

Healing The Broken Heart

Part IV— Bitter Root Judgments

I. Bitter Root Judgments

Something that is bitter leaves a bitter taste in our mouths, producing a biting disagreeable sensation in the tongue. In a figurative sense, emotions such as extreme enmity, grudge, hatred produce a bitterness in the heart of man which is manifested through the words spoken—bitterness of anger, sharpness, severity of temper.

The Bible warns us about not allowing bitterness to become rooted in our hearts:

See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled (Heb. 12:15).

Bitterness is a spiritual strongman that connects to unforgiveness, resentment, retaliation, anger, hate, violence and murder. Do you have people in your life who you haven't forgiven? Are you resentful and angry?

Refusing to go to the Lord and receive His grace when hurt, we hold on to our grievances, allowing them to fill our heart with bitterness. We nurse our resentments, anger, desire to retaliate, they turn into hate, violence and murder.

A. The Law Of Judging

Making judgments leaves a bitterness in the heart of the person who made them. There is a spiritual principle that says do not make judgments against others, otherwise what we will receive back in life is related to what we have sown. The judgments I make against others will come back to me.

The law of judgment says that what we give out, we will receive.

Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it shall be measured to you (Matt 7:1,2).

Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother, or judges his brother, speaks against the law, and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge of it. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy, but who are you who judge your neighbor (James 4: 11-12).

The Law Of Sowing & Reaping

Our judgments deposit a seed in our heart which by law has someday to be reaped. The natural and spiritual laws are similar: For every action there must be an equal and opposite reaction.

Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap (Galatians 6:7).

Interestingly the Sandfords (1982) suggest that the law of sowing and reaping was designed by God to bring about the multiplication of blessings, not punishment. However the law of sowing and reaping also works to bring about destruction.

Sow to yourself in righteousness, reap in mercy (Hosea 10:12).

They that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same (Job 4:8).

B. Sowing Judgments Against Parents

When we make a judgment that dishonors our parents, we are sowing a seed which by spiritual law has someday to be reaped.

The Law of Honoring Parents

Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with you on the land which the Lord your God gives you (Deut. 5:16).

Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king (I Peter 2:17).

You have been trapped by what you said, ensnared by the words of your mouth (Prov. 6:2).

For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.” (Matt. 12:36-37).

In other words, things will go well with us in the areas that we honored our parents. They will not go well for us in the areas that we have dishonored them by judging them. We will reap what we have sown (Sandfords).

Judgments Against Parents Cause Darkness Within Us

According to the scripture, judgments we make against our parents in childhood can cause darkness within us.

He who curses his father or his mother, his lamp will go out in time of darkness (Prov. 20:20).

Our judgments against others will block our ability to clearly see ourselves, others, the world around us, and God through the eyes of light. Making judgments against others and holding them in our hearts darkens our inner lamps, blocking our ability to see clearly—both within us and around us. Harboring bitter judgments and unforgiveness causes our hearts to harden and turn to stone, rendering us unable to be tenderhearted and extend mercy.

Block Our Ability to See God

It also blocks our ability to see God and know His presence within us.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Matt. 5:8).

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love, does not know God, for God is love.

By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and set His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love another. No one has beheld God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit (I John 4:7-13).

And we have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. And there is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love (I John 4:16-18).

We love, because He first loved us. If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also (I John 4:19-21).

II. Development Of A Bitter Root Judgment

A bitter root judgment often begins in childhood, when our parents failed to love us with God's love. Perhaps they didn't remember their promises, abandoned us, failed to give us time, didn't really see us or listen to us, were inconsistent in nurturing and loving us, failed to provide warmth, safety and a sense of belonging, or even abused us. In other words, we were betrayed by relationship.

A. Bitter Root Judgment Produces Negative Expectancies

The child's heart becomes angry and he cherishes the resentments in his heart. Because it is not good to be angry with parents, the child may bury the resentment in his heart and forget them. As a result of the pain of the judgment, he develops negative beliefs and expectancies, making inner vows about what he will or will not do. Some section of his heart becomes hard and stubborn, and unable to apply faith in a loving God or sense His presence. He opens himself to hatred, anger, revenge, murder, violence—becoming very bitter.

1. Bitter Judgments Against Parents Hinder Marital Relationships

These negative expectancies bring about an inability to relate to our partners in marriage.

If father abandoned you and you form a judgment against him, you will most likely believe that all men will abandon you, even God, the Father. The negative expectancy makes it possible to relate to your partner in trust.

2. Bitter Judgments Against Father: Unable to Come To God

These judgments and vows rooted deep in the heart prevent him from seeing God as a loving God and believing Him.

No pain strikes more deeply into a man's heart than being abandoned emotionally or physically by Dad. Therefore no pain more directly beckons the saving power of Father God. The Father

wound is a wound of absence, therefore it is harder to heal than other wound and more destructive. Many men desperate for manhood are angry for not getting from dad what they needed, and they take refuge in techniques and grasps after control (Source Unknown).

The father wound is typical of people who like to challenge the idea of a loving God by saying things like this: "Why doesn't He stop all of the evil things in the world? Why are children starving to death? Doesn't He care?" This type of theological debate is very often the result of a wounded, impure heart that is holding anger, resentment, and hatred against a father who failed to love them with God's love. When asked to tell what their fathers were like they describe them as cruel, insensitive, critical, or deserting. As adults these people are still holding resentment, hatred, and anger in their hearts because of their earthly fathers failure. Their hearts were wounded and scarred and informed by the reactions to their earthly father and project it onto God (Sandfords).

Jerry's Story

My husband grew up in a Christian family with Bible reading and prayers after meals. They never missed church. Yet, he grew up, not really wanting to get too close to God or to serve Him. He didn't think God liked him very much, and he really didn't like God that well either.

In a workshop, Jerry drew a picture of God with His eyes and mouth frowning at him and a measuring stick in his hand. Jerry saw that his picture of god looked just like his father's face. He describes his father as disapproving, judgmental, harsh, critical, without grace and mercy. He did not give him any affirmation, approval, love, comfort, or warmth.

In response to his experiences with his father, Jerry believed that "No matter what I do, it will never be good enough."

3. Negative Expectancies Produce Performance Oriented Behaviors

(Primarily taken from "The Transformation of the Inner Man" by John & Paula Sandford, pp. 41-70).

Performance orientation refers to the reasons why we do things, not to the things we actually do. It refers to the hidden motives underlying our good behaviors, the reasons why we work so hard. It develops out of a neurotic anxiety and fear in the core of the person.

People caught in performance orientation have little center of decision in themselves. They act out whatever the group ideal is, losing their own identities. They force themselves to become whatever it is that will get them approval. Their security rests in what people think of them, not in God. They depend on other's reactions to them in order to feel okay (Sandfords, p. 45).

Performance oriented behavior is not motivated by genuine love for others but a self-serving need to be perfect together with some type of bitter-root expectancy. This type of behavior can often be manifested in the church as a religious spirit, in which the person has transferred onto God their pattern of performance orientation.

Performance-orientation is woven into the very structure of the personality, affecting everything the person is and does. The person carries hidden resentments deep in the heart. Underlying this behavior is the feeling that that they did not get the kind of love from their parents that others got—a love which would have enabled them to find their true identity and security. Because of this, they made judgments against their parents and inner vows based upon

their negative expectancies. The person needs to come to the place where they are willing to renounce the whole pattern of performance (Sandfords, p. 41-70).

III. Healing Bitter Root Judgments

Every sin demands resolution. There is no cheap grace. Forgiveness does not mean God looked the other way or changed His laws. Jesus said for us not to think that He came to abolish the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfill it (Matt. 5:17).

Our hearts need to be cleansed from bitter judgments, resentments, anger, unforgiveness, etc.

Call on the Lord out of a pure heart (I Ti. 2:22).

Create in me a clean heart O God...do not cast me away from Thy presence... (Ps. 51:10).

The grace of Christ on the cross delivers us...

The full legal demand of the law of sowing and reaping was fulfilled in pain upon the body of Jesus in anguish in the heart and soul and spirit of our Lord upon the cross. Nevertheless, the cross is not automatic. If we do not repent and confess, we reap in full despite the fullness of mercy available at a moment's utterance.

...having forgiven us all our transgressions, having cancelled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross (Col. 2:13-14).

A. Forgive From Your Heart

We need to make peace in our heart with everyone who has ever hurt us and get that cleared up before God. We need to forgive your father or mother and all other family members for what they did or did not do in our life. Pray, asking the Lord to teach you about forgiveness.

1. Unforgiveness, a barrier

Unforgiveness is a barrier to becoming free from ungodly soul ties. It prevents God from giving His grace to the person seeking to be free.

...delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if you from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses (Matt. 18:34-35)

The Lord makes it clear that forgiving others is a condition to receiving the desires of our heart—our healing. Some sobering thoughts: According to the Lord's prayer, we will not be forgiven if we do not forgive others for their sins against us (Matt. 6:9-15).

Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil...(Matt. 6:12-13).

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses (Matt. 6:14-15).

And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions (Mark 11:25-26).

If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained (John 20:23).

2. Unforgiveness holds the curse on us.

The Scriptures command us to forgive before we can be freed, because demonic bondages often stem from broken relationships of trust between people (Banks, p. x). When we hold another's sins and do not forgive them, we are holding the curse upon ourselves. When we will not let go of the sins of others, we are keeping that person under the "bondage of my judgment".

If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained (John 20:23).

So shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart (Matt. 18:35).

3. Principles of Forgiveness

Forgiveness is key to our own healing, thus it is vital that you understand what true forgiveness is. Pray, asking the Lord to teach you about forgiveness. Here are a few principles of forgiveness.

Genuine forgiveness is from the heart

Real forgiveness must come from the heart. The heart must be postured with an attitude of forgiveness toward the person:

...if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart (Matt. 18:35).

Separate person from their sin

Forgiveness becomes easier if you can separate the person who hurt you from the sin they did against you, just like the Lord did for you. He loved you even in your sin, because He was able to separate you from your sin. This means that we too can forgive others of their failures yet love them.

Jesus was saying, 'Father forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing' (Luke 23:34).

I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you (Matt. 5:44).

Love your enemies, and do good... be merciful, just as your Father is merciful (Luke 6:35-36).

B. Stop Speaking Evil Against Others

When we speak evil against someone, we bring a curse upon ourselves. Ponder on the following scriptures:

Every man of you who passes judgment for in that you judge another, you condemn yourself...(Rom. 2:1).

Do not judge, lest you be judge. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you (Matt. 7:1-2).

➤ Your Response

(The following ideas and prayers are taken from Virkler & Virkler (2000), *Contributing Strands Worksheet*, p. 6).

1. Pray, asking the Lord to search your heart

Ask Him to show you any judgments and negative expectancies at work within you. Ask Him to show you any bitterness, resentment, anger, fear, etc. in your heart.

There was great searching of heart (Judges 5:16).

Create in me a clean heart o' God (Ps 51:10).

Lord, Search me and know my heart (Ps. 139:23).

The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord, searching all the innermost parts (chambers of the body) of his being (Prov. 20:27).

The word of God is quick and powerful,..... discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart.

2. Identify bitter root judgments & negative expectancies in your heart and mind."

Make a list of your negative expectations & beliefs:

3. Who Do You Need To Forgive & Stop Judging?

When you think of someone who has wronged you, what do you feel in the pit of your stomach? Does your stomach tighten? Is there a ping in your spirit when you think about someone? Make a list of the people you will need to forgive.

"I need to forgive _____."

Then state why you need to forgive them: How did they hurt you? What did they do to you or fail to do for you? "I need to forgive them for: _____"

"I need to stop judging _____." Then state why you need to stop judging them: Did they hurt you? What did they do to you or fail to do for you that causes you to judge them? Have you forgiven them?

➤ Doing Business With God: Transformation Of Bitter Root Judgments

(The following ideas and prayers are taken from Virkler & Virkler (2000), *Contributing Strands Worksheet*, p. 6).

Start by welcoming the Holy Spirit's presence to guide and empower you.

Position your heart in humility before the Lord. Come before the Lord, tell him the heart issue you are bringing to Him. Give your heart to God now; allow Him to access your heart.

1. Repentance From Dead Works & Faith Toward God: Confess & Forgive

Make a decision to forgive all other people who have ever hurt you, recognizing that holding bitterness produces death in you and in those around you.

Then verbalize your decision, by saying out loud, "Lord I forgive..." and name the person or persons involved and state specifically what their sin is. Declare your total dependence on God to free you. Ask God to release and forgive you of the sin; state your desire to turn from it and receive His grace. Also ask God to forgive you for judging others. State your desire to turn away from this sin and receive His grace.

Speak out loud the words of forgiveness. Confess specifically what the sin is; declare your total dependence on God to free you. Ask God to release and forgive you of the sin; state your desire to turn from it and receive His grace.

2. Act of Praying:

Heavenly Father,

I need You to make me clean and whole. I am coming to You to confess my sin of unforgiveness as sin. I renounce all sins involved in my holding unforgiveness againstand

I give up my right to be angry with them and I release them into Your hands. I thank You that your blood is enough for every sin committed against me. I now receive Your forgiveness

I am choosing to forgive for (Name what they did to you).....

I ask you to forgive me for judging ,, etc. (Name the person and what you judged them for). I choose to give up my right to be angry with them.

I know judging this person is sin, and I ask You to cleanse me from it and to completely forgive me for it.

Please make me clean and whole and release me of this sin. I know I am helpless in overcoming it on my own, and that I need You. Unless you set me free, I will never be free.

In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, I thank You. Amen.

References

Anderson, Neil T. (1996). *The Steps To Freedom in Christ*. Gospel Light:

Healing The Broken Heart: Part IV Bitter Root Judgments
Program Notes
Radio Horeb 29 October 2006

Banks, Bill & Sue (1999). *Breaking Unhealthy Soul-Ties*. Impact Christian Books: Kirkwood, MO.

Linn, Matthew & Dennis, & Fabricant, Sheila (XXXx). *Healing the Eight Stages of Life*.

Long, Brad & Strickler, Cindy (2001). *Let Jesus Heal Your Hidden Wounds. Cooperating With The Holy Spirit in Healing Ministry*. Chosen Books: Grand Rapids, MI.

Peck, M. Scott (1980). *The Road Less Traveled*. Simon and Schuster: NY (ISBN 0-671-25067-1)

Prince, Derek (1990). *Blessing or Curse. You Can Choose*. Chosen Books: Grand Rapids, MI.

Sandford, John & Paula (1982). *The Transformation of the Inner Man*. Victory House, Inc: Tulsa, OK.

Virkler, Mark & Patti (2001), *Prayers That Heal the Heart*. Bridge-Logos: Gainesville, FL 32614 USA. www.bridgelogos.com International Standard Book Number 0-88270-852-X. The Virkler's ministry is called "Communion With God (CWG) Ministries": Tel: (1) 800 466 6961; www.cwgministries.org