







COLOSSIANS 1:13-14 (NIV)

13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Rescued. Redeemed. Forgiven.

OFFENDED

No Bitter Roots

For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness...

Colossians 1:13-14

A message on releasing what is slowly destroying you.

HEBREWS 12:15 (NIV)

See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

Bitterness is never just personal -- it spreads.

OFFENDED

No Bitter Roots

*What does bitterness cost you
and the people around you?*

*Bitterness is like drinking poison,
hoping it will kill your enemy.*

AN INVISIBLE ROOT ALWAYS YIELDS VISIBLE FRUIT

You may be holding on to the offense -- but the offense is reshaping you.

The Cost of Keeping Bitterness

PERSONAL COST

Hatred and holiness cannot coexist in the same heart. Every moment you nurse bitterness, you forfeit intimacy with God.

RELATIONAL COST

When we invite others into our bitterness, we become a stumbling block in their pursuit of faith and peace -- our wounds become their obstacles.

How do you kill a bitter root?

Three moves that break the power of offense.

MOVE 1

Expose the Object of Your Bitterness

*You cannot fight what you refuse to name.
Healing begins with honesty.*

Real roots. Real pain.

Dad was absent

A best friend abandoned me

Mom was harsh and critical

I was overlooked for an opportunity

A brother walked away

My contribution went uncredited

A relationship ended in betrayal

I suffered under abusive leadership

EPHESIANS 5:11 (NIV)

*Have nothing to do with the
fruitless deeds of darkness, but
rather expose them.*

Exposure isn't shame -- it's the first act of courage toward freedom.

**You cannot heal from what
you are unwilling to admit.**

Denial preserves the wound. Honesty begins the cure.

D a w n R u s s e l l

**With whom or what
are you bitter?**

Take a moment. Be specific. Name it.

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MOVE 2

Cancel Their Debt

*Forgiveness is not saying what happened was
okay.*

It is releasing your right to collect what is owed.

MATTHEW 18:31-35 (NIV)

The master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours... Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?'... 'This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

v. 32, 35

Forgiven People Forgive People

- 01** | God canceled an unpayable debt on your behalf.
- 02** | The servant refused to cancel a comparatively tiny debt.
- 03** | Mercy received but not passed on reveals mercy that was never truly understood.

MOVE 3

Bless Your Offender

*Forgiveness stops the bleeding.
Blessing the offender closes the wound.*

LUKE 6:27-28 (NIV)

But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

This isn't weakness -- it's the hardest and most powerful thing a person can do.

True Forgiveness is Secondhand.

*We forgive because we have first been forgiven.
The cross is our motivation and our model.*

EPHESIANS 4:31-32 (NIV)

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

'...just as in Christ God forgave you.' -- That is the standard. And the strength.

TALK IT OVER

- 1.** Read Hebrews 12:14-15. Why does Scripture compare bitterness to a root and not just a wound or a feeling? What does that image reveal about how bitterness works?
- 2.** All bitterness starts as a hurt. The next time you feel anger or resentment rising, what can you do in that moment to stop a seed of bitterness from taking root?
- 3.** Hatred and holiness cannot coexist in the same heart. Who around you might be affected by bitterness you haven't fully surrendered? What would one step toward forgiveness look like this week?