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## THE GALL OF BITTERNESS

I saw a plaque that had a poem on it once about a bitter old man. The poem spoke of how the bitter old man was young once and was bitter when he was young too. He never saw this as sin and did not change. He felt he had a right to be bitter.

We have all met that kind of person, you know the ones, they always have a chip on their shoulder. They dare people to knock it off. Yet, these very ones were not born that way. Something happened in their lives to change them. A hurt, a loss, a failed marriage, a failed business, or so many other things could have happened. When these trials came these people made the choice not to forgive. I have seen this happen with both Christians and non-Christians.

When we do not forgive, then eventually it grows into bitterness. It does not happen overnight. It starts with a seed just like everything else does. Yet, if not pulled out, it surrounds the heart until it becomes hard and squeezes all love out of it. I have seen so many in this state. You can counsel them, and some will see their error and repent, but many never do. The lines of bitterness are in their faces but are also in their hearts. Bitterness knows no boundaries.

In Acts chapter 8 we see the story of Simon the sorcerer. He heard the gospel preached and received salvation. He had previously made a lot of money doing his sorceries. Later when the Apostles came to Samaria many received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Simon offered them money to have this power. Peter told him his heart wasn't right and to repent. In Acts 8:23 Peter said, ***"For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."*** Simon repented.

When we view money as the object of our attention, we can become bitter when others have more than enough, and we are just barely getting by. Never let this happen because it can lead to more than just sin. It will control your life!

If you find yourself in the gall of bitterness, I suggest you have a little talk with yourself. Is it worth it? Is it making your life any happier? Then confess it as sin and ask the Lord to give you a new fleshly heart that can forgive and love.

Sin always brings death, but through repentance there is hope. In Ezekiel 11:19 a promise is given to those that turn back to God. It says, ***"And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh...."*** Ezekiel 36:26 repeats it. God has a way of taking the stony hard heart and making it soft as flesh when we ask him to. We do not have to be like that bitter old man. We can have a new heart, soft as flesh through Jesus Christ.