

# Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

*Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ*

January 17, 2020

## **What is so Sweet about Bitterness**

What is so sweet about bitterness that causes people to cling to it as though it is their most prized possession? It does nothing for the person in whom it dwells except to keep them in pain over the wounds of the past. So it is with other similar bondages of the soul, such as envy, jealousy and hatred. These destroy a person from within, and offer only misery and loneliness in return. It has been said that bitterness is like drinking poison and expecting someone else to die. This is very true, but bitterness is also contagious and will often infect and destroy those around the person in whom it dwells. Still, most people will hold to it even though it cost them happiness, family, friends, and even their own soul.

In the scripture, bitterness is included among the things which will *"grieve the holy Spirit of God"* Ephesians 4:31 such as wrath, anger, and evil speaking (vilification). If God's Spirit is grieved by a person, He will depart from that person and they will find themselves sitting in darkness. Bitterness is difficult to hide, and when the object of a person's bitterness is mentioned, their bitterness can hardly be contained. The Apostle Paul spoke of those *"Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:"* Romans 3:13-14.

Most people can point to a reason to justify their bitterness, envy, or hatred towards another

person. It is usually based upon what someone has said or done. Sometimes these reasons have merit and sometimes they are just plain silly; it really makes no difference. The embittered person almost always feels as though they “have a right” to be bitter. Perhaps they do, but they are clinging to a “right” that is destroying them.

For years I have told people, “You may have a right to be bitter, but you also have a right to have peace with God. Just know that you cannot have both.” The Bible says the kingdom of God is *“righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost!”* Romans 14:17. If you are born of God’s Spirit, you have full privilege to walk in that righteousness, peace, and joy all the days of your life. But if you do, you will surrender your right to bitterness, envy, strife, and hatred. Such things have no place at all in *“the Kingdom of God’s dear Son.”* Colossians 1:13. You must know that as a child of God, you have no right to such things at all.

I do not believe a child of God has enemies. There may be people who dislike, hate, or despise you, but they cannot be your enemy. When Jesus said *“love your enemies”* Matthew 5:44, he is speaking of those who see you as an enemy in their eyes. Yet if you love them, they can never be an enemy in your eyes. Jesus said, *“Pray for them who despitefully use you.”* Matthew 5:44. Do not pray for God to punish them or straighten them out. Pray for God to lift them up and bless them! You will find it impossible to despise someone for whom you are sincerely praying.

A person in the grip of bitterness and hatred may read this letter and acknowledge every word of it to be true, yet still find it impossible to turn

loose of the bitterness that possesses their soul. For that person I have two words: Forgive & Trust.

**Forgive:** Jesus said, *“But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”* Matthew 6:15. Sometimes people refuse to forgive others because they do not believe the other person is “sorry” for what they have done. Sometimes people just refuse to forgive. What have you needed forgiveness for? What do you need forgiveness for? Forgive, and you shall be forgiven!

**Trust:** Only the blood of Jesus Christ has the power to cleanse the human heart. The Bible says, *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* 1 John 1:9. God will not only forgive you for your bitterness and hatred, but he will wash it from your heart, mind, and soul. When the Bible says *“the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,”* it means there is no bondage, no darkness, and no sin so powerful and strong that Jesus’ blood will not wash it all away. You can be free! You must simply trust that God’s word is true, and that He is true to His word. Find yourself a place and call out to Jesus Christ today!