

Bitterness, with a side of Envy

Watch diligently lest any man fail the grace of God, lest any *root of bitterness* spring up to trouble you and defile many. –Hebrews 12:15
Resentment kills a fool, and *envy* slays the simple –Job 5:2

DEFINITION

Bitterness- Separation resulting from **unforgiveness** for wrongs or felt wrongs, coupled with the desire to continue in separation or **payback**.

Envy- A discontented state of wanting for **something else**.

DOORWAYS

Generational

Hurt of any kind. Who's hurt you? Feeling rejected.

Disappointment. Who's disappointed you? Have *you*?

Memories that continue to be unpleasant- Jr. high? Lost virginity? Divorce?

Taking offenses of any kind. What is the last thing you remember taking an offense about? (traffic, comment by someone else, being bumped into)

DESCRIPTION

Bitterness is a willingness to feel badly about someone else, or a perverse pleasure in someone else's shortcomings. It is quick to repeat others' sin, has memorized a list of transgressions, and agrees to despair of reconciliation.

Envy **lusts** after someone else's **qualities**, status, possessions, or relationships. Envy is self-seeking and willing to demean others for itself. Envy fixates on others, promotes self, calls God **unfair** or unwise, and connives for gain. *Envy is not content!* It holds onto others instead of releasing them (children, people under your authority/influence).

UNDERLINGS- first, a progression (underlings are the tip of the iceberg)

Unforgiveness!

Resentment (Matt 26:5-8) ("...love keeps no record of wrongs...") This separates us from others, and can be a foundation to fears: of man, rejection, failure, abandonment.

Anger (James 1:19-20) If someone has anger, look for un-forgiveness and bitterness. Anger can be seen and felt by you and others. It's not loving.

Hate (Titus 3:3-5); "I despise him"

Retaliation (Rom 12:17-21) Fantasies of getting even. Vengeance is the Lord's (but his mercy is even better!)

Violence: Anger & hatred in action; striking, screaming, physical & sexual abuse- "I will eliminate you."

Murder (John 8:39-44) Full manifestation/ fruit of un-forgiveness; it can be in your heart, with the tongue, or physical murder. Just as evil to the LORD.

Bitterness-Unbelief/**cynicism**; Confusion; **Programming** – traps you in behaviors and thoughts that you don't want but can't stop; Fear; Rebellion- knowing what's expected of you and doing the opposite; **Self pity** – "woe is me". The superglue of hell that will bind you to the past; Rejection – feel like you're not accepted; Accusation – feeling accused OR accusing- "They'll never change!"; Slander; **Recorder** – keeps record of wrongs, replays hurtful moments/conversations; Thievery- like in Acts 8:20-23, when Peter said that Simon was full of bitterness for trying to buy the Spirit; Destruction; Death; **Suicide** – Suicidal thoughts; no forgiveness toward self; Fornication; Adultery; Cursing – words you speak and those spoken against you; **Pornography**; Slander

Envy & jealousy- materialism; idolatry; *comparison*- more friends, money, spirituality, etc.; **disbelief that God will provide**; bitterness; criticism; gossip / slander; cursing (others); competition; pride / superiority; strife; possessiveness; ambition

HEALTH CONSEQUENCES

Anger- aneurisms: stroke, hemorrhoids, varicose veins (form of aneurism)

Unforgiveness- cancer (Colon: retaining others' sins, John 20:23), arthritis

Envy- osteoporosis (Prov 14:30) "...envy is the rottenness of the bones"

GOD SAYS...

Rom 12:21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. **Don't let your past rule you.**

Ephesians 4:26 Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry. **Deal with your bitterness.**

Ephesians 4:29-32 Let no corrupt communication proceed from your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all **bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander**, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

No matter what has happened to you, no matter what way you were hurt or abused, the devil and his spirits meant it as a way to bring you down... but Rom 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. God wants to use our hurt for good. Can you believe this?

Genesis 37: Joseph & his brothers. Father loved Joseph more than brothers and his brothers hated him. Joseph dreamed that he would rule over them. Brothers were angry, hatred, envy / jealousy. Later they conspired to slay him and sold him! Yet, in Gen 50:20, Joseph tells his brothers "you meant it for harm, but God meant it for good."

How do we forgive? **John 20:19-23** On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Luke 5:20-25 When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven." The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...." He said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God.

Matthew 18:21-35 "Terrible parable"

- God's ministry to us is one of forgiveness and compassion. Jesus said on the cross 'Forgive them for they know not what they do.' Jesus forgave while on the cross.

- **You** have been called to this ministry of reconciliation (II Cor 5). What others have done to me does not equal what was done to Jesus.

- We think that if we hold anger or unforgiveness, we somehow get even. No, you get held in bondage! "It's like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die." If you forgive and bless, you release God's how to bring good not only for you, but in them. If you want to walk in power, forgive. Hold onto **nobody** else's sin- if you do, you'll get their death (Rom 6:23)

- Forgive as God forgives. Take the other's account back to zero, then add to it!

Name offense – speak forgiveness – command evil spirits to leave

- Bless the person in the way they've hurt you. If they did not love you as they should, bless them that he or she would be loved in every way, etc.

Soul tie: an unclean connection between people on a soul level

Envy- Cain of Abel's sacrifice in Genesis 4. Led to bitterness, accusation, revenge, and finally murder.

James 3:13-17 *Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.*

Love does not envy (I Cor 13:4)

RECEIVE (go through forgiveness with a volunteer!)

Psalm 23:3 and 5. Get your soul restored so that you can eat in the presence of your enemies.

Titus 3:3-5 *At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in **malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.** But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us...*

Micah 7:18 *Who is a God like you, who **pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance?** You do not stay angry forever but **delight to show mercy.***

There is only ONE Godly jealousy: his for your whole heart and soul. (Ex 20:5, 34:14 Dt 4:24, II Cor 11:2)

OBEY THIS WEEK

Make a list of those who've hurt you or from whom you've taken offense. When you think of them, you get an emotional ping. Put yourself and your spouse and your parents on the list! If you hold God accountable for anything, put him on the list! Include people who've died that you need to forgive.

In your small groups, you're going to forgive, release, and bless. Forgive those who have hurt you, beat you, molested you, and lied about you... whatever! There is power in forgiving and blessing. There is **strength** in this. We set in motion God's power to overcome evil with good.

MEMORIZE

Be kind to each other, tenderhearted and forgiving, just as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven you. –Ephesians 4:32