

HIDDEN BITTERNESS

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PREFACE

As healing and deliverance were being restored to the body of Christ in the early days of the Charismatic Movement, it became apparent that unforgiveness could keep one from receiving from God. After the individual was counseled to choose to forgive, the breakthrough would come.

Today, the power of forgiveness has been discovered in the psychiatric office and the writing of movie scripts. Forgiveness is how God is saving His creation.

During my years of ministry to God's people and through my personal experience, I came to realize that unforgiveness was the surface reflection of a pool of bitterness in one's life and that to really be free, one must continue to profess the choice of forgiving until this pool of wormwood is drained.

As I share in my personal testimony in this writing, bitterness can be hidden away in our soul for years, and may require the voice of our Heavenly Father for us to see it. I prayer He might speak through these words.

Hidden bitterness is like pride in that it is almost impossible to see in one's self. Remember Job?

May this little book bring deliverance and healing to body, soul and spirit.

For the kingdom,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nicole".

HIDDEN BITTERNESS

Micah Stephen Bell

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” -Jeremiah 17:9

Although the heart knows its own bitterness, evasion of shame and rejection will cause it to suffer deceit.

A lifelong pool of failures, hurts, betrayals and disappointments gradually fills until we find ourselves wading in a swamp of stagnant muck diluted with wormwood. God forbid that we let anyone know about our exclusive quagmire of bitter retreat, so we allow denial to repulse its repugnance and deceit relieve our uncompleted duty.

Among all the giants to be brought down in the conquest of our personal Canaan, unforgiveness and bitterness of heart prevail in the darkness of a deceitful heart. We may find that our sling of forgiveness with the smooth stones of confession hit their mark but still not be the final, fatal blow that slays this murderous giant.

Practically every person we have dealt with in ministry has been counseled to forgive and admit bitterness in their lives. Most sincerely believed they had taken care of these matters, but deeper scrutiny revealed remaining residues of unforgiveness and bitterness.

The full breadth of bitterness is very difficult to detect because of its unabating evasiveness. I have seen many people surprised, when they earnestly begin to let the Holy Spirit shine His full light into their heart, to find the incompletely drained bitter pool with its remaining refuse souring their soul and aborting the development of the Christ within them.

Chapter 1

A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

I personally discovered first hand that a person can harbor hidden bitterness for many years and not be aware of its insidious presence.

I have shared this experience in a tract called How God Heals, so I will abbreviate the story. (Let me know if you would like to have the tract with the full story).

A few years ago, I strained and evidentially damaged my right hip joint causing me such unbearable pain that I could not find any position for my body where I could ease the blinding pain.

I prayed, cried out to the Lord and called an elder in our fellowship to come and pray for me. Thankfully, the pain abated somewhat and I could function again.

For a few weeks I was able to walk, but not without a degree of pain that would require me to stop and sit down for a while. During this period I went to New York City during the first anniversary of 911 and walked extensively in the area of disaster. It was difficult, but I knew I was supposed to be there to pray and pass out copies of the repentance prayer the Lord had given me.

After a respite of about a year, I was sitting on the side of my bed on a Sunday morning putting on my socks when my back snapped and the pain returned with a vengeance. I struggled to make it through the morning gathering, but I finally had to surrender to the bed, something I had not had

to do in several years.

I could find no comfort or ease regardless of what position of my body. With a broomstick for a cane, I hobbled and staggered to the bathroom or a chair in our living room that tilted enough to allot me a small degree of relief, but nothing I did completely diminished the grinding, burning pain.

After three days of totally immobility, I was shaken by the thought that I might be spending the rest of my days in a wheelchair. What was I to do?

I kept petitioning God and confessing healing. Still no respite from the horror of the agony.

After another sleepless night, I shuffled and moaned my way to the chair in the living room and carefully laid back staring at the ceiling. One more time I asked, "Lord, please show me what this all about." Almost instantly, I heard His still, small voice say, "You have bitterness."

"How could I have?" I thought. "I have not only done so much of my own forgiving, but have also led countless people through prayer of forgiveness."

Then I heard, "You have bitterness toward me."

It was unbelievable at first, but I began to see that I had buried this bitterness for many years because I was angry at God for calling me into the ministry. It had been hidden from my awareness until He confronted me with the truth.

The moment I admitted my grudging attitude and asked forgiveness, I was instantly healed! I leapt from the chair, jumped up and down rejoicing and took off for my study.

I share this experience in hope to help others who might be searching for the key to their deliverance and healing. From experience, I know that almost every individual harbors some hidden bitterness that unknowingly affects their life.

Chapter 2

WHAT IS BITTERNESS?

The heart knows its own bitterness, and a stranger does not share its joy. —Proverbs 14:10

Bitterness is an attitude—a state of one’s heart which reflects in the countenance and the tone of voice.

Bitterness evolves from:

Unresolved expectations

Frustration of unfulfilled desire

A sense of unfulfillment

A sense of personal failure

A sense of being treated unfairly

The tension of hopelessness

We can be aware of bitterness in our heart but, because of our hearts deceitfulness, not fathom its depth. Unexplored heart issues are carried to the grave.

THE FIRST BITTER MAN

The first indication of bitterness in the Word of God is in Genesis 4:5 where we find the story about Cain and Abel. Abel gave his offering and it was acceptable to God. Cain brought his offering, but it was not acceptable.

“And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.”

Anger manifested in Cain to such an extent that it affected his countenance—the way he looked—the shine upon his face. Anger is a child of bitterness with bitterness clouding the visage and anger spewing out of the mouth.

“So the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?”

Aha, sin has found its opportunity!

“If 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.”

Anger and resentment are doors for demonic entrance into a person. God said to this man:

“Sin lies (crouches) at the door.”

Here we have an image of some kind of personality (obviously a demonic personality) that God calls sin, squatting at the door into Cain’s life wanting to get in. Like a little cat when, every time you open the door, it runs into your house. God personifies sin as a demon that can jump into Cain if he gives in to his bitter anger.

“And 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 slew him.”

Obviously, Cain did not rule over this thing, so it was able to enter him bringing resentment, anger and bitterness which activated murder. Wherever there is a pool of bitterness there will be a spirit of murder. This terrible sin is no longer limited to the physical act as see in I John 3:15: “Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”

“And Cain said to the Lord, “My punishment is greater than I can bear! Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will

happen that anyone who finds me will kill me.”

The result of that action, because of sin’s opportunity, was that he was driven out from the face of the earth, was dismissed by God and his relationship with God broken.

In verse fifteen we see how God had to deal with the dreadfulness of the consequences of this sin:

“And the Lord said to him, “Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.” And the Lord set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him.”

Cain was so hated and so defiled that people would turn on him. Such bitter, murderous people bring judgments upon those who may relate to them and are marked with a curse of repulsiveness to others.

The spirits of unforgiveness and bitterness induce people to turn on you. It is difficult to be friends with them, even if a relationship can ever be established.

Bitterness is a root that ripened in this man, broke his relationship with God, and as a result, he turned murderous, not only toward his brother, but toward God. Cain went out, angry at God and the fruit of his anger has darkened the entire earth.

BITTERNESS IN A GROUP

In Exodus 15:22-26, we find the first indication of bitterness in an entire group—God’s chosen people, Israel. Israel had just come out of Egypt and miraculously crossed through the Red Sea on dry ground:

“So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called

Marah. And the people complained against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” So he cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them, and said, “If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you (Jehovah Rapha).”

Notice that after three days of journeying without water they came to a place called Marah and could not drink the waters because they were bitter. What was God doing?

At some time, God leads all of his chosen to bitter waters even after a dry season. Three days without any water, and when you finally find it, it’s bitter. What?

God knew that if the Israelites were going to grow, they were going to have taste the bitter water and be willing to drink it without murmuring.

The people murmured against Moses saying: “What shall we drink?” So often when we come to a bitter experience instead of proclaiming, “Praise God, I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me. Lord, thy grace is sufficient,” we murmur, which is half suppressed complaints. Today, we find an interesting medical diagnosis of a condition of the heart called, “Heart Murmurs.” Research shows that it is an abnormality of the heart, but not usually fatal. God’s peoples’ hearts were not right.

They blamed and attacked the leadership: “It is all your fault, Moses.” These complainers knew full well that Moses was only following God’s directions. People often sublimate their anger at God by targeting blame for their hurts and problems at some earthly authority rather than seeking to know God’s ways. Sometimes the Lord doesn’t give us a

quick miracle because He wants us find the meaning of our malady.

“He (God) made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel.” –Psalm 103:7

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” – Hosea 4:6

Many Christians still have bitterness in their hearts toward God because they do not really understand His ways.

Word of faith or prosperity preaching continues to be popular. Name it and claim it! I am not against naming it and claiming it. I name demons and claim their eviction all the time, and I also have PRO-claimed the promises of God and seen His faithfulness year after year. I know the Lord wants us to prosper. I believe the promises of God are “yea and amen,” but this stream of teaching has gotten out of balance and fallen into error. To teach that Christians should not and cannot suffer, removes the cross from the Gospel. Some of the adherents of such teaching have stood up and walked out of meetings where I was teaching about the cross and the importance of suffering in a life of faith. They considered me a reprobate because of their “itchy ears” teachings.

Chapter 3

EFFECTS OF BITTERNESS

ANGER AT GOD

It seems like a contradiction to ask a Christian if they have anger toward God, although a few I have ministered to quickly admit they are mad at God. For the majority of believers; however, bitterness regarding God is not a conceivable cause for some of the oppression in their life due to the way it can be shrouded with the hypocrisy of religious spirits. My own experience with the pain in my damaged hip awakened me to a personal reality I would never have considered as a called minister of the Gospel if the Lord had not spoken it to me.

Ultimately, every Christian must admit and face his or her anger toward God, especially those with presumptuous faith. I have found bitterness in regards to God's personal dealings and corrections to be a given, not only in my own life, but also in every individual seeking to follow Jesus.

“God, why didn't You hear my prayer? God why didn't You heal my child?”

“God, why didn't You do this? God, why didn't You do that? Why did You do that?”

“Why God? Why? Why? Why?”

“God, I stood on Your Word. I was taught that if I confess that Word and stand on that Word and believe that Word, that

EFFECTS OF BITTERNESS

you are going to do something, and You didn't do it and and to be honest, I am mad at You.”

“Then Cain went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.”

INFIRMITIES FROM BITTERNESS

The bitter place is where God reveals His Name as the Healer. Bitterness and infirmity are tied together. Practically every single infirmity in the body is rooted somehow in bitterness. Not just arthritis or cancer, but practically every other infirmity. God says at the bitter waters, “I Am the Lord God that heals you.” Surely, if bitterness festers for very long, its root will always cause an infirmity of some sort. Dryness in the bones, arthritis, cancer, all kinds of afflictions.

When somebody comes to me with an infirmity, I am always suspicious of bitterness being the door of entrance for the unclean entity and ask them about any unforgiveness in their heart. “Who or what have you not forgiven?” My senses have been trained as such.

We see God bringing deliverance by revealing His Name and the people appropriating the authority and power of that Name.

DECEPTION FROM BITTERNESS

Bitterness not only tears the spirit and poisons the soul, it also invites deception. It opens one up for deception. It leads to Immorality. It builds walls of isolation. It leaves a trail of broken relationships. If you look back in your life and you have a pattern of broken relationships it is most likely because of personal bitterness.

I John 2:11 says, “But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.” The hatred given rise to by unforgiveness and bitterness draws

darkness into one's life. With this darkness, insensitivity and hardness come in.

Hidden bitterness causes immaturity, since you cannot grow without interaction with other people in the Body of Christ. A bitter person is going to be an immature person because of isolation and the lack of healthy social activity. He or she cannot relate. They keep breaking relationships due to their arrested development as a whole personality. They are a prime sitting ducks for deception and cult involvement.

A DOOR FOR THE OCCULT

Bitterness opens a door for the occult and inevitably leads to some form of witchcraft in one's life. Bitter people need and want to control others to avoid any more hurt in their lives which induces them to turn to fleshly strength. Witchcraft is a work of the flesh. When you encounter someone infected with this spirit, if you can scratch through their exterior, you will find an angry, bitter, murderous soul with an attitude toward God. In the light of this, I would say that the entire genre of extra-biblical, para-church therapy falters in the scrutiny of God's Word and eternity.

Bitterness is not some little harmless thing we carry around and can disregard. It leads to serious, and sometimes deadly consequences. It can make one vulnerable as a prime prospect for New Age mysticism. Bitter people, including Christians, are often drawn to such anti-christ venues, with an unconscience, hidden feeling that God has failed them in some way.

After eight years as an ordained pastor, I left the Baptist Denomination and the ministry. I was bitter and angry. Looking for the answers for myself (since I sincerely felt I had been betrayed by the church and God), I turned to psychology and other philosophies to find my reason for living. The famous psychologist, Abraham Maslow, became one of my gurus. Being so bitter, I was a prime prospect for

such humanistic counsel desperately searching for my own peak experience that would bring me into, what Maslow called, self-actualization. I enrolled in graduate school and began to study psychology. Maslow and Carl Rogers became my spirit guides in counseling. I was there. I steeped and seethed in it. How could I have known I was dabbling in the occult? I was even hypnotizing people and recommending psychotropic drugs for them.

THE FRUIT OF BITTERNESS

Hebrews 12:14 reveals the fruit of bitterness.

“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: 15 looking 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.”

In this verse, I see three effects resulting from bitterness:

First of all, bitterness affects one's relationship with God. The Word says: “Follow peace with all men and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.” Bitterness will cut you off from God.

Number two, it affects your relationship with yourself. “Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you.” So, bitterness affects your relationship with yourself. You begin to turn in on yourself; you begin to get self-critical; you begin to become self-condemned and self-rejected because of bitterness.

Notice this passage also says: “And thereby many be defiled.” Bitterness affects your relationship with others. Brother Carroll Thompson who taught about spiritual warfare at Christ for the Nations Institute in Dallas was a secret referrer to our ministry. He confidentially referred people to come to our ministry for help. He wrote a helpful

book called, Bruises of Satan. In his book, the brother says that bitterness tears the spirit and poisons the soul. I totally agree.

MORE EVIDENCE OF BITTERNESS

Here are some more symptoms of hidden bitterness:

Critical ness or Judgmental ness: Always finding something wrong. (What misery.)

Impatience: Restlessness.

Isolation: being a loner, isolating yourself.

Infirmities: Can be numerous.

Confrontation: Seeking to correct others or "put them in their place."

No enduring relationships and all the relationships are disappointing—not fulfilling.

A release of the build-up of any one or all of these internal issues manifests as:

Anger

Rage

Grief

Depression

Withdrawal and isolation

Sometimes suicide

We do not "lose" our temper, but rashly decide to react to a person or situation in a violent way. A display of anger and rage is nothing less than the working of witchcraft empowered by bitterness. God's Word says it is a work of the flesh.

In Ephesians 4:31, we are exhorted:

"Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil

**speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32
And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving
one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”**

Chapter 4

DOORWAYS FOR BITTERNESS

Bitterness must find an opening to gain occupancy in a person's life. Jesus taught about some doorways for bitterness beginning in Matthew 5:38-42:

“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ 39 But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. 40 If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. 41 And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. 42 Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.”

Jesus is talking here of possible areas of bitterness. How bitterness builds up. For instance, if a Roman soldier demanded an Israelite to carry his pack the one mile required by Roman law, he can could go that mile chomping and raving and at the end of that mile, throw the pack down and declare that he had fulfilled his obligation. But, Jesus said: “No, no, no, you go carrying that pack praising the Lord and tell that man about me while you walk down the road and, by the way, tell him, “I am just going to go ahead and carry it for you a couple of more miles because I know that you are real tired today.”

The Lord leaves us very little latitude for our attitudes. Jesus was constantly upbraiding the Pharisees about their attitude regarding the outcast and needy in regards to their social class or ethnic background. It was the highly religious ones that passed up the wounded neighbor in the ditch. In Deuteronomy 28, God pronounces curses on those who do not serve Him with joy and gladness of heart. Religious spirits generate a bitter heart out the frustration of carnal efforts to do good. The hidden bitterness nullifies the Lord's joyful rewards engendering even more bitterness.

A sincerely forgiving heart, whatever whoever asks of us, cannot beget a bitter root, nor can the countenance of such a soul be dimmed.

In verses forty-three and forty-four of Matthew 5, Jesus said:

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.”

When the Lord revealed demons in people (especially Christians) to me, I quickly realized I could now sincerely love them knowing they were often being energized by these unclean creatures. We must realize we wrestle not against flesh and blood but with principalities and powers—spiritual entities. If we war against people and personalities instead of discerning and understanding the real motivation behind their behavior, we will breed bitterness in our hearts.

PLANK-EYED CHRISTIANS

In Matthew 7:1-5, Jesus warns us to judge not that we be not judged ourselves. Here is a powerful principle that will keep us from suffering the curse of Cain. Such an “eye for an eye” attitude emanates from a bitter root and passes down

the family tree as the sins of the fathers pass down. If you go around judging and criticizing people, guess what people are going to do to you?

Jesus gives another zinger in verses 3-5:

“And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”

Such a critical person is left holding a smoking gun.

SELECTIVE FORGIVENESS

My Heavenly Father dealt stringently with me about this a few years ago when I received a letter from a witch in which, I realized, was motivated by demon influence. The letter said that a witch had come through Dallas, heard my radio program and the entire Texas church of Wicca was now praying against Agape Fellowship. I was angry at that witch, but God said, “You have to forgive that witch.”

We can get mad at witches, open the door for bitterness and defeat ourselves in what we might consider a righteous cause. It is the spirit of witchcraft that we should be warring against, not the witches themselves. God, through His Holy Spirit, will deal with the personalities.

Ministering in the Dallas/Fort Worth area as I have for over 35 years now, I began to get bitter about people coming from other churches wanting deliverance. When they came, I could see where the pastors obviously had abused these people. I was growing bitter about the churches and pastors and Satan was using his rightful opportunity against me and the ministry. Having effectively projected my guile to the flock, ultimately, our entire fellowship had to repent and ask

God to forgive us.

We chose to forgive the pastors and congregations and to release our bitterness and unforgiveness in the Name of Jesus. The Lord told me to just do what He had told me to do and not to mind what others were doing. Bitterness can take you far off track from the calling of God and even lead you to a false calling.

Forgiveness of others is essential, as we see here:

“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.” —Matthew 6:14-15

SUPPRESSING THE HOLY SPIRIT

Then in Ephesians 4:30 we find:

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

The defiling root of bitterness and its branches of wrath, anger, clamor and evil speaking grieve the Holy Spirit, which will cause depression and heaviness in one’s life.

If you are having trouble moving in the gifts of the Holy Spirit or receiving tongues, it could be because of a root of bitterness that is grieving the Holy Spirit from operating through you and keeping you from receiving anything from God. Like Cain, you are hidden from God and defiled.

My friend and Brother in the Lord, Norman Parish experienced a period of great angelic activity in Guatemala told me he discovered that angels can only stay in a human body for a little while because of defilement of the flesh. What would hinder such angelic stirring more than a bitter vessel? Bitterness poisons the whole being. It pumps poison into our soul and throughout our flesh. Angels beware!

THE TORTURERS

In Matthew 18:34, Jesus shares the parable where the servant was called in and was going to be thrown in prison, but he asked for mercy and his master extended his mercy and forgave the servant of the debt. The servant then went to the people that owed him and began to throw them in prison.

“And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.”

Need it be said here that the tormentors are obviously demons who exercise their legal rights to oppress and harass in an unforgiver’s life?

In II Corinthians 2:10-11 Paul lays down a principal:

“Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.”

Unforgiveness and bitterness are great advantages for the devices of Satan. These are doors for unclean spirits to come into our lives—judging, not forgiving, not turning the other cheek and not being willing to go the extra mile.

Chapter 5

THE REMEDY FOR BITTERNESS

THE REMEDY OF THE CROSS

God's remedy at Marah was to sweeten the water with a tree. God had Moses throw a tree in the water and it became sweet. That tree is a type of the Cross—the tree of Calvary. The only way we are going to deal with our bitterness is at the Cross. At Calvary. Your only hope, your only solution. You will not work your way out of your own bitterness. You will not come to some point in time where you are going to feel like forgiving. You won't ever get there. Do not wait on it—it will not happen. You are going to have to come to Calvary and face the fact that there is only one thing you can do and that is to do what was done for you, FORGIVE. It is a death experience.

I have to let this thing go. I have to say, “God, you are perfect. You can do no wrong. I am wrong, you are right. I do now renounce and expel all bitterness I have toward You and any other person.”

It is significant that, following the Marah experience, God gives a revelation of Who He is by declaring one of His Names: Jehovah Rapheka (Rapha)—“I Am The Lord who heals you.” The first time we find such a revelation of

the nature of our God is in Genesis 22:14 where Abraham declared God to be Jehovah Jireh which means, “Jehovah will see or provide.” Now He makes known He is the healer. Not only does our God provide, but He also heals. It is who He is and He well knows what bitterness can do to His people.

People say they are not sure about Jesus healing people, but healing was revealed in the Bible long before Calvary.

RIDDING YOUR LIFE OF HIDDEN BITTERNESS

I truly believe we can completely purge ourselves of all bitterness if we so desire, but first of all, we must see it and admit it. From this point, we can take these steps for deliverance and healing:

1- Actuate Forgiveness - The Legal Release

Objectively chose to forgive and release the issues you are able to see in your heart. Decide to make forgiveness a part of your lifestyle forever. Continually proclaim it audibly until the emotions abate and peace settles in your soul.

2- Deny Self - The Emotional Release

Instead of continuing to bury or hide the bitterness, deny the self its assumed right to be upset or angry. This is where the cross is applied in our life as followers of Jesus Christ. He made it plain that, if we are to be His disciples, we are to deny ourselves, take up OUR cross and follow Him. (Luke 9:23)

This is a very important step. After (sometimes) years of assuming justice justifies a disposition of resentment and anger, it is very difficult to see and accept the absolute requirement of letting go of every right to life. The total Christ-like life calls for unconditional

submission to the sovereignty of the Creator who is perfect in wisdom, purpose and love.

We must come to the point where we see that the Father in Heaven has perfectly ordered everything in our life and surrender our ego, pride and presupposed rights to the reality (truth) of His actual care and love.

3- Cast Down Logic - The Spiritual Release

Our logical mind assumes we deserve the right to be upset or angry, but when we bring such thought into captivity to the knowledge of Christ, we find it is just an imagination that does not stand-up in the light of the qualifications of a sincere disciple of Jesus.

4- Rein in the Rage - Anger is a Choice

See that yelling and slamming doors accomplished nothing but hurt and pain. It really is a choice. STOP IT!

5- Let Patience do its Perfect Work - Surrender

Finally, we submit to our Heavenly Father's perfect plan for our life and let Him deal with the flesh and blood which we are told not to wrestle with.

“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.” —James 1:2-4

Now Give Thanks for the peace you have found.

Chapter 6

FINDING REST

THE STORY OF CALEB

The outcome of Caleb's life in Joshua 14:6-13 reveals a life lived without bitterness:

“Then the children of Judah came to Joshua in Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him: ‘You know the word which the Lord said to Moses the man of God concerning you and me in Kadesh Barnea. I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land, and I brought back word to him as it was in my heart. Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly followed the Lord my God. So Moses swore on that day, saying, ‘Surely the land where your foot has trodden shall be your inheritance and your children’s forever, because you have wholly followed the Lord my God.’ And now, behold, the Lord has kept me alive, as He said, these forty-five years, ever since the Lord spoke this word to Moses while Israel wandered in the wilderness; and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength was then, so now is my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in. Now therefore, give me this

mountain of which the Lord spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fortified. It may be that the Lord will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the Lord said.’ And Joshua blessed him, and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance.”

What a testimony! Here was a man who had gone out and done a work for God as a spy, obeyed the Word of the Lord, came back as a faithful steward of the Word of God, gave a true report and was totally and completely rejected by all of the people but two. Because all of the others rejected his true report and trust in God, he had to wait forty-five years in the wilderness, living with those unbelieving, murmuring people every day; suffering with them every day; eating that bland manna every day for forty-five years. Yet, at the end of those forty-five years he could stand up and say, “I am as strong as the day that Moses sent me.”

Do you know what that tells me? There was no bitterness in that man.

I not sure I could have done what Caleb did staying there with those people forty-five years thinking every day: “If it was not for you, I wouldn’t have to be here. I preached the truth to you forty-five years ago and look at us.” (Maybe a lot of the fire and brimstone preaching we hear is out of a heart of anger and bitterness?)

What a man of God! Even after forty-five years of going through the hardship of the wilderness, he had no bitterness and was able to stand up and say: “My strength is as it was forty-five years ago.” Obviously, the reason he had his strength is because he did not have any bitterness. A lot of us would be stronger today if we did not have bitterness.

This eighty-five year old man, Caleb, was able to stand up and say: “Give me this mountain!!” He knew it was his mountain, and he waited patiently for God’s promise to him.

This is the voice of the overcomer. Age is an attitude. You are never too old. God will rejuvenate you if you will wade out of the swamp of bitterness and drain all of its murky sewage into the sea of God's forgetfulness.

Today we have millions of old people lingering in care centers lonely, oppressed and bitter. Eventually, many become mean and caustic. As the flesh weakens, the demons begin to take the upper hand and manifest their true nature through these aged souls. How sad.

After my epiphany in 1977, I asked the Lord why He let me leave the ministry like I did. Prior to my abdication and departure, I was crying out to Him for some kind of sign or help, but I had to go twelve years out there in the world away from my original denomination and the local church, to find the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and the enlightenment of the truth in God's Word.

“Why didn't you tell me about it then, Lord?”

One day, years later, the Lord answered me with a word of knowledge showing me that, at that time, with all the demonic issues in my life, such a blessing would have been perverted and stunted by denominational doctrine and personal pride.

God did not want a super Baptist, He wanted a super saint.

So this man, Caleb, stood up and said: “Give me my mountain!” It did not appear to be a wise demand. There were giants all over that mountain, in fact Hebron was formerly name after one of the giants named Arba, who was the greatest man among the Anakim. Nonetheless, this old man said: “That mountain is mine, and I want it. Turn me loose! Let me have at it!”

Full of giants?

Eighty-five year old man?

What an inheritance! This was the place where David began to set up his Kingdom for seven years before going to Jerusalem. The name Hebron means a place of alliance and covenant. Here is a beautiful picture of a man who refused bitterness in his soul and received the reward of God's promise.

GOD'S PROVIDED REST

Finally, after the march out of Egypt, traversing the Red Sea and the testing at Marah, God leads them to a place of rest.

“Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters.”

Following the healing deliverance came the rest and order. Here is a parable of governmental order with the twelve wells of water, twelve being God's number of governmental order and the 70 palm trees, the number 70 represents restoration. Herein is a picture of a heavenly place. It is wonderful to get rid of bitterness and experience the rest of one's soul.

In the ministry, especially the deliverance ministry, we must guard against becoming bitter when we get tired. It is so easy to wear down and say: “Lord, God how many more messed up people can there be for us to deal with? How much longer is this going to go on? How many more times is this person going to come back here and want prayer?” I am tired of “Deliverance-holics.”

Weariness through lack of rest invites bitterness. Bitterness will cause you to lose heart for the battle and suffer defeat. R & R is important because and if you do not take it, you are going to get bitter. I have met several dear saints through the years that have given-up ministry because they burned themselves out. It grieves me to say that I could see their bitterness.

FINDING REST

NO MORE BITTERNESS

May this writing expose the clandestine curse of bitterness in your life, dear reader, and as you appeal to the Lord for deliverance and healing in the following model prayer, find your soul flooded with the sweet waters of Zion and the peace that passes understanding.

PEACE

A PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE

Father in heaven, you are the only true and living God. I desire this day for you to be the Lord of all my life. I come to you committing and surrendering my entire being to you. You are my creator, my life and my reason for being.

Knowing how desperately wicked and deceitful my heart can be, I ask you to reveal to me any hidden bitterness in my life. I want to hold nothing back from myself regarding any unforgiveness that I may still harbor in my heart. I willingly choose to release any and all issues with any individual or situation to be totally forgiven and, with the help of the Holy Spirit, completely forgotten, never to be brought up again.

My Father, I confess bitterness toward you in regards to your sovereignty in my life. I submit myself to your perfect wisdom and will in all matters of my existence as a son of man here on the earth. I renounce the urge in my soul to resist and rebel against any of your dealings in my life through any person or situation. It is not for me to tell you what is best for me. I want this day and from now on to release this into your loving hands.

I do willingly, by choice, forgive these persons: (*Names*)

I also choose to forgive these past traumatic and abusive events in my past: (*Describe*)

I choose this day to completely deny myself and take up my cross and follow Jesus, my Savior and Your Son.

In the power of the name and blood of Jesus Christ my deliverer, I cast down every lie of logic and renounce every false imagination in my mind and, from henceforth, seek to bring every thought into captivity to the knowledge of Christ. I confess I now have the mind of Christ.

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Father, I ask you for the strength to no longer manifest anger regardless of what I encounter with people and situations in the future. Make me ever aware that it is my choice about how I respond, and may, in the strength of the Christ that's within me, I react in love.

Instead of turning bitter, I determine to count it all joy when I come into various trials, knowing full well that the testing of my faith will produce patience and I believe that it will do a perfect work me.

Thank you, father, for your patience with me and love for me.

In the name of Jesus, I pray.

AMEN

COME FOR MINISTRY

Many have come to our campus from all over the world to receive personal ministry. You are welcome to contact us should you desire deliverance and healing. The Lord has moved in miraculous ways here.

Call: (817) 283-1700

Email: thekey@thekeym.org

Complete the Personal Information Form on our
website:

www.keydeliverance.org