



## ***Bitterness and Unforgiveness!***

***With Bishop Ronald K. Powell***

*A man who was bitten by a dog went to the doctor because he started experiencing strange symptoms. After examining him, the doctor said to the man, "I'm sorry, it's too late – you already have rabies." The man, nonchalantly replied, "I thought as much," He then pulled out a pen and paper and began furiously writing something. Curious, the doctor said to him, "Don't tell me you are writing out your will now? You should have done that long ago!" The man explained, "No I'm not writing out my will, I'm writing a list of the people that I want to bite before I die!"*

The man in that story had bitterness and unforgiveness! As we Think about this story, begin to think about who it is that has hurt you, harmed you, abused you, humiliated you, falsely accused you, lied about you or made you feel unworthy. What happened in the past that still creates feelings of pain, anger, rage, resentment and bitterness when you remember it?

Hebrews 12: 15 "Exercise foresight and be on the watch to look [after one another], to see that no one falls back from and fails to secure God's grace (His unmerited favor and spiritual blessings), in order that no root of resentment (rancor, bitterness, or hatred) shoots forth and causes trouble and bitter torment, and the many become contaminated and defiled by it."

***Bitterness, like battery acid, corrodes and eats away at your soul.***

***It poisons first your mind and then your body with disease. Bitterness is a principality and under it and answering to it are seven spirits that reinforce bitterness:***

### **1. Unforgiveness**

***This is how bitterness first gets a foot hold. You begin to keep a record of wrongs and you carry unforgiveness in your heart. You say to yourself, "I am not prepared to forgive you and I am going to remember what you did to me." You think on all the wrong things that have been done to you and every time that person's face comes to your mind, that high octane ping goes off inside of you. This unforgiveness invites the next six spirits to become a part of your life:***

## **2. Resentment**

*Resentment develops as you continue to meditate on that record of wrongs and fume and steam internally over it. A thorn tree is beginning to grow in your brain and secrete chemicals that putting your body into a toxic state of dis-ease. Those chemicals are carrying negative emotion Bitterness, like battery acid, corrodes and eats away at your soul. It poisons first your mind and then your body with disease.*

*That is why you have that bad feeling in your gut every time that person comes to your mind. Resentment keeps the unforgiveness in place.*

## **3. Retaliation**

*After the resentment has been simmering for a while, the steam builds up and you start thinking of ways to get even with that person. They must pay for what they did.*

## **4. Anger**

*Un-forgiveness, resentment and retaliation has been building up and now you are very, very angry. The pressure cooker is really going and adding fuel to the fire. This anger is both seen and felt.*

## **5. Hatred**

*Now that you are angry, hatred gets a foothold. You are saying, "I remember what you did to me. I have really been meditating on it and I really resent it. I'm going to get even with you and make you pay." At this stage hatred begins to say, "You do not deserve to exist. There is no room on this earth for you and me to both be at the same place at the same time." Hatred starts to go into the elimination mode:*

## **6. Violence**

*Hatred fuels violence. Violence says, "Before I eliminate you, you are going to feel my pain." Violence is anger and hatred in action. It can take the form of verbal, emotional, physical or sexual abuse.*

## **7. Murder**

*Once violence erupts, the final fruit of bitterness is murder. This can be literal physical murder, premeditated murder which is murder of the heart or murder with the tongue which is gossip, slander or character trashing. When hatred, violence and murder are in a person's life, they feel they are justified and that person is going to pay the price. Unfortunately, the person does not realize that by this stage the devil has managed to get in and alter his body chemistry, causing diseases like cancer that are resulting in death of his own body.*

*If any one of these seven areas that answer to bitterness are present, the preceding ones are usually also there, and if they are not dealt with, all the rest will surely come. For example, if the person has hatred in his heart, un-forgiveness, resentment, retaliation and anger will also be there. You will not be able to remove bitterness from your life until you deal with un-forgiveness, resentment, retaliation, anger, hatred, violence and murder behind it.*

**Why is Bitterness Sin?**

Romans 12:19 – 21; “19Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave the way open for [God’s] wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay (requite), says the Lord. 20But if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head. 21Do not let yourself be overcome by evil, but overcome (master) evil with good.”

Isaiah 54:17: “No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue that rises up against you in judgment you shall show to be in the wrong.

*This [peace, righteousness, security and triumph over opposition] is the heritage of the servants of the Lord [those in whom the ideal Servant of the Lord is reproduced]; this is the righteousness or the vindication which they obtain from Me [this is that which I impart to them as their justification], says the Lord.”*

Zechariah 2:8 says, that he who touches you touches the apple of God’s eye.

*When somebody wrongs you, those two scriptures above are God’s promise to you so long as you keep your heart right with Him. When you choose to forgive and overcome evil with good, you open the way for God’s wrath and you allow Him to repay the evil that was done to you and to be your vindicator.*

*However, when you put yourself in God’s shoes and become your own vindicator and the judge of others, you are in disobedience to scripture and you will reap the consequences of that:*

Matthew 7:1 – 3: “1Do not judge and criticize and condemn others, so that you may not be judged and criticized and condemned yourselves. 2For just as you judge and criticize and condemn others, you will be judged and criticized and condemned, and in accordance with the measure you [use to] deal out to others, it will be dealt out against you. 3Why do you stare from without at the very small particle that is in your brother’s eye but do not become aware of and consider the beam of timber that is in your own eye?”

*There are worse consequences to bitterness than diseases such as cancer – you put yourself in danger of spending eternity in hell because God gave a very clear warning in His Word that if you will not forgive others, He will not forgive you.*

#### Forgiveness – The Missing Link

Mark 11: 22 - 24: “22 And Jesus, replying, said to them, have faith in God [constantly], 23Truly I tell you, whoever says to this mountain, be lifted up and thrown into the sea! And does not doubt at all in his heart but believes that what he says will take place, it will be done for him. 24For this reason I am telling you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe (trust and be confident) that it is granted to you, and you will get it.”

*We have all been taught this scripture many times in churches all over the world today where they say that believing will guarantee receiving. If you confess it, provided you have enough faith, you will get it.*

*There are so many Christians who have become so confused and disillusioned with the faith messages and name it and claim it teachings because it is still not working. When the person in this church circus*

*is not receiving the object of their belief, they are simply told that they did not have enough faith...and then you talk about hopelessness! Faith isn't even the issue. It is not working because this scripture has been taken out of context. If you want to understand the intent of the author you have got to read Mark 11:22 - 24 in context. If you are going to apply the Word of God, apply the whole Word of God, not just the part that feels good. There's more to the Bible than promises and blessings – there's also conditions and there's reproof.*

*What has happened to us in the healing ministry is we have hung our hat on a few scriptures to the exclusion of the rest of the Truth in the Word.*

*How many times have you tried to pray the prayer of faith and speak to your mountain and claim God's promises and you never received anything? Did you ever wonder why? Well I hope by this point in your journey through this book that you are beginning to understand why. I'm going to show you the missing link to receiving which is found in the verses following Mark 11: 22 – 24 and it is taught by very few people anywhere in the world because they are so busy preaching about God's blessings and His promises.*

Mark 11:25-26: **“And whenever you stand praying** (praying what?) Speaking to the mountain as it says in Mark 11:22, not doubting in your heart, believing that those things which you say shall come to pass and you shall receive the things that you are believing for), if you have anything against anyone, When you choose to forgive and overcome evil with good, you open the way for God to be your vindicator.

Forgive him and let it drop (leave it, let it go), in order that your Father who is in heaven may also forgive you your [own] failings and shortcomings and let them drop. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your failings and shortcomings.”

(\*Note: In the NIV translations of the Bible, Mark 11:26 has been taken out -

So, verses 25 and 26 in Mark 11 are a continuation of verses 22 to 24: In context these scriptures say, **“And when you stand praying, forgive.”**

This is never attached to the faith sermons and “Name it and Claim it” teachings. There are no conditions being offered except that you must have enough faith.

Without mastering this issue of forgiveness, I am wasting my time trying to help you get well from your biological and psychological diseases.

Forgiveness is a big missing link in healing. I will tell you emphatically that forgiveness is a prerequisite to all healing. There's just no way around it.

The promise of healing and divine health is yours as a child of God (Isaiah 53: 5). However, with every promise God has a condition. You can't claim His promises without being prepared to meet His conditions. I explained to you “Essential background knowledge of disease from a Biblical Perspective” that the condition for healing is repentance. Repentance involves asking God to forgive you for the sin that caused your disease.

When you repent to God for serving the sin that caused your disease, do you think He will forgive you and heal you? The answer is – it depends. You see, God’s forgiveness for you is conditional. The Bible tells you very clearly that you cannot ask God to forgive you, if you are not prepared to forgive all those who have hurt you and wronged you. Unforgiveness is a major block to healing and it is one of the reasons why our churches are filled with disease.

Jesus said in Matthew 6:14-15: **“For if you forgive people their trespasses [their reckless and willful sins, leaving them, letting them go, and giving up resentment], your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their trespasses [their reckless and willful sins, leaving them, letting them go, and giving up resentment], neither will your Heavenly Father forgive your trespasses.”**

Imagine the condition your life would be in if God refused to forgive you? You would be cut off from a relationship with Him and everything in your life would be a miserable mess of poverty and disease – spiritually, mentally, emotionally, financially and physically. We like to think that we can stay angry with other people and yet go to God and receive forgiveness for our sins.

But the Lord tells us in Matthew 6: 14 – 15 that this is not so. God’s forgiveness for you is in direct relationship to how you forgive your brother.

Jesus taught us how to pray in Matthew 6: 12: **“Father forgive us our debts, as we have also forgiven (left remitted and let go of the debts and have given up resentment against) our debtors.”**

God is a God of mercy (Psalm 57:10; Psalm 86:15) and this issue of forgiveness is very important to Him.

Henry Wright taught that as a believer you will not get anything from Heaven that you are not prepared to give away to others. So, if you want to have forgiveness, you are going to have to give it away also.

*God tells us repeatedly in His Word that if we want mercy, we have to give mercy.*

Matthew 5 :7 **“Blessed (happy, to be envied, and spiritually prosperous – with life-joy and satisfaction in God’s favor and salvation, regardless of their outward conditions) are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy!”**

Matthew 18:21 – 22 “Then Peter came up to Him and said, Lord, how many times may my brother sin against me and I forgive him and let it go? [As many as] up to seven times? Jesus answered him, **I tell you, not up to seven times, but seventy times seven!”**

## CLOSING

*I don’t know about you but I am personally very glad that God does not put a limit on how many times He forgives me. How many times have you done the same wrong thing at least seventy times seven,*

*and God still forgave you for it? We are often willing to keep receiving and receiving forgiveness from God, but it is amazing how little we want to extend forgiveness to others.*

*We freely accept mercy, yet it is surprising how rigid, legalistic and merciless we can be toward others, especially if they have wronged or hurt us in some way. Yet the Bible says that the debt we owe God is much greater than any debt anyone may owe us.*