

Recovery from Bitterness

(Eph 4:31) Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

It is not difficult to build up bitterness toward those whom we consistently share close quarters. These can be in our families, our church or our work companions, etc. Bitterness is a sin and when we allow it to build, we are clearly out of God's will. All of us use our circumstances, the failures of others and the pain we experience as reasons to justify our sin. If you find yourself as a believer who is involved with bitterness, then you need to know that God has a means of recovery.

Bitterness – pikria – an angry hostile attitude toward another that is built up over time as one experiences conflict with another.

Solution:

1. Recognize out of God's will

(Ps 26:2; 1Cor 11:28) Examine yourself: consistent state of mental, verbal or overt sin - relationship conflicts & struggles

- You can live outside of God's will and not even realize you are into sin
- 2Cor 13:5 – examine yourself to see if you are in the faith – are you saved?
- Psm 26:2 – examine me Lord, test my mind & heart
- Recovery from a state of sin requires that we 1st recognize our sin

2. Restoration of F/HS

(1Jn 1:9; Eph 5:18; Gal 5:16-17)

- F/HS is a command – Eph 5:18 – a choice as cp to I/HS
- F/HS – under the influence of GHS – surrendered to the will of GHS
- F/HS is an absolute – Gal 5:16 walk/Spirit & won't fulfill desires/flesh – ouk me indicates that you will be absolutely free of the flesh
- Confess sin – 1Jn 1:9 – admit your sin & GHS cleanses you of your sins
- Walk GHS means to stay filled – refuse to sin, refuse to go back to bitterness

3. Repent Logic that Justifies sin - Repent – metanoia – change of mind

Examine the reasoning that decided that sin was the appropriate strategy as a response to your circumstances – your justification

Gen 4 Cain – God's rejection of His offering → pain/anger → eliminate rival

Gen 37 brothers – Jacob/Joseph's failure → pain → sin/vengeance: excuse to sin

2Sam 11 David – adultery/Bathsheba → murdered Uriah → excuse: fear of exposure

- Natural, flesh reaction to adversity & pain is to commit sins: self-pity, anger, fear
- Realize that God has a better way – Jam 4:1-10 – 1-4 sinful reaction; 5-10 spiritual response; Gal 5:19-21 works/flesh; 22-23 fruit/Spirit
- Rom 8:28 – God works even our pain for divine good – trust Him w/out sinning
- Heb 13:5 – reject love/money; be content; God won't leave you

4. **Reject Old Man belief that set you up for disappointment.**

(Rom 13:12; Col 3:8; Heb 12:1; Jam 1:21; 1Pt 2:1)

- OM is a satanic, human built belief system designed to meet our human needs w/out the provision of God – fig leaves solving our own problems
- False objects of desire & hope; False strategies for relating
- OM belief: need-desire/man à set up to fail à hurt/disappoint à justify sin
- Repeating pattern with changing partners – different place/face – same result
- Discover and reject old belief that causes us to choose same destructive pattern

5. **Renew mind with new man logic**

Eph 4:22-24, Rom 12:2; Col 3:10; 2Cor 4:16

Rom 8:29 – destined to be conformed to the image of his Son – temp à eternity

1Cor 2:16 – word of God is the mind of Christ – thinking of God expressed in the bible

2Cor 3:18 – as we behold the glory of the Lord in the word à transformed into image

Eph 4:22-24 – we take off the old belief system and put on the divine belief system

2Tim 2:15 – rightly dividing word of truth – **orthotomeo** – cut straight

- CBD – principles developed and taught in categories – renders big picture

6. **Render obedience to God**

Jn 14:15, 21, 23-24

- Jn 14:15 – If you love me keep my commands – obedience expresses love
- Momentum - Spiritual momentum is built by learning and obeying the word of God
- Momentum is the mechanics of spiritual strength – Eph 6:10; 2Tim 2:1; 1Jn 2:14
- Knowledge is the potential for blessing – obedience insures blessing