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Bitterness - A Root Of Unforgiveness #2

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Romans chapter 12 teaches us how to forgive, by overcoming evil with good, not letting unforgiveness and offenses become roots of bitterness in our lives. We cannot live in denial, saying we are not offended when there are behavior patterns, according to scripture, showing that we are offended or have been.

Heb 12:15 "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;" KJV

Not only are we affected by bitterness, but it will affect everyone around us, in our homes and our relationship with others. Being rooted and grounded in love, which doesn't quit, keeps believing the best, knowing that God will turn situations around.

There are so many different people, having so much hurt and disappointment in the world today, but the Word tells us there is an answer for everyone because of the anointing of the Messiah, who has come to heal and bind up the wounds of all and make them whole.

Isa 61:3,7 "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." 7 For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them." KJV

Isa 61:3,7 "To grant [consolation and joy] to those who mourn in Zion—to give them an ornament (a garland or diadem) of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, the garment [expressive] of praise instead of a heavy, burdened, *and* failing spirit—that they may be called oaks of righteousness [lofty, strong, and magnificent, distinguished for uprightness, justice, and right standing with God], the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified. 7 Instead of your [former] shame you shall have a twofold recompense; instead of dishonor *and* reproach [your people] shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land they shall possess double [what they had forfeited]; everlasting joy shall be theirs." AMP

Shame causes people to withdraw and hide, feeling guilty and intimidated. This is not God's plan for us.

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." KJV

Cleanse means to purify us from the pollution and guilt of sin. The process is not complete until shame and guilt have been covered by the blood of Jesus; we are no longer intimidated but are at liberty among people. We cannot let our past lives cause us to feel unworthy; we are the righteousness of God, the gift given to us when we received salvation.

Luke 7:23 "And blessed (happy—with life-joy and satisfaction in God's favor and salvation, apart from outward conditions—and to be envied) is he who takes no offense in Me *and* who is not hurt *or* resentful *or* annoyed *or* repelled *or* made to stumble [whatever may occur]" AMP

This is God's plan for us, we are on the path of growing and maturing and regardless of what happen, we will not be offended.

In the Hebrew and Greek, the word offend: always means to fall away or stumble and become lukewarm, to pull away from what is our salvation. Even though we say that we are not offended, there are behavior patterns which will tell a different story showing us to be living in denial.

God is in the blessing business and His plan will never change regarding our lives. Many times people continue to hold on to offenses, but that is not God's plan.

1 Pet 3:8-10 "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: 9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. 10 For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:" KJV

1 Pet 3:8-10 "Finally, all [of you] should be of one and the same mind (united in spirit), sympathizing [with one another], loving [each other] as brethren [of one household], compassionate *and* courteous (tenderhearted and humble). 9 Never return evil for evil or insult for insult (scolding, tongue-lashing, berating), but on the contrary blessing [praying for their welfare, happiness, and protection, and truly pitying and loving them]. For *know that* to this you have been called, that you may yourselves inherit a blessing [from God]—that you may obtain a blessing as heirs, bringing welfare and happiness and protection]. 10 For let him who wants to enjoy life and see good days [good—whether apparent or not] keep his tongue free from evil and his lips from guile (treachery, deceit)." AMP

A root of bitterness is usually the result of being offended, "a few thistles gone to seed causing a bitter discontent." We can say that we are not offended, but there are many words describing behavior patterns showing that we are.

Heb 12:15 "Work at getting along with each other and with God. Otherwise you'll never get so much as a glimpse of God. Make sure no one gets left out of God's generosity. Keep a sharp eye out for weeds of bitter discontent. A thistle or two gone to seed can ruin a whole garden in no time." MESSAGE

This is what a root of bitterness will do to us; until the root of bitterness is dealt with things will not change. Forgiveness is one way of getting rid of bitterness, but becoming rooted and grounded in love is the most effective.

In the parable of the sower found in the gospels, some of the seed never took root because of things that happened in the natural, the enemy stealing the word. We must learn the ways of God, in order to be able to discern what is happening when the enemy comes to steal what has been sown in our lives. We have to begin to get grounded in the Word of God. We cannot allow a root of bitterness to take over our lives, as payback time, getting even with those who have offended us. We have to be honest with the Lord and other people in regards to our being offended, we cannot be in denial.

Matt 13:21 "Yet it has no real root in him, but is temporary (inconstant, lasts but a little while); and when affliction or trouble or persecution comes on account of the Word, at once he is caused to stumble [he is repelled and begins to distrust and desert Him Whom he ought to trust and obey] *and he falls away.*" AMP

Mark 4:17 "And they have no real root in themselves, and so they endure for a little while; then when trouble

or persecution arises on account of the Word, they immediately are offended (become displeased, indignant, resentful) *and* they stumble and fall away." AMP

Mark 14:27 "And Jesus said to them, You will all fall away this night [that is, you will be caused to stumble and will begin to distrust and desert Me], for it stands written, I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered." AMP

Many of us know how to handle offenses with other people, but sometimes we are not sure about being offended with God.

"the voice of darkness, the voice of light, the one I listen to will win the fight" (words from Amy Grant song)

Luke 7:23 "And blessed (happy—with life-joy and satisfaction in God's favor and salvation, apart from outward conditions—and to be envied) is he who takes no offense in Me *and* who is not hurt *or* resentful *or* annoyed *or* repelled *or* made to stumble [whatever may occur]" AMP

The message of forgiveness is not an easy message, it is challenging, without us learning how to walk in forgiveness, we must quit being so easily offended, it will stifle our spiritual growth, unfortunately many carry a spirit of offense, refusing to let it go. Offense always comes with self pity, a root of bitterness, it is always about me.

John 6:60-61 " When His disciples heard this, many of them said, This is a hard *and* difficult *and* strange saying (an offensive and unbearable message). Who can stand to hear it? [Who can be expected to listen to such teaching?] 61 But Jesus, knowing within Himself that His disciples were complaining and protesting and grumbling about it, said to them: Is this a stumbling block *and* an offense to you? [Does this upset and displease and shock and scandalize you?]" AMP

The message concerning offenses and the root of bitterness is challenging to us.

Rom 12:17-21 "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. 18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. 20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." KJV

Rom 12:17-21 "Repay no one evil for evil, but take thought for what is honest *and* proper *and* noble [aiming to be above reproach] in the sight of everyone. 18 If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19 Beloved, 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. 20 But 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. 21 Do not let yourself be overcome by evil, but overcome (master) evil with good" AMP

Don't try to get even, leave the door open for God to do His work in the situation. We are to be a blessing and we are to receive a blessing. In the Old Testament God blessed them.

1 Pet 3:8-10 "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: 9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. 10 For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:" KJV

1 Pet 3:8-10 "Finally, all [of you] should be of one and the same mind (united in spirit), sympathizing [with

one another], loving [each other] as brethren [of one household], compassionate *and* courteous (tenderhearted and humble). 9 Never return evil for evil or insult for insult (scolding, tongue-lashing, berating), but on the contrary blessing [praying for their welfare, happiness, and protection, and truly pitying and loving them]. For *know that* to this you have been called, that you may yourselves inherit a blessing [from God]—that you may obtain a blessing as heirs, bringing welfare and happiness and protection. 10 For let him who wants to enjoy life and see good days [good—whether apparent or not] keep his tongue free from evil and his lips from guile (treachery, deceit)." AMP

Gen 1:28 "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." KJV

Rom 12:19-20 "Beloved, 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. 20 But 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 " AMP

We are never to try to get even with anyone for offenses, but let forgiveness and blessing be ministered to them knowing that it is God's plan for us.

Heb 12:15 "Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many." NLT

Trouble means to harass, to crowd in and bitterness is something that poisons and defiles. Our spiritual senses tell us that bitterness is not good, keep it out, don't let it in.

Eph 3:14-21 "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. 20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." KJV

To become free of the effects of offenses and bitterness, shame and guilt, we must continually renew our minds with the Word of God and our confession of who we are in Jesus. It takes time and is a process that we will go through, but the final outcome is worth it. Renewing our minds, being grounded and rooted in love, is a continual thing, never ends. Renewal of our minds must include meditating on the Word, keeping the Word before our eyes. How do we become rooted in love, which is the opposite of being rooted in bitterness? Love isn't always concerned about ourselves, but always about the other person. Love is a learned behavior.

1 Cor 13:4-8 "Love endures long *and* is patient and kind; love never is envious *nor* boils over with jealousy, is not boastful *or* vainglorious, does not display itself haughtily. 5 It is not conceited (arrogant and inflated with pride); it is not rude (unmannerly) *and* does not act unbecomingly. Love (God's love in us) does not insist on its own rights *or* its own way, *for* it is not self-seeking; it is not touchy *or* fretful *or* resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it [it pays no attention to a suffered wrong]. 6 It does not rejoice at injustice *and* unrighteousness, but rejoices when right *and* truth prevail. 7 Love bears up under anything *and* everything that comes, is ever ready to believe the best of every person, its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances, and it endures everything [without weakening]. 8 Love never fails [never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end]. As for prophecy (the gift of interpreting the divine will and purpose), it will be fulfilled *and* pass away;

as for tongues, they will be destroyed *and* cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away [it will lose its value and be superseded by truth]." AMP

Deal with the root of bitterness and offenses, become rooted and grounded in love. We, who are spiritual, need to be about restoring people, not condemning and judging. God is all about restoration.

Gal 6:1 "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." KJV