**Adult Sunday School**

October 10, 2010

The Defilement of Bitterness

Hebrews 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;

**Fail** = to fall short of or be destitute of (the grace of God)

**Grace** = God’s favor & power manifested on our behalf and extended to us, divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life, Joy and gladness instead of bitterness, resentment and corruption. Love and mercy put to our account.

**Bitterness** = resentment, sourness

**Defiled** = corrupted, polluted

1. Offences are stumbling blocks.

I John 4:20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

**Hateth** miseo, *mis-eh'-o* = (hatred); to detest (especially to persecute); by extension, to love less or to act without God’s love

* **Hate** = to fail to continue to love or an absence of love. Not necessarily a state of animosity or anger yet,though the “seeds” that produce this are present

21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

Mat.10:22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

24:10 And then shall many be **offended**, and shall betray one another, and shall **hate** one another.

1. The carnal nature of man is prone to offences.
2. Brethren are not to stumble in any offence.

1John 3:13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

If we truly love God, we will love our brother, our enemy, all men with God’s love. We cannot love with a natural love because anything and everything that the natural man produces is unacceptable to God. We love others with God’s love by the enablement of God’s grace through faith. God’s love is expounded on and identified in I Cor 13.

Those who do not overcome offences and put them away releasing those who offended them will open the door to the root of bitterness to take root in their lives.

This root will poison, corrupt, defile their spirit and they will resent, despise, retain anger toward and hate others.

Those in this condition come under the influence of darkness, blindness and deception and endanger their souls.

These cannot love as God has commanded and so according to the Word of God (Lu 6:46 / Jn 14:15) do not love God not living in obedience to the divine command to love one another.

1. God’s love in you blocks all stumbling and bitterness.

True love is the essential nature of God and dwells in God. The wellspring or source of this love is God.

The love of man is lead or directed by the senses, what we see, hear, feel, think etc. Our natural love “hinges” on what we see in that other person’s actions or conduct, what we hear them say, what we feel in response to what they do and say.

The love of God does not exist toward a person because of any excellency in the individual (Rom 5:8), but it is an exercise of the divine will in a deliberate choice with a cause to be found only in the nature of God Himself and not in the person who is the object of His love.

1Cor. 13:2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. There is proneness in most to grow weary and faint under trial and afflictions, especially when it proves heavy and of long continuance: this proceeds from neglecting the grace of God and the remains of the corruption of an old nature.

There is the danger of "any root of bitterness."

Any root, any cause that might stir a person to become bitter:

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| --- | --- |
| •  disappointment  •  neglect  •  being overlooked  •  inadequacy  •  teachers  •  wife  •  husband | •  accidents  •  disease  •  mistreatment  •  loss  •  ministers  •  parent  •  supervisors |

Bitterness can be caused by anything or any person who has failed us or brought disappointment and trouble to us in some way. The person who is bitter is often...

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| •  sharp  •  resentful  •  cynical  •  intense  •  relentless | •  cold  •  harsh  •  stressful  •  distasteful  •  unpleasant |

Any expression of these is sin to God. God desires people to live in love, joy, peace, and holiness, not in bitterness. Therefore, the believer must look diligently, must guard against the great danger of bitterness.

**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;**

**Acts 8:23** For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.  **Eph 4:31 Let all bitterness,** and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

**James 3:14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts,** glory not, and lie not against the truth.

1. Offences are overcome by God’s grace.

There are four great dangers believers must overcome.

**Romans 3:4** God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest **overcome when thou art judged.**

1. Lest any man fail of the grace of God
2. Lest any root of bitterness trouble you.
3. Lest there be any fornicator
4. Lest there be a profane person,

Romans 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Zec 12:10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

Romans 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

1Cor. 13:7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Hebrews 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith;

Hebrews 12:15 “Looking diligently”

Jude 1:21 “looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ “

Mat. 18:7 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! Luke 17:1 Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!