

July 2014 Newsletter - Dealing With Emotions – Review

Thirty

Without being specific there is a force inside each one of us trying to keep our painful, embarrassing, or sinful feelings buried inside of us. While at the same time there is another force trying to bring these feelings to the light of day where the conscious mind can see them. This is where tension in the soul comes from and this is what causes stress in the soul, or one of the things that does. There are external stressors on the soul and there are inner stressors on the soul.

Whenever we repress our feelings down into the subconscious, we are actually denying we feel a certain way. When we do that, then we are not at the place where we can confess them to God and no confession to God means no forgiveness and cleansing from God. *“If we **confess** our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* 1 John 1:9 So if we repress the feelings of fear, anger, jealousy, etc., then we are not at the place where we can confess them. *“The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who **suppress** the truth by their wickedness,”* Romans 1:18

But something else and that is we won't be able to know our true selves! Our feelings, good or bad, tell us a lot about ourselves, but if we get into repression, denial, etc., (and we do that so we can still hold to this preconceived idol we have created that we call – us), then we'll never know who we really are. Emotional solutions can be helpful in overcoming this, but ultimately it's the spiritual solutions that God provides is the final answer.

To overcome this we need to occupy ourselves with Christ through his Word, concentrating on Bible Doctrine, concentrating on the promises of God, confessing our sins to God, prayer, intense prayer, asking God for wisdom in the matter, living in Christ's peace, the filling of the Holy Spirit, resisting the devil, living by faith and staying away from negative people and influences, etc..

Whenever we are angry, and it's amazing how many people won't admit they're angry, our anger is triggered by the rebellious, prideful will. It's the “I don't want to” in all of us. God says, “Obey me”; we say, “I don't want to”. God says, “Trust me”; we say, “I don't want to”. God says, “Go to church”; we say, “I don't we want to”. God says, “Study Bible Doctrine”; we say, “I don't want to”. God says, “Submit to him”; we say, “I don't want to”. God says, “Confess your sins”; we say, “I don't want to”. God says, “let go of your anger”; we say, “I don't want to”. God says, “Humble yourselves”; we say, “I don't want to”. The reason why there is an “I don't want to” in all of us is because of the flesh nature and personal pride.

Instantly we react with anger when a demand or command is put on our “I don't want to”. Remember **anger** is the emotion and **pride** is the mental attitude. Bitterness is the immediate reaction of pride to something it doesn't want to do. If we have to do something we don't want to do, we will react with anger, (which is bitterness or resentment), and this anger can be present for the entire period of time that we have to do it. It can be interrupted by periods of peace when we confess our anger to God, but for the long term solution the believer has to **get his attitude straightened out!** The solution for this is to remain in the filling of the Holy Spirit for it is the Spirit of God that gives us the “I want to” we so desperately need. *“For it is God which worketh in you **both to will and to do** of his good pleasure.”* Philippians 2:13

Thirty-one

The statement, “*God which worketh in you*” - *ho theos gar estin ho energon en humin*, is the present active participle of *energeo*, which we have seen means to inspire faith ideas in the souls of believers who are filled with the Holy Spirit, but it means more than that. It comes from two words *en – in and ergeo – to be active, to be active in, to be active among you, to be active in all Christians.*

Energeo and *energeia* was a term that was used almost exclusively by the ancient Greeks to refer to the activity of the cosmic powers in the lives of people. It was used of both demonic powers, as we refer to them, as well as to divine, beneficent powers. They used this term to refer to the activity of the gods, the Titans, the demiurges, demigods and the *daimones*, whom we refer to as demons.

Here the word is used of the activity of God in and among all believers in Christ, and we see an example of God's activity in our lives manifested in Romans 8:28, “*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*” One of the ways we see God working in our lives is by providing spiritual solution for destructive emotions!

And this concept should not go unnoticed by us; it needs to have an impact on our faith. It is the eternal, all-powerful God who is actively working in our lives and with the use of the present active participle it tells us that he is constantly doing this as his practice toward us! He is actively at work not only in our lives, but also in our souls! And this passage brings out two important areas that he is active in our souls in and that is: **one, to want to do his will**, and **two, to actually do it!**

If we remember what some of our biggest problems are is our negative emotions and the destructive effect they have on our souls and bodies. But when we go back and diagnose the problem we see that at the root of all this is the **prideful will!** In the flesh we say, “I don't want to”, and when we get pressed in the matter we react with **anger!** So the problem is one of negative volition, which comes from the sinful flesh nature. But when we are filled with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit's activity in our soul transforms the will where one becomes willing! **A willing soul means no bitterness!**

God is not only working externally in our lives, but also internally in our souls through the filling of the Holy Spirit. When we operate in the sphere of faith in the Word of God and are filled with the Holy Spirit, then the Holy Spirit produces the fruit of: *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance:*” Galatians 5:22,23 Not only that the Spirit of God produces **hope** in the believer's soul. “*Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*” Romans 15:13 And, as we have seen here, gives us a **willing heart.**

And a willing heart means no bitterness in the soul. Bitterness was one of Israel's biggest problems and it is one of the biggest problems for Christians. And remember, bitterness can range from the horrible bitterness we usually identify with the emotion all the way down to a mild resentment. But it's still bitterness nevertheless and it denotes the individual's reaction to being made to do something it doesn't want to do, or one's reaction to not being allowed to do what it wants to do. Usually it revolves around one's lust pattern. **Lust delayed leads to frustration; lust denied leads to bitterness.** Bitterness is connected to pride. In fact, the general rule is: **the greater the pride the greater the anger!** Pride reacts, pride rebels and bitterness ensues and the anger complex is activated with the believer going from one level of anger on to the next one. Arrogance and anger go hand in hand.

The Israelites were bitter about leaving Egypt. It mattered not to them that God had made them rich with the entire wealth of a nation. It mattered not to them that he was going to give them their own nation free and clear. It mattered not to them that their captors were dead and they were free. They were bitter because they were currently, temporarily inconvenienced! They were bitter because they didn't have the food that they liked. It mattered not to them that they didn't have to work 12-16 hours a day as slaves to get that "free" food; they were just bitter about everything.

We have to ask ourselves here, are we bitter? And if we are, about what? Are we bitter about our lives? not enough money? Our clothes? Can't do Christmas? Don't have any fun? Didn't get to do what we want? Had to do what we didn't want to do? What are we bitter about? And there's no better, faster way to get over bitterness than by confessing that sin of bitterness to God and to start being **thankful!** And not only start being **thankful**, but start **thanking God** for all the wonderful things he has done for you!

So God took this group of bitter ingrates to a watering hole named *Marah* to give them a taste of their own medicine. "*And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.*" Exodus 15:23 Now the word *Marah* meant **bitter** and he was letting them know what they were like because of their bitterness. And because the water was bitter it was unfit to drink. What a lesson for the Israelites, because they were bitter they were unfit for anything spiritual in their walk with God. And so it is with all of us today, if we are bitter we are unfit to be used for the Lord and his service.

Now God took them to this place of bitter water to show them what **they** were like, but what did they do? Did they see the spiritual analogy he was giving them? No! Instead they complained! "*And the people murmured (complained) against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?*" Exodus 15:24 God wasn't punishing them, nor did he want to deprive them of anything, especially something as important as water. He was trying to teach them a lesson about themselves to show them that they were **bitter!** **And as bitter water isn't good for anything, neither are bitter people.**

What God was doing with his OT people was showing them that **this is you!** God called out his OT people that through them he would bless the world, that through them his spiritual blessings would flow to the people of the world. But what good were they? They weren't! How could the people of the world drink from bitter people? They can't! This is similar to Christ cursing the fig tree. "*And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.*" Matthew 21:19

And the same thing goes today for his NT people, the Church, it is God's plan that through us his spiritual blessings would flow to the people of the world. But how can they if we are bitter people? If the people of the world see love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance flowing in us, they will want to drink of the same water we do. But if we are bitter, then they certainly won't want to drink bitter water. We can't drink sweet water from a bitter well. "*Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?*" James 3:11 **We can't enjoy spiritual sweetness from a bitter Christian.**

He was also showing them that as he had a cure for bitter water, he also had a cure for our bitterness through the spiritual problem solving devices of confessing our sins to him, claiming the promises by faith and living in the sphere of the filling of the Holy Spirit. And in this spiritual sphere we will be manifesting the spiritual sweetness of love, joy, peace, compassion, acceptance, etc., so that those who are thirsting after those things might see them in us and go to the same fountain of Christ we do.

Thirty-two

In Numbers 21:5,6, “*And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.*” we have the episode of God dealing with Israel, (God's activity among his people), when their bitterness had got to the place that they were not only **complaining** about their lives, but now they were **bad-mouthing** Moses and the Lord.

The word for **fiery** here is *saraph*, which actually denoted the idea of burning. The venom of the serpent is burning, just like the strike of the scorpion and the sting of the bee or wasp – it burns! It's an excellent analogy for the emotion of bitterness and the bitter words that people speak. When our mouths speak the bitterness that is inside of us, we are infusing our bitterness into other people's souls, if they don't have a spiritual wall up to prevent that, which most people don't; then they go out and strike other people's souls with their bitterness. And so bitterness spreads throughout a nation, a camp, a church, a circle of friends, etc.. So God is giving them a physical example of what they are doing spiritually and emotionally to each other. They were injecting their burning, poisonous venom into each other by their bitter, hateful words, just like the serpents.

The word for **serpent** here is *nachash* and it was the word for the Egyptian cobra, not the asp. The Egyptians regarded the Egyptian cobras as deities and protectors of the royal family. Egypt was the center of the Babylonian Mystery religion at that time and the serpent was the focus of it taken from the idea of the serpent in the Garden.

Thousands of bitter Israelites died as the result of being bitten by these cobras, but thousands of other Israelites, who had been bitten by the serpents, lived because they looked up to the pole with the bronze serpent on it. “*And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.*” Numbers 21:8

We see wood being used three times in the Bible as a metaphor for what took place with wood, or what took place on wood where something bitter, or burning, is made into something sweet. One is our passage here with the burning serpents. The second is when God brought the Israelites to the waters of *Marah*, which were bitter; *marah* meaning bitter. “*And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.*” Exodus 15:23

The people complained to Moses, which was par for the course, and Moses cried out to the Lord as to what to do. Here the Lord uses **wood** again to turn something bitter into something sweet. This is where God had Moses place a tree in the waters, which made them sweet. “*And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them,*” Exodus 15:24,25

The third instance is when Christ hung on that wooden cross where he paid the penalty for our sins and all those who look up to him in faith and trust will be forgiven, they will receive new natures and be turned from their bitterness, hatefulness and anger into something sweet: a soul of love, gentleness, compassion, etc.! “*Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*” Ephesians 2:3

Christ was talking about himself to Nicodemus when he was speaking about him being lifted up in John 3:14, “*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:*” Paul also addressed this problem of bitterness in Romans 3:13,14, “*Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:*”

The bite of the Egyptian cobra injected a neuro-toxic venom that was always fatal to its victim and it is the bitterness of God's people operating in the flesh nature that is regarded as venom. And as the cobra injected its venom into its victim by biting them, we do the same thing today. We bite other believer's by our harsh, angry words and inject our venom into their souls leaving behind us a trail of hurting, destroyed souls full of our burning venom of anger. And when we behave like that we become like the soul of Satan who is full of bitterness and anger.

When the Lord sent the cobras into the camp of the Israelites he was letting them know what they were really like, what their actions and words were doing to each other, and what Satan's religion was like. So you want Satan's religion? Well how do you like all those cobras slithering around your tents at night? And these cobras were not like our rattlesnakes, who at least give a warning.

You want to hang on to your bitterness? to your bitter soul? to your bitter jealousy? to your bitter discontent? to your bitter words? You don't want to stop biting your fellow believer with your bitter words and injecting your bitter venom into them? Well how do you like it now? How do you like being bitten by a cobra and having its venom go into you? As the cobra injected its burning venom into the body thus destroying its well being, so do our bitter words destroy other people's soul's well being.

When the Israelites left Egypt and went out into the wilderness, they took with them their own stores of water to help them on their journey, which is a picture of the believer providing for themselves what they need out of their works, but their supply of water had run out and now they were in need of water. What do they do now? What is God going to do now? What he did was lead them to a place where the water was unfit to drink.

So **why** did he do that? He did that to show them that they had to stop relying on what they could do in their own works and to start trusting him. They had to believe that he was not only going to **protect** them from the people of the world, which he had proven with what he did with Egypt, but he was going to **provide** their basic needs and potable water is certainly one of them. Canaan was to be the place of prosperity, not the wilderness. But this was going to be a test for them to see if they really trusted him!

The word for the **tree** that was thrown into the waters of Marah to make them sweet is *ets* and it denoted both a tree or wood. If it was a tree, then its leaves would still be on it. This gives us a picture of the Tree of Life found in the New Jerusalem whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. “*In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the **tree of life**, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the **leaves** of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*” Revelations 22:2

The important thing for us to remember is that it was *Yahweh* who pointed out the solution for the bitter waters of Marah and it is he who points out the solution for bitter souls, which is found in his Word. “*Let all **bitterness**, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And **be ye** kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*” Ephesians 4:31,32

Thirty-three

Now we get into the issue of since water is water **what caused it to be bitter?** It's because the elements from the surrounding soil had leached into the water. And this explains why the Israelites had become so bitter. It isn't that they had become bitter on their sojourn with the Lord from Egypt, but because **they had become bitter back in Egypt!**

And **why** was that? It was because the elements of Egyptian society and culture, (the world system), had leached into their lives, just as the elements of American society today, (the world system), has leached into the souls of Christians. The pride, the arrogance, the materialism, the pursuit of money and things, the anger of angry people, the occultism, the culture and religion of the Babylonian religion permeated Egyptian culture and all that had leached into the lives and hearts of the Israelites.

Egypt was the southern center of Mystery Babylon, which was nothing more than a veil for the worship of Satan, a fallen angel filled with rage and is symbolized by the Egyptian cobra with its burning, bitter venom. So pride, arrogance, lust, materialism, bitterness, immorality, occultism, mysticism, and every other form of evil was found in Egyptian life and leached into the camp of God's people.

Which serves as an illustration and a warning to all of God's people today. Even though Christian may not be aware of it, bitterness is directly related to the world system as well as the flesh nature and the devil. **It comes about as the result of our reaction to what's going on.** We either are reacting to the negativity of the world, or we are reacting because we don't have what the people of the world have! And we also end up reacting to the bitterness and anger that the people of world radiate!

Remember that the toxic elements from the soil surrounding the water just naturally leach into the water, and do the toxic elements of the world system around us just naturally leach into our souls, if we let them. That's why **separation** is so important for the believer in Christ; separation from the elements of the world system and separation from the people of the world. The doctrine of separation, along with living in the spiritual life instead of the flesh nature, is one of God's provisions for us. *"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you," 2 Corinthians 6:17* But we have to apply it in our own lives. This explains why Redding, along with so many other American cities have become hostile over the years; the bitterness of the world system and Babylon has leached into them.

We can become bitter, if we react to a **wrong** done us; we can become bitter, if we react over a **hurt** we have suffered; we can become bitter, if we **don't get our way**; we can become bitter, **if we don't get to do what we want to do**; we can become bitter, **if someone tells us what to do.** All bitterness deals with these two things: personal pride and negative volition or the rebellious will.

If we react to a wrong done us, which is a function of our pride, then we will lose our peace and spiral downward into the anger complex. Where the biblical way of handling wrongs is to put them into the Father's hands and let him deal with the people who hurt us. As it is written, *"Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord"* Romans 12:19.

Concerning any feelings of anger we have toward the people who wronged us, then we are to **forgive** them, to let the bad feelings go. *"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."* Colossians 3:13 **The important thing is to hang on to our peace, not to hang on to our pride!**

Class 34 - Concepts associated with bitterness

A bitter soul - *“Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul;”* Job 3:20, **Bitter complaint** - *“Even to day is my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning.”* Job 23:2, **Bitter words** - *“Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words:”* Psalms 64:3 **Marrying the wrong woman causes bitterness** - *“And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.”*, Ecclesiastes 7:26 **Rejecting Bible Doctrine results in bitterness** - *“Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.”* Jeremiah 2:19 **The Chaldeans, because of the Babylonian religion, were a bitter and warlike people** - *“For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not theirs.”* Habakkuk 1:6 **We're not to be bitter against our wives** - *“Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.”* Colossians 3:19 **Envy and bitterness go together** - *“But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.”* James 3:14

Hannah was bitter because she didn't have any children - *“And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.”* 1 Samuel 1:10 **Revenge violence ends up in bitterness** - *“Then Abner called to Joab, and said, Shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? how long shall it be then, ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren?”* 2 Samuel 2:26 **Bitter souls complain** - *“Therefore I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.”* Job 7:11 **Bitter souls have bitter words** - *“My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.”* Job 10:1 **Bitter in life ends up being bitter in death** - *“And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure.”* Job 21:25 **A foolish son is bitterness to his mother** - *“A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.”* Proverbs 17:25 **Jeremiah was bitter concerning Israel** - *“He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood.”* Lamentations 3:15 **Humility replaced pride** - *“My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me.”* Lamentations 3:20 **He recovered his peace and stability of soul** - *“The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.”*, Lamentations 3:25 **Bitterness is in the heart of the unsaved** - *“Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:”* Romans 3:14 **We're to eliminate even the roots of bitterness** - *“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;”* Hebrews 12:15

Hannah's Bitterness

Hannah was bitter because she didn't have any children, but the reason **why** is because the Lord had closed up her womb! *“But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb.”* 1 Samuel 1:5 She was one of Elkanah's two wives the other one named Peninnah, who had bore Elkanah both sons and daughters.

Now Elkanah was a doctrinal believer, positive to the Word of the Lord and to the spiritual authority structures that existed back then and he had been prospered by the Lord in his life. As far as being a woman goes it was of great value to be married to a man who was prosperous, loving, respected in the community and well established in life.

He had several sons and daughters with Peninnah, but none at all with Hannah and this had gone on for years. And the reason why is because the Lord had closed up her womb so she couldn't have any! Now if the Lord had done this, then there was a reason as to why he did! What Hannah needed to do was content herself with her husband and the Lord and enjoy the life they had, but she wasn't content.

Now Elkanah deeply loved Hannah and even in the offerings he provided for both wives when they went up to worship the Lord, he gave Peninnah portions for her and the children, but to Hannah he gave her double portions. An obvious display of how much he loved her, but also for public respect. This was to show everyone around that even though Hannah had bore him no children, he still loved her and regarded her very highly.

But Hannah had things she had to deal with on a personal level. It was bad enough that in society's eyes she was esteemed lower than the other women because she bore her husband no children, but to add insult to injury she had to bear the brunt of Peninnah's constant jabs at her. Peninnah was always putting her down resulting in her weeping, depressed and unable to eat.

Even though Peninnah had a problem of pride and spite, Hannah had a spiritual problem that she had not addressed all those years and that was bitterness! She was bitter about being picked on by Peninnah; she was bitter because she had no children; she was bitter that she had loved and served the Lord all these years and he hadn't rewarded her with what the lowest of women had – children! And she could have been bitter about other things as well.

Elkanah was aware of all these things over the years, but it was this one year it came to the surface so he tried to comfort and encourage her by asking her why is she crying? Of course he knew why she was crying, but here's where a man's thinking comes in versus a woman's thinking. Aren't I worth 10 sons?, he asks. To men our wives are worth more to us than any amount of children, but apparently some women don't feel that way about their husbands. You have me, you have the Lord, you have a great life with respect and creature comforts, isn't that enough? It should be, but it wasn't for Hannah.

Elkanah's attempt to get Hannah out of her mood was to no avail. Hannah was self absorbed, which is one of the arrogance skills of bitterness. All she could do is think about herself and what she didn't have, instead of being thankful for what she did have! Which has been played millions of times since then by God's people. Instead of being **angry** over what we don't have, we should be **thankful** for what we do have!

We need to look at what Hannah did have. She had salvation and a relationship with the God of heaven and earth, but that was not enough for her. She had a husband who loved her and favored her, but that was not enough for her. She had a doctrinal husband with wealth who bestowed wealth on her, but that was not enough for her. For the believer caught up in arrogance, bitterness and self-absorption none of the things that truly matter: salvation, right man right woman, health, etc., matter to them.

People will say, well Peninnah had children and she didn't! So what! What's it to you what other believer's have? Instead of being bitter about what she didn't have, Hannah should have been thankful about what she did have, which was really a great life, and start trying to get the answer as to why God closed her womb! But a change took place when she prayed to God in bitterness of soul. *“And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.”* 1 Samuel 1:10 Sometimes we have to get to the bottom to humble us so we will reach out to the Lord.