

# The Mindset of the Believer: Avoiding Bitterness

## Part 2

Grace Bible Conference - Summer 2015

Steve Thomas

Introduction: The United States Supreme Court ruled in favor of Homosexual Marriage, the Affordable Care Act (Obama-care) was upheld as constitutional, and many states in the South are removing the Confederate flag as a symbol of heritage and calling it a symbol of hate. What is happening? Is the US no longer the City on a Hill? When we see things going wrong around us, and we do not interpret them in the light of the truths we discussed last hour, confusion sets in. When we are not communicating with the Godhead properly, God's promises seem empty. When we do not understand what God is doing in this day and age, we are out of step with the Spirit and not operating in our full strength potential. This is disheartening to the believer and causes wrong reactions. The believer is then open to attack from the enemies. One of the results is bitterness.

II. The believer actually has a choice on how he perceives events and circumstances around him, and his place in them. Perceiving incorrectly leads to Bitter Fruit, and a proper perception leads to Good Fruit.

- A. Not being able to discern the answers to the questions posed in the first half of the study will lead to Bitter Fruit.
  1. Bitter can be defined in the following ways:
    - a. A spirit of persistent sourness. A condition that fails to see good, but always sees wrong, defects, or deficiency. The bitter person always sees things in a bad light .- Pastor Dennis Daniel
    - b. Bitterness sees faults and blemishes and never good. Bitter people make themselves miserable as well as those around them. Martin Loyd-Jones
    - c. Greek word - πικρία acidity (especially poison), literally or figuratively: - bitterness. Sharp or biting
    - d. Hebrew root Mara (feminine form of bitter) and marar (to make bitter) **Ruth 1:20**.
  2. Simon the sorcerer was described by Peter as being in the poison of bitterness. **Acts 8:23** He could not discern properly what was going on with the gifts that he was seeing and it led to bitterness.
  3. Esau lacked perception of his situation. He framed his mind on earthly things. **Heb 12:15-17** Again, I believe we are dealing with an unsaved individual without the ability to discern these things.
  4. Naomi actually asked to be called Bitter. **Ruth 1:20**
  5. In the beginning chapters of Romans, Paul is making his case that neither the religious, moral, or heathen man has an excuse before God. **Rom 3:14** describes these men as full of bitterness. It is in the middle of a litany of accusations towards the unsaved. **3:10-18**
- B. Framing your mind properly leads to manifesting good fruit - what can be described as the character of Christ, the Fruit of the Spirit. **Eph 4**

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1. Skipping to the end of the chapter, Paul asks the believer to put away all bitterness. **4:31** In order for this to be possible, other things have to occur first.
2. Believers are to order their lives in such a way so as to be in line with our calling. This is not possible for the unsaved or carnal believer. **4:1**
3. Paul gives a picture of unity (the body) that is infiltrated with the Character of Christ (the Fruit of the Spirit: meekness, longsuffering, love, and peace). **4:2-3**
4. Paul includes the gifts given to benefit the Body. Again a mental perception of purpose for each believer. **4:7-8, 11-13**
5. Later in the chapter he encourages the believer to “put off” the old man - the position in Adam. This happens by a framing of the mind, seeing ourselves in the new position In Christ. **4:22**
6. One of the key verses in the New Testament, I believe is the call to be renewed in the Spirit belonging to your mind. **4:23-24**.
  - a. At salvation the believer is regenerated, the seed of the Father is placed in us. **1 John 3:9** This presents the believer with a choice, not like Simon or Esau.
  - b. The believer has been given Eternal Life. This is Christ. **Col 3:4** Christ is our life. Not the biological life that living beings have, but Eternal life.

Conclusion: In the Upper Room Discourse already discussed, Christ paints a picture of a Vine and Branches. **John 15** He asks us to abide in Him. This is done by making the choice we are discussing. If we are comfortable in our Position in Christ, we will perceive circumstances based upon Truth, and not how unbelievers do. **Eph 4:17-18** We as believers have the option to frame our minds in the regenerated area, or dwell in the flesh. The “framing” process is vital to the believer’s Victorious Life. We have a choice which nature we will yield to, the old nature which will cause us to misinterpret our surroundings and the circumstances involved, or our new nature which will lead us to stabilizing fruit and productive participation in the desirous will of God for our lives. Being able to see things properly in light of what God is doing, then communicating properly with the Godhead and discerning His desirous will for our lives, then seeing our place in what is happening - these things will give a tremendous advantage to the believer. If we do not perceive things properly, it will lead to worry, doubt, confusion, and bitterness. God is desirous of better things for us.