

What are you following?

Hebrews 12:14-15 & Ephesians 4:30-32

According to these passages, we are all following after something. Is it peace? We are told to release "all bitterness." If we do not, then it will sometime, spring up and "trouble you." It's easy to allow bitterness to take root in our hearts. It could be influenced by a friend, acquaintance, family, fellow believer or even just a circumstance.

What Causes Bitterness?:

- Willingly _____ . Ruth 1:20
- Refusing to _____ . 2 Samuel 15:12 & 31
- The feeling of _____ . Jonah 4:9

What is Bitterness?:

- Remembers _____ .
- Accuses _____ and Excuses _____ . James 3:14-18
- Reveals Itself. James 3:10-11

What Cures Bitterness?:

- Receive _____ . Hebrews 4:16; 12:15
- Take _____ .
- Release _____ . 1 Pt. 2:24 & Matt. 6:14-15

Illustration: Think about the oyster. It takes a grain of sand and turns it into a beautiful pearl. Too often we do just the opposite. We take pearls and turn them into grains of sand. Has God sent you a grain of sand? What will it do **to** you? Or, what will it do **for** you?

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What Causes Bitterness?:

- Willingly ignoring God's will. Ruth 1:20
* Elimelech and Naomi ignored God's plan --Ruth 1:1,2
- Refusing to release the offender. 2 Samuel 15:12 & 31
* We do not forgive and then the roots of bitterness grow
- The feeling of entitlement. Jonah 4:9
* Jonah felt he was entitled to the shade of the gourd and became bitter with God when the gourd died

What is Bitterness?: The signs of bitterness:

- Remembers details.
- Accuses others and Excuses self. James 3:14-18
* bitterness leads to evil doings
- Reveals Itself. James 3:10-11
* If you are bitter, nothing sweet shows in you

What Cures Bitterness?:

- Receive the grace of God. Hebrews 4:16; 12:15
- Take ownership.
* we need to take ownership of the desire to forgive
- Release both the offense and the offender. 1 Pt. 2:24 & Matt. 6:14-15
* Bitterness will never release you--you must release the bitterness

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