- Resist the devil (James 4:7)
- Live by the Spirit; have joy in the Spirit and read your Bible
- Forgive (Gal 3:8) as the Lord forgave you, bear with one another

* Human attitudes, motivations and mindset; not the physical heart