Lesson 17– Bitter Roots That Hinder Our Fellowship with God

Bitter Roots

Roots support the plant and provide all the water and nutrients it needs to grow. In a similar way we have roots that allow us to draw nurture from God, others, self, and nature.

- **These "roots" begin to grow from our first encounters with life and are well developed by the time we are 3 to 5 years old.**
- From these "roots" spring forth the trunk, branches and leaves that make up who we are and how we respond to life.
- These "roots" are affected by our environment while growing up.
- If the environment was filled with lots of nurturing love, gentle touches, and tender looks, we will be able to draw good things into our life and produce good fruits as we grow up.
- However, if we were exposed to an unsafe environment filled with strife, anger, hate, abuse, rejection, neglect or abandonment, then our "bitter roots" will draw bad things from Satan and others, and we will produce **bitter fruits** in our lives. (*Bitter roots are our sinful actions to hurts*.)

"If you've got the fruit, then you've got the root!"

- You cannot get good fruit from a bad tree or root.
- If you have bad fruit in your life, then there is a bitter root somewhere that is producing it.
- You cannot kill a fruit tree just by picking the fruit off of it. Under the right conditions, the same type of fruit will begin appearing again.
- Deliverance ministry is good, but it often does not get to the root issues that produced the bad fruit in a person's life.
- We must dig down and kill the root cause for the bad fruit too. Even then, it may take several times to remove all of the strength from the bad root to finally put it to death.

Judgmental and critical spirits are some of the most destructive bitter root influences in our lives and can hinder our ability to receive and give love away.

- We usually judge others as a result of being hurt or wounded by something they did or said. It can come in the form of bitterness, blame, condemnation, jealousy, envy, unrighteous anger, or unforgiveness.
- When we judge others, we set in motion a spiritual law that demands a response. The way we judge others is the way we will be judged. (**Matt. 7:1-2**)
- The standard and measure of our judgment will come back on us at some point in our lives. Unfortunately, the judgment we receive is usually much greater than what we sowed because of the laws of sowing and reaping and increase. (**Gal. 6:7, Lk. 6:38**) It is not God judging us, but the law.
- When we judge another for the wrong done to us, we are demanding payment for those wrongs. We cannot expect mercy for ourselves and judgment for others who wronged us.
- Our bitterness or resentment towards those who hurt us causes a judgment that demands justice. The judgment against us is the curse of reaping what we sowed.

From John and Paula Sanford's *Transformation of the Inner Man* and Jack Frost series "From Slavery to Sonship"
Written and compiled by Rick and Sue McCoy, Abba's Arms International, Inc., PO Box 1396 State College PA 16804-1396 2009

Bitter Root Judgments and Expectations

Judgments and Expectancies

Judgments have the full power of the law behind them (**Matt. 7:1-2**) and come back on us through our defilement of others around us. This reinforces our ungodly beliefs and causes us to develop bitter expectations from the judgments. Bitter expectations are more psychological, but they can seem like the truth because of the fulfillment of the Law of Judgment. Most bitter root judgments remain hidden or forgotten until Holy Spirit brings them back to our remembrance. The first indicator that we have these judgments is the fruits associated with these judgments in our lives!

Judging Parents - Probably the first place we judge others is with our parents.

- This may happen very early in our life and we may have completely forgotten about it.
- It is not as important what your parent did to you, even though it may have been wrong, as the judgment that you made against them.
- They are responsible for what they did, but you are responsible for how you responded to the wrong things they did.
- When we judge our parents we also dishonor our parents and put the law of dishonoring your parents into motion. (**Deut. 5:16**) We put a curse on ourselves and things will not go well for us.
- When you judge, the bitter expectancies that you form in your mind and spirit are drawn out of the people closest to you. If you judged your father for being passive, you will draw that passive nature out of your husband. If you judged your mother for being overweight, you will draw the tendency to be overweight out of your wife. She may not want to be fat, but ends up that way and does not know why. If you judged your parents for getting a divorce, you will draw that same tendency out of your spouse towards divorce.

Love covers and because of our love and loyalty to our parents, we may cover up the hurts and subtle judgments that we may have made against them. Even if our remembrance of our parents seems rosy and fine, the surface manifestation of bad fruit always reveals a bitter root. We may need to ask Holy Spirit to show us any areas where we may have judged our parents.

Satan uses the law to release curses in our lives.

- He accuses us and pronounces us guilty of every violation of the law so that he can bring the consequences of the law into our life.
- Every unconfessed violation of the law opens a door of darkness in our lives, and Satan, by demanding that the law be fulfilled, steals from us through the curses. (**Deut. 28:15**)
- Repeated violations of Law of Judgment begin to build strongholds (habitual patterns of thinking) in our lives that control our thoughts, words, emotions, and actions.
- God does not bring the problems and destruction into our lives; it is the consequences of breaking the Law of Judgment.
- Only through the grace of God and the cross of Jesus Christ can we escape the fulfillment of the Law of Judgment in our lives! (**Matt. 5:17**)

From John and Paula Sanford's *Transformation of the Inner Man* and Jack Frost series "From Slavery to Sonship"
Written and compiled by Rick and Sue McCoy, Abba's Arms International, Inc., PO Box 1396 State College PA 16804-1396 2009

We become what we have judged in others.

- The law that is set in motion when we judge others is found in **Romans 2:1**. When we judge, we doom ourselves to do the same thing!
- Our judgment of others allows it to take root in us, and eventually it will bring forth the same behavior either in ourselves, our spouse, or our children. (**Heb. 12:15**)
- The spiritual law and forces within us begin to influence those around us and can draw out that same bad behavior in them.
- Then **Romans 7:19** becomes a reality and we begin doing what we did not want to do!
- The broken Law of Judgment, without repentance, begins to drive us to do the wrong things and becomes a curse in our lives.

The Results of Judging

- In nature there is a law of physics that says, "for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction." That same law works in the spiritual realm as well.
- We activate the law of sowing and reaping. The seeds we sow of anger or resentment may seem tiny, but they will keep growing and come back on us again and again.
- Often these hidden judgments and bitter expectancies cause us to continue doing the same thing even when we know what we are doing is wrong. We just cannot seem to stop!
- The law of judgment says that what you measure out will be measured back to you. The judgment seeds we sow must someday be reaped, if left unrepented for.
- The longer it goes without repentance, the larger and larger the seed becomes.
- Generational patterns may be a result of sons judging their parents and reaping that same problem in their lives and marriages.
- Because the judgments come back on us, we begin to expect those bad things to continue happening to us. We develop bitter expectances that are now self-fulfilling!
- Judgments produce bitter expectancies that will force other people around us to fulfill them.

Bitter Root Judgments in Marriage

- Bitter root judgments and expectancies are in every couple, and in fact, they are what typically draw a couple together.
- Since we are a complex bundle of what has happened to us in the past, we may not even be aware of what we bring into a marriage in our hearts and how that controls our perceptions, attitudes, and behavior.
- The hidden things from the past become trigger points that cause us to explode at our mate.
- Each mate has certain expectancies of the other depending upon how they judged their parents while growing up. We expect our mate to behave in certain ways based upon what we saw our parents do. We expect them to treat us the way our parents treated each other.
- Our bitter expectancies become self-fulfilling prophecies as we draw that behavior out of them. (**Heb. 12:15**) Our mate will often end up living up to our expectancies!
- We end up defiling those around us. (weak father – weak husband; alcoholic father – alcoholic husband; cold, distant father – cold, distant husband; domineering, controlling mother – domineering, controlling wife) If these are not exactly the same, they will at least be parallel. I
- If your spouse had that tendency already in them, it will be that much easier to draw it out of them.

From John and Paula Sanford's *Transformation of the Inner Man* and Jack Frost series "From Slavery to Sonship"
Written and compiled by Rick and Sue McCoy, Abba's Arms International, Inc., PO Box 1396 State College PA 16804-1396 2009

Our Judgments Condemn Us! (Rom. 2:1-3)

- We are doomed by the law to be exactly like the one we judged in that area.
- We are driven by forces that we are not even aware of and cannot understand why we are behaving the way we are.
- We can have bitter judgments as a result of judgments we unknowingly made sometime in the past.
- Our judgments are like a boomerang with more momentum in the future. We set in motion what absolutely must return to us.
- Our judgments may also be tied to inner vows that will also come back on us like, "I'll never do that to my children."

Three Simple Truths (based on law) that Affect All of Our Lives

This is the basis for almost all counseling!

1) **What we honor in our parents will go well with us.**
   What we could not honor in our parents will not go well with us.
2) **We will receive harm in the same areas that we judge others in.**
3) **We will reap what we sow.**

How to Walk Free From Bitter Root Judgments and Expectancies

- Jesus came not to do away with the law, but to fulfill it. (**Matt. 5:17**)
- What Jesus did through the cross was to become a substitute for us and fulfill the demands of the law for us. What should have been a curse on us for judging others was put on Jesus and He takes it in our place.
- By repenting and asking God's forgiveness, we remove the demand of the law from us and place it on Jesus.

Six Steps to Freedom from Judgments

1) We must ask Holy Spirit to reveal each judgment that we made against another person or our parents. Whenever we experience bad fruit in our lives, we need to check on the inside if this is not based upon some judgment we made in the past.
2) We need to go back to the time when we made that judgment and the child, teenager, or adult must invite Jesus to take care of each specific bitter root judgment. Call the judgments to death on the cross. (**Luke 9:23**)
3) We need to ask God to forgive us for making that bitter root judgment. We need to forgive those who may have done the wrong that caused us to make the judgment, and then we need to forgive ourselves for making it.
4) We need to repent for how we have caused others to act badly around us, for drawing the negative out of them. We need to ask for a new heart that can bring out the best in others.
5) We need to remain diligent to catch ourselves in the areas we have identified until the habit patterns are changed. Pray for God to reverse the old patterns and build a new way. (**Phil. 3:10**)
6) As we get free from the bitter root judgments, the reverse begins to happen. People begin to respond just the opposite from the way they were responding before. Things begin to work together for good. The ones we hated the most often become our best friends. What used to bother us does not any more.

From John and Paula Sanford's *Transformation of the Inner Man* and Jack Frost series "From Slavery to Sonship"
Written and compiled by Rick and Sue McCoy, Abba's Arms International, Inc., PO Box 1396 State College PA 16804-1396 2009

Inner Vows

God takes vows very seriously! **(Num. 30:2, Deut. 23:21, Ecc. 5:4)**

- ✓ Another bitter root that can arise from judging others is inner vows.
- ✓ An inner vow is a hateful order against our body, usually spoken as a child that is sent through the heart and mind to the body.
- ✓ The words spoken are a creative force that will affect us until it is broken through the cross. We do not grow out of them as we mature or have a change of heart.
- ✓ Our mind may forget about the vow, but it will eventually manifest itself in our life and physical body.
- ✓ Even good vows that were compelled by the flesh and not the spirit need to be released so that the flesh does not rule in that area.

Vows May Lie Dormant for Many Years

The manifestation of inner vows may lie dormant for many years until the time set by the vow or the right situation or person(s) trigger the vow to be activated. (*There was a little girl who was continually bothered by her cruel brother, embarrassing and physically hurting her. One day, out of frustration, she vowed that she would never have a boy baby when she grew up. After marriage she had two girls, but she aborted three baby boys. Holy Spirit brought back the incident of the vow during counseling, and after breaking the vow, she was able to have a baby boy!*)

- ✓ They usually are forgotten until Holy Spirit reveals them to us.
- ✓ Inner vows lodge in the heart and cannot be removed by our own fleshly effort.
- ✓ They strongly resist change and work in tandem with other bitter roots, hidden resentment, and fear.
- ✓ Only by using the authority of the Name of Jesus, usually by another believer, can a person be released from an inner vow.

Inner vows can block God's plan for our lives. For example, most boys learn early that their mothers are very observant and remember almost everything that they say or do (good or bad), especially related to emotions and feelings. Mothers use this knowledge later as a means of control. "You used to get excited about…." "I remember when you liked to…" A boy under this pressure, may vow, "I will never show my emotions or feelings around a woman. It is not safe." Later, when he is married, he may find it hard to express his feelings or emotions to his wife, even though he may want to share them. (They may have had good communication while dating, but the trigger of marriage brings out the inner vow and he now finds it hard as a husband.) Even though he wants to work things out, something inside that he is not aware of stops him. He may repent and try over and over again only to revert back to the old pattern programmed by the inner vow against his mother. The inner vow will continue to confine him to isolation until it is broken in his life.

Inner vows can form complex structures of other bitter roots that must also be broken to be completely set free. In the example above:

- ✓ He may have withdrawn from relationships and hardened his heart
- ✓ He may have developed evasive and defensive habits to protect himself from being hurt
- ✓ There may be bitter root expectancies and fears
- ✓ He may be incapable to trust, or have other controlling actions like anger.
- ✓ Breaking free from all of these may take some time through counseling, love and forgiveness.

From John and Paula Sanford's *Transformation of the Inner Man* and Jack Frost series "From Slavery to Sonship"
Written and compiled by Rick and Sue McCoy, Abba's Arms International, Inc., PO Box 1396 State College PA 16804-1396 2009

Fears may be rooted in inner vows.

- ✓ After some embarrassing or scary event, we may have vowed never to take any risks beyond our control, never to speak in public, never to grow up, never develop breasts, never try again, or never to wear hand-me-downs.
- ✓ You may have vowed, "I will never be unprepared when people ask me a question." You may then be tense in a group discussion, or if there are too many situations that require many quick adjustments, you may experience a mental breakdown or panic attack.

Some of the most destructive vows concern personal relationships, especially marital relationships, and are rooted in a child's determination against his parents.

- ✓ If you said, "I'll get even with my mother or sister," you may become angry at women, especially your wife or daughters. "I'll never let my brother or sister get the best of me again." may result in you becoming very competitive in business, or with peers and family.
- ✓ You may vow, "I will never get angry like that," only to find yourself withholding anger until some situation causes you to explode like a volcano.

Other Examples of Inner Vows:

"I'll never do that again," after feeling shame.
"I'll never be like my mother (or father). I'll never act like that."
"I shouldn't be here. I'm in the way, so I choose to hide,"
"I'll get even with her (a mother or sister)" which can be projected on all women.
"I'll never let my temper go again," so you store up repressed anger.
"I'll never raise my voice," which is good yet it's your flesh doing it, not God.

<u>We Need Help to Break Inner Vows</u>

- ✓ Once the Holy Spirit reveals an inner vow, find another strong believer and have them use the authority of the Name of Jesus and break the inner vow.
- ✓ The person breaking the vow must have a personal faith in the power of the Lord to act on their behalf. You must speak to the inner child and release the child from the habit of or connection to this inner vow in Jesus' Name.
- ✓ Then release the child to enjoy the original freedom they had in that area before the vow was made.
- ✓ Then ask God to reveal to the adult the freedom from the effects of this inner vow.

<u>Death Wishes</u>

Death wishes are words that we speak against ourselves concerning death like, "I wish that I was never born." "I wish the Lord would just take me home right now." "I'm so embarrassed, I could just die." If there were difficult times surrounding the time you were in the womb, your birth, or just after birth, you may have made death wishes without even being aware of doing it because you felt that the world was not a safe place.

Defilement Lies Behind Death Wishes

- The spirit that comes to earth to inhabit a new human being at conception has only the remembrance of the beauty and wholeness of heaven.
- If the parents love and long for the child to come, the child begins to recover from the shock of entering this world of sin and chaos.
- However, if the atmosphere outside of the womb is one of turmoil, fear, fighting, hurtful emotions, and violence, or if the delivery is difficult, then the spirit inside the child feels like this is not a safe place to live and begins wishing they were dead so they would not have to live their life in such a place.
- Death wishes may come if there were tragedies, deaths, or other traumatic happenings during the pregnancy or shortly after birth or if other children in the family were jealous of the new baby or did not welcome it into the family.
- Your parents may be disappointed that you were the "wrong" sex.

These death wishes show up in the new baby and young children as behavioral problems, self-hatred, chronic sicknesses, dangerous physical conditions or diseases, or they are accident prone. The immune system does not work right because the body does not want to live. Death wishes can affect coordination and confidence, or take the zest for life out of us.

Our Parents Words Can Impact Us

- The words from your parents can also cause a person to form death wishes.
- If you were told that, "You are no good. You will never amount to anything. You are hopelessly stupid, or I wish you were never born." you can begin hating yourself and wish that you were never born. One person we know had her father tell her that the darkest day of his life was the day she was born.
- If you just felt like you were in the way or were an inconvenience to your parents, you may wish that you could die so the pain would go away.
- You may have not been conceived at a good time in your parent's life and they may have considered having an abortion.
- If you were abused as a child, abandoned, given up for adoption or rejected by your parents, you may feel like you do not have a right to live.
- You may wish that the Lord would just come and you could be done with the miserable life here on earth and go to a better place.

<u>Can Affect Our Physical Bodies</u>

- We can walk with a deliberate bent-over look that does not allow our body to move smoothly.
- It may affect your voice and rob the diaphragm of power to sing with gusto and joy.
- The person may not view life as more than just existing as long as they have to be here.
- Death wishes may affect our sexual fulfillment.
- They engage in sex more out of duty or for whatever little enjoyment they may get from it. They never come alive to experience the glorious union with their mate in the spirit and ravish the love and joy of true sexual fulfillment. Usually people with hidden death wishes do not even want to engage in sexual activities.
- Hidden death wishes may also hinder one from fully expressing the talents and calling given to them by God. Their spirit is not free to venture and explore life.

You Are Probably Angry With God

- Everyone who has hidden death wishes is angry with God deep within their spirit.
- We are angry with God for putting us in this messed up situation, or for not being there when we needed Him in the womb. God was there and He did not plan for your parents to respond to you the way they did. His plan was for good and not evil.(**Jer. 29:11**)
- We may be angry at God because of the way we look. The degree to which you do not love yourself is the degree to which you are angry at God.

Steps to Freedom

- If you do not love yourself, you dishonor God for He created you. In **Mark 12:31** we are commanded to love ourselves.
- We need to forgive God, even though He really never did anything wrong, and be reconciled to Him in our own heart. (**2 Cor. 5:18-20**)
- God forgave us through Jesus Christ and we forgive God by faith reconciling each to the other.
- We must be open and honest with our self.
- We must break free from the fear and shame of our past and confess our sins one to another. Confession, in some ways, is like becoming a child again, open, vulnerable, and trusting. (**Luke 18:17**)
- As the shame melts away in this new transparency, you can begin to love yourself.
- You cannot use salvation as an escape from being what you were. Jesus and God accepted you even before you were born again just the way you are, but they love you enough that they do not want you to stay that way!
- We must repent for rebelling against being born where He put us and the family He gave us.
- We must repent for rejecting ourselves. We accept our bodies and ask God to reconcile us to ourselves and to our time, place, and position in this earth.
- Have someone pray with you to ask Jesus to woo the inner child within you to life and break the vows against wanting to be alive. Have them command the spirit, mind and body to work in harmony with each other.
- Then rejoice, be free, and alive to enjoy life and fellowship with God. Discipline yourself to daily choose life.

From John and Paula Sanford's *Transformation of the Inner Man* and Jack Frost series "From Slavery to Sonship"
Written and compiled by Rick and Sue McCoy, Abba's Arms International, Inc., PO Box 1396 State College PA 16804-1396 2009