Lesson on A Root of Bitterness

1.) Pray for Insight

2.) To the Carnal Christian & The Genuine Christian - What is the difference between these Christians?

3.) The Carnal Christian

Hebrews 12:14-17 (NLT)  A Call to Listen to God

14 Work at living in peace with everyone, and work at living a holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord. 15 Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many. 16 Make sure that no one is immoral or godless like Esau, who traded his birthright as the firstborn son for a single meal. 17 You know that afterward, when he wanted his father’s blessing, he was rejected. It was too late for repentance, even though he begged with bitter tears.

**Why would the writer of Hebrews highlight Esau as an example of having a "Poisonous Root of Bitterness"?**

Think about his childhood and why he lost his Birthright and his Father's Blessing.

Esau's Example:

Genesis 25:29-34 (NLT) 29 One day when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau arrived home from the wilderness exhausted and hungry. 30 Esau said to Jacob, “I’m starved! Give me some of that red stew!” (This is how Esau got his other name, Edom, which means “red.”) 31 “All right,” Jacob replied, “but trade me your rights as the firstborn son.” 32 “Look, I’m dying of starvation!” said Esau. “What good is my birthright to me now?” 33 But Jacob said, “First you must swear that your birthright is mine.” So Esau swore an oath, thereby selling all his rights as the firstborn to his brother, Jacob. 34 Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and lentil stew. Esau ate the meal, then got up and left. He showed contempt for his rights as the firstborn.

Genesis 27:36 (NLT) 36 Esau exclaimed, “No wonder his name is Jacob, for now he has cheated me twice. First he took my rights as the firstborn, and now he has stolen my blessing. Oh, haven’t you saved even one blessing for me?”

**What was Esau's problem which made him so immoral or godless that both God and Isaac voided his birthright and withheld their blessing?**

Esau's story illustrates how mistakes and sins sometimes have lasting consequences. Even repentance and forgiveness do not always eliminate sin's
consequences.
Esau was feeding his emotional desire for worldly things by sowing his desire for pleasure in life. How often do you make decisions based upon what you want now; as opposed to making long term actions? Do you mostly seek activities which satisfy your sense of pleasure and ignore the hard choices in your spiritual life. Carnal Christians who have not made a break with sin continue to mock God’s forgiveness. His grace is the only source of power for changing our character.

**What was Esau like which resulted in Isaac voiding his birthright and God removing his blessing?**

**Positive Side:**
- Good hunter and archery skills
- Able to forgive after explosive anger

**Negative Side:**
- He lacked common sense and wisdom.
- He made decisions which didn't make sense and didn't learn from them.
- He didn't evaluate the future consequences of his actions.
- His life was filled with choices which he must have regretted bitterly.
- He tended to live in the now like an animal. Satisfied only his short-tem pleasure.
- Not a visionary. A loose cannon - unpredictable.
- Traded his birthright for a bowl of stew. His soul had a strong grip on him.
- He was immature and demonstrated a weak character for right living.
- He chose (heathen) wives in direct opposition to his parent's wishes.
- No respect for authority figures over him - parents nor God.
- He lost: double inheritance, family authority figure, & direct linage to Jesus Christ.
- He was like today's Carnal Christian.

**Describe how the actions of a "Poisonous Root of Bitterness" express itself within a person and their actions?**

Like a small root that grows into a great tree, bitterness springs up in our heart and overshadows even our deepest Christian relationships. Bitterness comes when we allow disappointment to grow into resentment, or when we nurse grudges over past hurts. Bitterness brings with it anger, jealousy, greed, dissension, and immorality of every form. Sin always blocks our vision of God, so if we want to see God clearly, we must renounce sin and obey God. Have you completely made a complete break with habitual sin? Or, do you mostly seek the controlling Pleasures in life and not seek the long term spiritual things of God?

**Deeper Insight:** Pride stops God from acting within a person in this condition. His Mercy and Grace is the only solution because only God's power can break this Stronghold! Holiness is coupled with living in peace with other people. A right relationship with God leads to right relationships with other Christians. We may not always "feel" positive towards other believers but we must act peacefully and be gracious towards them. Do you demonstrate a heart of "thankfulness" towards God and with man also? If not, you could have a Root of Bitterness starting.

Psalm 24:3-4 (AMP) Who may ascend onto the mountain of the Lord? And who may
stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart. Who has not lifted up his soul to what is false, nor has sworn [oaths] deceitfully.

**Are you a Carnal Christian?**

4.) **A Genuine or True Christian**

A.) **How should True Christians "behave / act" most of the time?**

*Colossians 3:12 (AMPC) Godly Behavior*

12 Clothe yourselves therefore, as God’s own chosen ones (His own picked representatives), [who are] purified and holy and well-beloved [by God Himself, by putting on behavior marked by] tenderhearted pity and mercy, kind feeling, a lowly opinion of yourselves, gentle ways, [and] patience [which is tireless and long-suffering, and has the power to endure whatever comes, with good temper].

**Consistently living by a strategy to live for God day by day:**

- Imitate Christ's compassion by showing a forgiving attitude.
- Let love guide your life.
- Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart.
- Always be "thankful" for whatever seems good or bad.
- Keep God's Word within you always.
- Live as Jesus Christ's representative.

B.) **How should True Christians "think" most of the time?**

*1 Peter 4:1-2 (AMPC) Godly Thinking*

So, since Christ suffered in the flesh for us, for you, arm yourselves with the same thought and purpose [patiently to suffer rather than fail to please God]. For whoever has suffered in the flesh [having the mind of Christ] is done with [intentional] sin [has stopped pleasing himself and the world, and pleases God],

2 So that he can no longer spend the rest of his natural life living by [his] human appetites and desires, but [he lives] for what God wills.

Suffering helps us be like Christ, yet people will do anything to avoid pain. Physical or Emotional Pain is sometimes necessary to get our attention and to humble us. Pain and Danger reveal our true values. Anyone who suffers for doing good and still faithfully obeys in spite of suffering - has made a clean break with sin. Cooperate with God and welcome suffering because it is part of God's training process which builds a Christ-like character.

C.) **How should True Christians "give & receive blessings" most of the time?**
1 Peter 3:9 (AMPC) Godly Blessing

Never return evil for evil or insult for insult (scolding, tongue-lashing, berating), but on the contrary blessing [praying for their welfare, happiness, and protection, and truly pitying and loving them]. For know that to this you have been called, that you may yourselves inherit a blessing [from God—that you may obtain a blessing as heirs, bringing welfare and happiness and protection].

In God's Kingdom, revenge is unacceptable behavior, as is insulting a person, no matter how indirect it is done. Rise above getting back at those who hurt you. Instead of reacting angrily to these people, pray for them. And, then you will receive a Blessing from our Lord which will bring welfare, happiness, and protection.

D.) Deeper Insight:

**How should True Christians try to consistently Walk in Victory day by day?**

**True Christian Personal Traits when Walking with God**

-- Consistently Express a Thankful, Anointed, and Blessed Heart.

-- Consistently Praise & Worship God in spite of Feelings - a Sacrifice of Praise!

-- Take authority over Negative Emotions and Critical Self-Talk; in order to, stay walking in the Holy Spirit's Anointing and Peace.

-- Consistently do whatever is necessary to keep our Conscience clear of all wrong doing. Live with a sense of contentment!

-- Consistently Follow a Right Way of Living!

-- Release and Entrust people, circumstances, and situations to God.

2 Tim 1:12b (AMPC) ... and I am [positively] persuaded that He is able to guard and keep that which has been entrusted to me and which I have committed [to Him] until that day.

-- Consistently Speak only Blessings & Truth from God's Word.

-- Consistently Walk by Faith and not by Sight!

-- Constituently believe that "God's Grace is sufficient for Me!

-- Cooperated with God desire to change your natural Character.

All of these Choices are important and up to you to make during
your lifetime! What is your heart's intent?

5.) Which Christian are you?

**Have you broken with sin?
**Do you live in peace with other Christians and your family?
**Do you attend church and a Bible study?
**Do you live like a Genuine Christian most of the time?
**What is the intent of your heart?
**What will Jesus say to you on Judgment Day?

Matthew 7:21-23 (NLT) 21 “Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. 22 On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ 23 But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.’

OR

Matthew 25:21 (NLT) 21 “The master was full of praise. ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’