

Fruit of the Spirit of God

As found in Galatians 5:23 & Ephesians 5:9



Words to Find: goodness love righteousness
 faith joy meekness temperance
 gentleness longsuffering peace truth

Answers at: <http://www.openthoumineeyes.com/Puzzles/Fruit.htm>

She Brought Her...

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properly. He had some trouble starting, but finally informed me that he had deserted his wife and baby daughter six months before, and had run off with another woman. He wanted his wife to forgive him, because he was a Christian now, and didn't want to die deserving her hatred.

The poor fellow wept like a child as he unfolded his tale. He offered no excuses, asked for no favor, just begged for forgive-

ness. I somehow phrased his pitiful pleas, and we mailed it together.

Two weeks later, he came in accompanied by his wife and wee daughter. I never saw a happier man in all my life. When his wife got his letter she wasted no time writing; she answered it in person. She said that she had prayed for her husband daily after he left her. She did not ask God to bring him back; only to save him. She got her answer, and her husband.

The Bible View




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Bound by Bitterness

Bill Brinkworth

One of the most devastating human emotions can be feelings of bitterness. It can creep in to our lives. Sometimes we do not even know how much it consumes our thought life and feelings. Before we know it, we are captured in the claws of the sin of unforgiveness.



Perhaps it starts with hurt feelings over what was said, another's actions, or even a lack of response. We mull it over, and over. It festers in our gut. Our spirit can be crushed. We can get hard feelings about the person that we feel offended us. Perhaps those hurt want to get "even" at the other person. Before long, hurt feelings can lead to a host of other actions, including slander against the offending person, or avoidance of that person.

The hurt accomplished may not even be recognized by the
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"I Will Forgive, But ..."

W. Hamilton in The King's Business

I remember once rebuking a Christian worker for manifesting an unforgiving spirit toward another. At length she said, "Well, I forgive her, but I never want to have anything more to do with her."

I stopped and said, "Is that how you want God to forgive you? Do you want Him to say He will forgive you, but He will have nothing more to do with you?"

She Brought Her Answer

Harry Rimmer, in Miracles at Morning Cheer

A man about thirty years old confessed Christ in a Sunday night service, and on Tuesday he came in and asked if I'd do him a favor. He said that he had to write a letter; that he didn't know how to go about it, and wanted some help.

We went into the writing room, and I told him to tell me what he wanted to say, and I would try to express it for him
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offender. They may not even have a clue as to how one is reacting to their remarks or actions; yet the offeree's bitterness digs deeper and deeper into their life.

Holding a grudge against another can be so devastating to some that it affects their health. Anger can be a result of bitterness. When angry, adrenaline and other hormones are released into the bloodstream, causing high blood pressure and a faster beating heart. Depression, ulcers, heart attack, and stroke have also been linked to those that are controlled by the stress of bitterness and unforgiveness. Not forgiving, and not attempting to forget the offense, can also lead people to do or say things to the offender that they would never think of doing or saying. Bitterness can indeed bind a person's life.

All have wrongs done to them sometime in their lives that hurt their feelings. Some let them roll off their shoulders and go on with their life; others stew and never let go of what another has done to them. The Bible has much to say about bitterness and forgiving one another. Here is a glimpse of what is said in the Bible:

☹ **God says not to be bitter and hold a grudge!** "It's not that easy to not be bitter," is of-

ten said. This is true, but no sin is easy to stop. In order have a healthy life, and a good relationship with God, bitterness has to be halted.

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour [to complain, utter loud noises], and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice." Ephesians 4:31

☹ **Forgive those that wronged you.**

"... If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him." Luke 17:3

☹ **Christ knows all you did; yet He still has forgiven all you have done, if you are saved!** (John 3:16)

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Ephesians 4:32

☹ **Do not worry and occupy your thoughts with what another has done to you.** The gateway to bitterness is the thought gate. Once a thought gets in and is contemplated on, it does more damage the more it is entertained in one's thought life. Do not let yourself dwell on it. Stop thinking about it, before it gets out of hand.

"Fret not thyself because of evil men, neither be thou envious at the wicked;" Prov. 24:19

☹ **Do not even start entertain-**

ing thoughts of getting even.

"Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work." Proverbs 24:29

☹ **You certainly have wronged others;** even unintentionally. You certainly want to be forgiven by others and the Lord; so, forgive those that have "wronged" you!

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Matthew 6:12

☹ **Forgive them, even if they do the offense more than once!**

"... how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? ... Until seventy times seven." Matthew 18:21

☹ **The only "getting even" God allows is to be nice to the offender!**

"If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink..." Proverbs 25:21-22 Return unkindness with kindness!

☹ **If there is any "getting even" to be done, God will do it; not you!**

"... avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Romans 12:19

Unforgiveness, and the bitterness that often follows, does not help matters, nor change anything. The hurt feelings of bringing the matter up repeatedly certainly digs its trap deeper and deeper. The only way to get

peace is to forgive.

"It's easy for you to say; you don't know what that person did to me." I do not know, but I do know that carrying and harboring that bitterness is going to hurt you and others around you. Your only choices are to let it fester, or get rid of it. Hopefully, you truly want to get rid of it.

Although, you hear again and again to forget, most of us humans cannot forget. Only God can forget. We may not be able to get it out of our minds, but we can do our best not to let it come to mind.

"How do you do that?" Our Saviour fought off temptation with scriptures. That is the only remedy for any battle. When the thought enters your mind, repeat a verse, hopefully one that is about the sin you are tempted with, and quote it repeatedly. It is hard to harbor thoughts of darkness and sin, when your mind is flooded with light! Praying about the problem and seeking God's solution are the only way to have victory over your hurt feelings.

We all battle hurt feelings. It is our choice how we handle them. God is clear that we should not let those temptations rule and destroy our life. Instead of getting bitter, and even blaming God about a matter, it is the time to get close to him. It is during those hard times that we learn of his mercy and grace.

The uncondensed version of this study is at: www.OpenThouMineEyes.com/Lessons/bitterness.htm

"People who fly into a rage always make a bad landing."

— Will Rogers