

No Place for Bitterness

Ephesians 4:31-32

(and Other Selected Scriptures)

No Place for Bitterness

I. Biblical Understanding of Bitterness

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- I. Biblical Understanding of Bitterness
- II. How to Rightly (Biblically) Battle Bitterness

No Place for Bitterness

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bitterness: Gr. pakria (pik-ree'-ah) = lit. acidity (pungent), biting; figuratively, a smoldering resentment; a brooding grudge-filled attitude

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anger: Gr. orgē (or-gay') = more internal smoldering; a subtle and deep feeling

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malice: Gr. kakia (kak-ee'-ah) = general term for evil or wickedness that is the root of all vices

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Ephesians 4:31 (ESV)

*Let all **bitterness** and **wrath** and **anger** and **clamor** and **slander** be put away from you, along with all **malice**.*

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Bitterness is a long, drawn-out, slow accrual of anger within the heart.

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- Biting sarcasm

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- Criticism

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- Condescending communication

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- Withdrawal

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- Rebellion to authority
- Remembering with great specificity the details of an offense
- Others – e.g., impatience, disrespect, depression, acts of vengeance, etc.

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Regarding Matthew 6:15; 18:35 :

*When Jesus teaches that an unforgiving spirit or bitterness leads to judgment and not to salvation, He means that bitterness is a kind of unbelief. And the way to fight against it is to fight the fight of faith. That is, the battle against bitterness in our hearts is not an effort to work our way to heaven. **It's a battle to believe the Word of God and to trust on the promises of His grace.***

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Regarding Matthew 6:15; 18:35 :

The way I would put it is like this: If the forgiveness that we received at the cost of the blood of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is so ineffective in our hearts that we are bent on holding unforgiving grudges and bitterness against someone, we are not a good tree [Matt. 7:15-20]. We are not saved. We don't cherish this forgiveness. We don't trust in this forgiveness. We don't embrace and treasure this forgiveness. (continued...)

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Regarding Matthew 6:15; 18:35 :

... We are hypocrites. We are just mouthing. We haven't ever felt the piercing, joyful wonder that God paid the life of His Son. I mean, how in the world could I hold a grudge against somebody when I have not been offended nearly like God has been offended — so highly that He has to pay the life of His Son in order for me to be forgiven?

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Battling Bitterness by Battling Unbelief

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Step 1: Don't Ignore God's Counsel. Trust it and do it!

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Step 2: Cherish Being Forgiven by God

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Step 3: Trust that God's Justice Will Prevail

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Step 3: Trust that God's Justice Will Prevail

Step 4: Trust God's Purpose to Turn the Cause of your Bitterness for Your Good

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