

3 | BITTER ROOTS



What Does God Do with Bitter Roots?

Ex 15: 23-25

Then they came to Marah. But they could not drink the water of Marah, it was so bitter; that is why that place is called Marah. The people began to complain to Moses. "What should we drink?" Moses called on the Lord, and the Lord pointed to a piece of wood. When he threw it into the water, it got sweet.

Jas 3:11

Does a spring bring forth sweet and bitter water from the same vein?

John 7:37-38

On the last day, at the height of the feast, Jesus stood in the temple and cried, "Let him who is thirsty come to me and drink! "Rivers of living water will flow from the heart of those who believe in me," says the Scriptures. "

Jesus endured all pain without becoming bitter. His crucifixion did not cause a bitter root either. When we drink from its source, fresh water enters us. If we believe on the cross it will be like in the days of Moses, our bitterness will be sweet.

How Can We Respond When God Shows that We Have Bitter Roots?

Gal 6: 7

Whatever a man sows, he will also reap. If we have grown into a bitter root in the past, we will reap bitterness. But the good news is that you can remove the bitter root and sow peace. You will then reap peace.

What is a Bitter Root?

A bitter root occurs when we hold on to pain, negative thoughts and emotions from the past and don't forgive. When bitterness arises after painful events, it takes root in your heart. This root continues to do its work and causes a bitter life. Roots are always underground and invisible, but they do determine the growth of the plant above the ground. They feed your life. They feed negative, critical and powerful thoughts in your life.

How is a Bitter Root Formed?

A bitter root originates, among other things, through condemnation.

Deut 5:16

Matt 7: 1-2

Rom 2: 1

If you judge someone else for doing something that is unpleasant, painful, dismissive, etc., you can start to form a judgment. There will be condemnation. The texts above show that you will receive the same judgment in return.

The main reason that a bitter root is formed is that you are unable to forgive. This means that the thoughts of the painful events keep repeating. If situations that are new resemble those of the past, it will act as a trigger. This is a system that lets you immediately remember what happened in the past. You will always draw negative conclusions.

Bitter roots are NOT the events that are painful, but our response to the pain. These are sinful responses that infect our lives.

What Are the Effects of a Bitter Root?

- Our expectations or thoughts become negative in new situations that are similar to old negative situations.
- For example a manipulating mother gives a lot of grief. This can cause a reaction of bitterness. Then the expectation is that all women manipulate, and even if they don't, you will still experience it that way.
- The grace of God is hindered.
- A negative atmosphere surrounds us and infects others.

How Do You Recognize Bitter Roots in Yourself?

- Bitter roots cause you to judge specific people.
- Bitter roots cause you to have very negative expectations towards large groups in general. Such expectations that happen often in your life can grow into beliefs. These negative beliefs will also have an unpleasant effect.
- You can recognize the tree by the fruit.
- Pay close attention to your reaction in situations of daily life. What is happening in you? What do you expect? Do you see that you often react negatively or have negative expectations? Most likely that is because a bitter root has grown in your heart.
- When your heart is bitter, your mouth overflows. Our words become cynical, sarcastic, sharp, mocking, critical, etc. Matt 12:34

Steps to Recovery

1. Recognize that you have developed a bitter root.
2. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you the situations of the past that caused this root to grow. Think especially of situations in relation to your parents, family members, but also authority figures (teachers, bosses, etc.).
3. Ask forgiveness for the judgments you have made against these people in the painful situations.
4. Turn away from the habit of judging and having negative expectations.
5. Bring the power of the cross into this bitterness. Allow the living water of the Holy Spirit to touch this bitterness.
6. Forgive the people who hurt you and ask Jesus to heal this pain.
7. Take responsibility for your own wrong reactions and get rid of self-justification, self-pity and seeking support from others.
8. When God's Spirit leads you, go to others to restore relationships.



PRAYER:

Jesus, I want to forgive those who have hurt and hurt me. I will now mention the situations and persons...

I repent of the condemnations I have made and ask forgiveness for the wrong and negative expectations that I have allowed to grow in my heart.

In Jesus name I break that power of condemnation and my habit of clinging to it. I now release myself from this negative force in my life. I allow the cross into these bitter roots and to remove the consequences of this lifestyle. I am destroying the wall that I have built in my heart towards these people and I now open my heart anew to them.

Jesus, I ask that You will form new patterns in the opposite spirit in my heart. Give me thoughts of peace, love and acceptance. I allow those thoughts to be planted in my heart as the seed of the Kingdom of God.

Amen

