

# ***DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM OF RESENTMENT AND BITTERNESS!***

## **I. RECOGNIZING THE PROBLEM:**

### **A. The truth is --**

1. Everyone of us, at one time or another feels that we have been wronged by another person. At that point we will either forgive or become resentful and possibly very bitter.
2. Bitterness will steal our inner peace and can even cause physical illness.
3. It will destroy our fellowship with God and cause our closest relationships to suffer.
4. Bitterness is often the overflow of resentments we have allowed to develop.
5. We should easily recognize a bitter and resentful spirit in ourselves.

### **B. We often:**

1. We easily hold on to resentments!
2. Then we dwell on them until they become as mountains in our mind.
3. We meditate upon what others have done to us, and we readily produce a hateful, and bitter spirit.

## **II. GOD WARNS US ALL ABOUT BITTERNESS:**

- A. The husband is especially warned not to practice bitterness.** Col. 3:19
- B. God commands ALL of us to “put away” bitterness.** Eph. 4:31, Col. 3:8
- C. God warns us about the “*root of bitterness, springing up, whereby many are defiled.*”** Heb. 12:15-16

## **III. LOOKING AT THE ELEMENTS THAT MAKE UP BITTERNESS:**

- A. Bitterness involves *judging and condemning.***
- B. Bitterness is a *continuation and a deepening of anger.*** Eph. 4:26,27
- C. Bitterness is like a *plant that continues to grow and will produce fruit.***  
Heb. 12:15

## **IV. CONSIDERING WHY PEOPLE BECOME BITTER:**

- A. We are *hurt* and *become bitter because of many unfulfilled expectations.***
1. We do think **about** and maintain many expectations.
  2. We came to our **marriage** with many expectations.
  3. We have expectations about **life in general.**
  4. We entertain expectations concerning **our employment.**
  5. We even have expectations **in our friendships.**

As we entertain many different expectations in various areas of life we get hurt because others don't fulfill the expectations that we have mentally

embraced. We have not given our expectations to God and we won't be able to do this until we are willing to give all our rights to God.  
*Our expectations are often out-of-kilter, and unreasonable.*

**B. We become bitter as we try to balance guilt and blame.**

**C. And we become bitter in our attempt to get “even,” for then we hold on to malice.** Eph. 4:31,32

## **V. LOOKING AT WHAT BITTERNESS PRODUCES:**

*King Saul in a classic example of a bitter person. All of the following were evident in his life.*

**A. Bitterness brings depression.**

**B. A bitter spirit causes a person to be insensitive.**

**C. Bitterness also produces ingratitude and an unthankful spirit.**

**D. A bitter person experiences much tension and usually senses a lot of rejection, and will reject others as well.**

**E. A bitter person also exhibits distrust in others.**

**F. Self-rejection takes place in the life of the bitter person.**

**G. A bitter person can actually become ill because of his attitude.**

## **VI. RESOLVING BITTERNESS AND RESENTMENTS:**

If the one who is bitter and resentful is not saved, this is first and greatest need. Those who know they are forgiven are then able to forgive others. Often at the root of our bitterness is unforgiveness toward others around us. You must recognize what is the root of your bitterness or resentments and how you developed this sinful spirit.

**A. Confess bitterness and resentment as SIN!** I John 1:7-9; James 5:16

**B. See God's HAND through the offense and through the offender.**  
(See Genesis 5:20.) Joseph could have been bitter over many different things that happened in his life.

1. God is at work in your life in the things He allows you to face.
2. God is trying to produce a) maturity, b) dependency upon Him, c) submission, and 4) obedience in your life.
3. You need to be aware that God is using the offense and the offender to bring good results in your life.
4. Joseph didn't become bitter for He knew that God was at work.

**C. Thank God for the offense!** James 1:2-3; Phil. 4:6-8; Rom. 5:1-5; Eph. 5:20

**D. Fully forgive the offender!** Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13

**E. Restore love by loving acts of involvement in the life of the one who has offended you!** I Cor. 13:1-8; Jh 13:34-35; Rom. 12:20-21