

## Part 1 - Understanding Bitter Root Judgments

*See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. Hebrews 12:15*

*... judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment! James 2:12-13*

What does the Bible mean when it warns against judgment? There are two Greek words for judgment in the Bible, but they are both translated with the same English word.

1. But he who is spiritual judges all things... *I Corinthians 2:5.*

The word translated "judges" in this verse is *anakrino* in Greek which means to investigate.

2. *Judge not lest you be judged. Matthew 7:1.*

The word "judge" here is the Greek word *krino* which means to put on trial or to condemn.

When we are wounded, especially when the wounding occurs in the womb and in our earliest years, we are likely to respond to the pain by making judgments. We judge (condemn) ourselves; God for making us or not protecting us; the person(s) who wounded us, and those who should have protected us.

We judge ourselves to be bad, ugly, unlovable, stupid, dirty, failures, mistakes and so on. We may reject the gift of life. We may choose death.

We judge God to be absent, uncaring, cruel, weak, and untrustworthy.

We judge those who wound us as evil, worthless, worthy of death, beyond redemption, all powerful, etc.

We judge those who should have protected us as stupid, uncaring, weak, unloving, worthy of punishment or so pathetic that they need our protection, and so on it goes.

We make these judgments and then forget we made them. They then go underground into the soil of our unformed hearts and become roots from which grow fruit-bearing trees. At the proper season these trees bear fruit. No big deal, except that these roots are bitter and they bear bitter, destructive fruit.

For example when we marry, the forgotten anger we hold in our hearts toward our mothers or fathers may be triggered. That is, the tree bears fruit. Suddenly we despise the man or woman we thought we loved. Or, our spouse begins to treat us exactly like our parent treated us.

Have you experienced the phenomenon of sin habits that work in cycles? You may beat a sin habit into submission, believe you are done with it, and sometime later it resurfaces full force? This is because trees bear fruit in certain seasons. Unless the tree is rooted out, it will bear fruit. You cannot kill a tree by picking the fruit. This is why so many of us struggle so unsuccessfully with destructive behaviors.

### A. The Problem with Judging.

A condemning judgment activates several Universal Principles:

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1. Universal Principle: How you judge will determine how you will be judged.

*"Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. ... For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."* Luke 6:37-38

2. Universal Principle: We reap what we sow.

*"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life."* Galatians 6:7-8

3. Universal Principle: There are consequences for violating God's boundaries

*"There is only one Lawgiver and Judge."* James 4:12

Judging (condemning) sets you up as God with all the subsequent responsibilities of that position, not to mention that playing God is a major no no.

So does this mean we turn a blind eye to the truth? Of course not.

1. We are not to judge what God made (people), but we are free to judge their behavior (investigate to determine if it is good or bad).

*"Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls."* Romans 14:4

2. We are not to condemn ourselves.

*"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death."* Romans 8:1

*"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price." 1 Corinthians 6:20*

3. We are not to judge (condemn) God.

*"A man's own folly ruins his life, yet his heart rages against the Lord."* Proverbs 19:3

But God does invite us to ask him questions and to reason with him.

*"Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord."* Isaiah 1:18

*"If any of you lack wisdom, he should ask God who gives generously to all without finding fault."* James 1:5

## B. Uncovering Bitter Roots

Setting aside the troubles that come from inheriting generational iniquities, a subject I will discuss in a future teaching, let's focus on how to uncover the bitter roots within ourselves.

It is very important to develop self-awareness. Begin by paying attention to the fruit in your life.

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### Fruits

Have you been divorced multiple times?  
Does authority always mistreat you?  
Do you hate yourself?  
Does everybody reject you?  
Do you fail at everything you try to do?  
Do you reject people before they reject you?  
Do you judge people before they judge you?  
Does everybody abandon you, disappoint you?  
Does nobody believe you?  
Do you try to make everyone happy at your own expense?  
Do you find it easier to just give up?

All these are bitter fruits that can be traced back to early childhood roots.

Do you struggle with believing that God loves and approves of you? Did your father love and approve of you? Are you only able to "feel" God after you have done something to bring his disapproval down on you?

If you are trapped in a sinful behavior that you hate, perhaps you judged a parent for that same or a similar behavior, and now you are doing the same thing. You are caught in the same trap.

### C. Expectancy

Another clue to what is rooted in our hearts is our expectancies and fears. What do you expect or fear will happen? Have the same bad things happened to you so much that you have come to expect them?

Expecting certain bad things to happen is the result of certain bad things happening over and over. (It's hard not to say duh here.)

Here's the problem. When we have judgment in our hearts - for example, nobody loves me - then we tempt people to reject us. Other people actually feel like rejecting us. Our judgment against ourselves and others has the power to pull bad behavior out of another person.

Does that make you responsible for their sins against you? No. But it does help explain why the same bad things happen throughout our lives.

So examine what you expect to happen. Your expectancies reveal your bitter roots.

### Expectancies

Do you expect to be rejected?  
Do you expect to fail?  
Do you expect to be misused or unprotected by authority?  
Do you expect others to fail you?  
Do you expect your prayers to go unanswered?  
Do you expect to be alone, abused, sick, broke?

What are your expectations? Ask God to help you identify them and track them back to their root causes. Ask Him when was the first time you believed nobody loved you.

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Because roots are underground, they are hidden. But through listening prayer, God reveals to us the roots of our troubles.

*"There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed or hidden that will not be made known." Matthew 10:26*

*"Wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts." 1 Corinthians 4:5*

Let's pray:

Dear Creator God, please turn the lights on. Reveal the bitter root judgments and hidden motives I have buried in my heart. Teach me to thoughtfully and truthfully examine myself, so that You may release healing into all that I am. I need to know what I truly believe deep within my heart, because it is not with my rational mind that I believe. It is with my heart (*Romans 10:10*). I ask that You will protect me from the trap of self-hatred by covering me with Your love and acceptance. I pray in the amazing name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

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