

The Root of

BITTERNESS

The Deadly Root that Devours & Destroys

(Hebrews 12:14-17; Acts 8:23; Ephesians 4:31; Colossians 3:19)

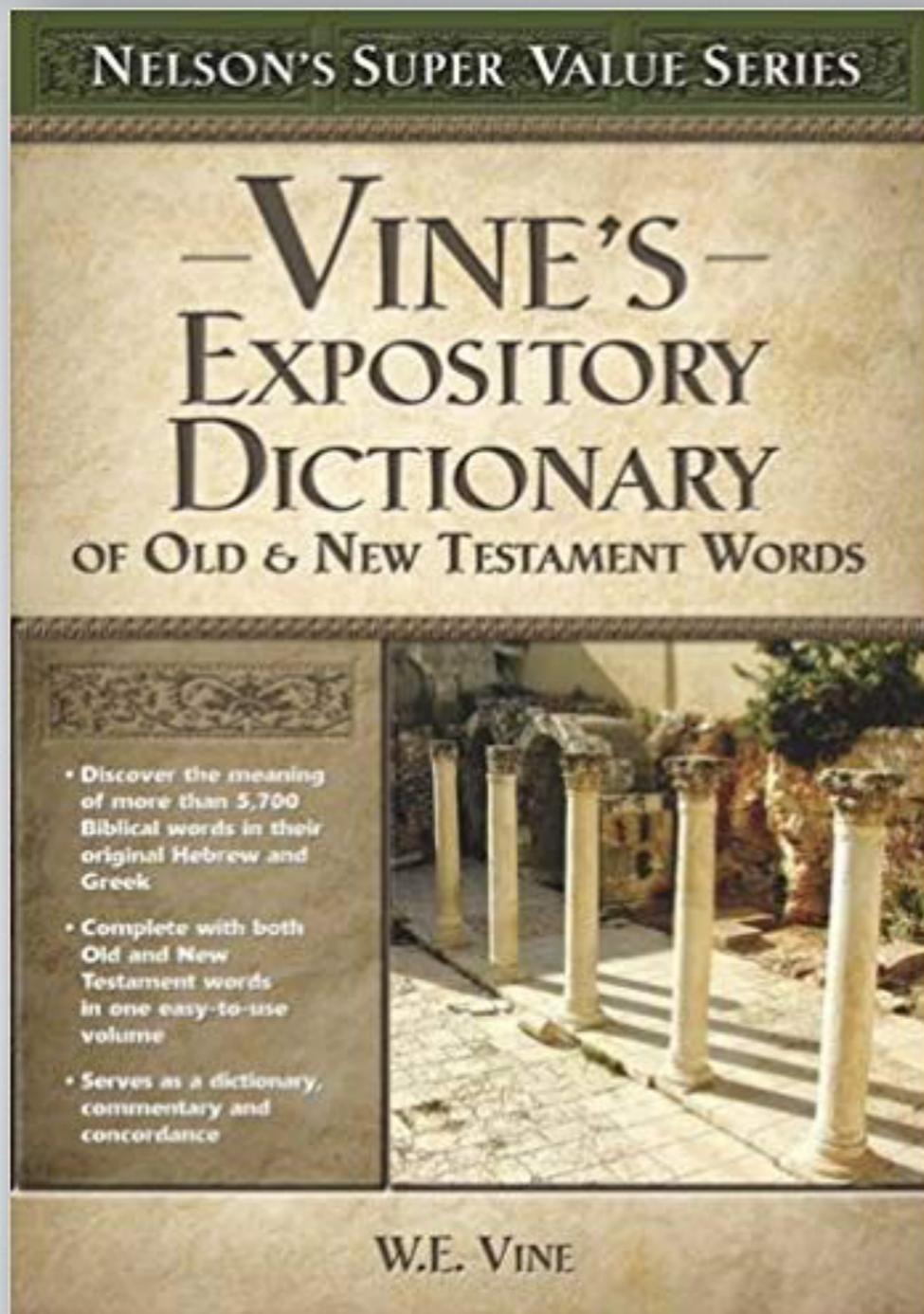
The Root of BITTERNESS

Hebrews 12:14–17 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Pursue peace with all *people*, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: ¹⁵ looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; ¹⁶ lest there *be* any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. ¹⁷ For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

The Root of BITTERNESS

TO DEFINE

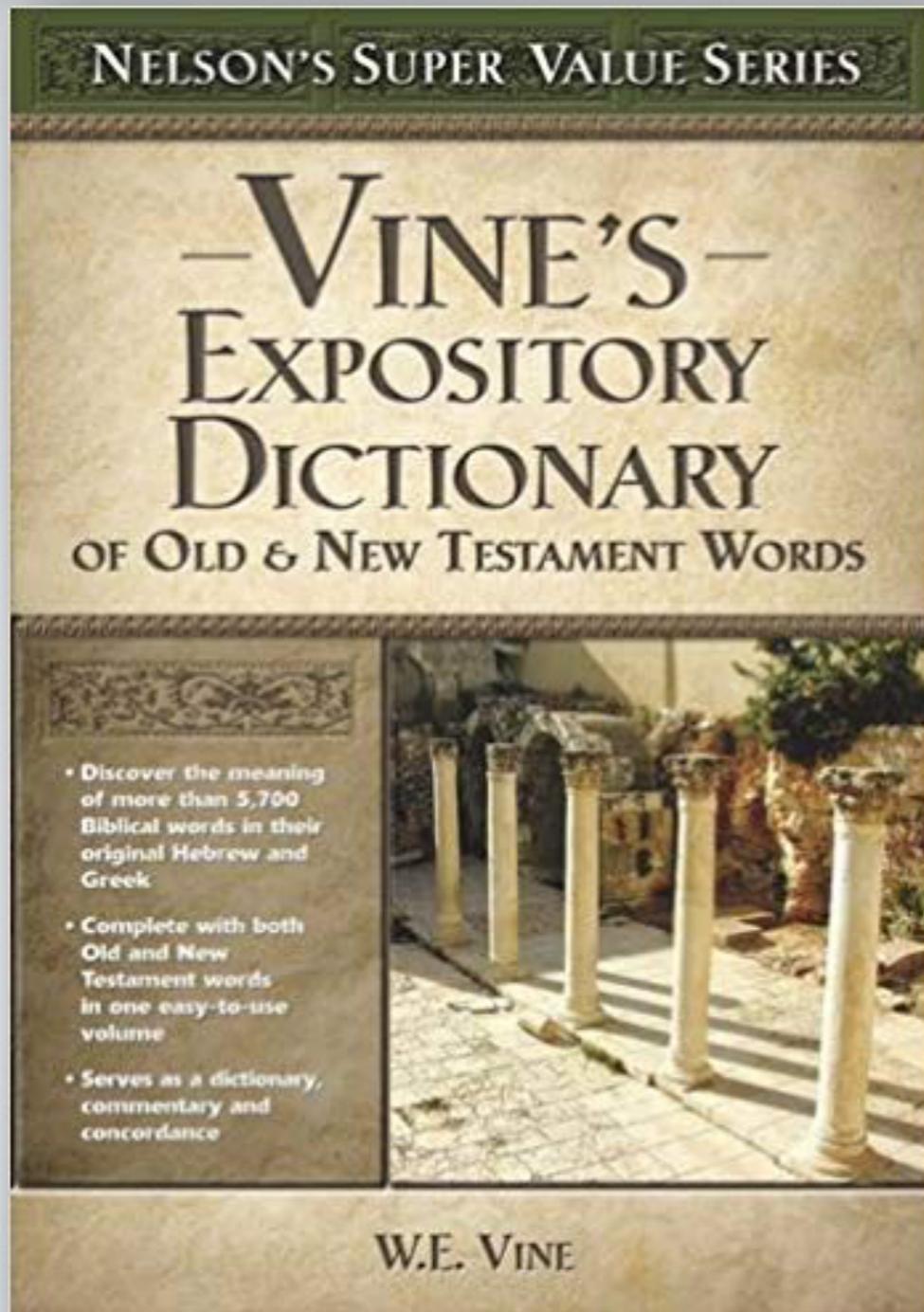


ROOT - A. Noun.

rhiza (ῥίζα, 4491) is used (a) in the natural sense, Matt. 3:10; 13:6, 21; Mark 4:6, 17, 11:20; Luke 3:9; 8:13; (b) metaphorically (1) of “cause, origin, source,” said of persons, ancestors, Rom. 11:16, 17, 18 (twice); of things, evils, 1 Tim. 6:10, rv, of the love of money as a “root” of all “kinds of evil” (marg., “evils”, kjv, “evil”); bitterness, Heb. 12:15; (2) of that which springs from a “root,” a shoot, said of offspring, Rom. 15:12; Rev. 5:5; 22:16. ¶

The Root of BITTERNESS

TO DEFINE



BITTERNESS - C. Noun.

pikria (πικρία, 4088) denotes “bitterness.” It is used in Acts 8:23, metaphorically, of a condition of extreme wickedness, “gall of bitterness” or “bitter gall”; in Rom. 3:14, of evil speaking; in Eph. 4:31, of “bitter” hatred; in Heb. 12:15, in the same sense, metaphorically, of a root of “bitterness,” producing “bitter” fruit. ¶

The Root of BITTERNESS

The ROOT of BITTERNESS in Heb. 12:15



▶ **A ROOT bearing poisonous and bitter fruit.”**

- **MUST PURSUE PEACE** with all & **HOLINESS** - vs. 13
- We **MUST** be **CAREFUL** to **NOT COME SHORT OF GOD’S GRACE** — (implies we can) — vs. 14a
- A **ROOT** of **BITTERNESS** is **ANYTHING** that would cause us to **become defiled** — 14b (including fornication & profanity - i.e., like ESAU — vs. 16)

The Root of BITTERNESS

The ROOT of BITTERNESS in Heb. 12:15



▶ **A ROOT bearing poisonous and bitter fruit.”**

- Reference is to Deut 29:18 where an OT apostate is called a “root ... that produces such bitter poison.” “BDAG - a bitter root, a root that bears bitter fruit Hb 12:15 (cp. Dt 29:17;)
- The whole can become defiled by the ungodliness of a few — 1 Cor. 5:6,7; 15:33; Mat 16:6-10; Gal 5:9; 2 Tim 2:17

The Root of BITTERNESS

The ROOT of BITTERNESS in Heb. 12:15



▶ **A ROOT bearing poisonous and bitter fruit.”**

- Like Esau, who sold his inheritance for the temporary gratification of a meal which could not be regained. - Ge. 25:27–34; 27:36
- WE ARE WARNED NOT to yield to transitory pressures, problems, or pleasures, and forfeit our inheritance — Mat 16:26; Luke 12:15-21; Heb 11:24-27

The Root of BITTERNESS

POISONED by BITTERNESS in Acts 8:23



Acts 8:21–23 (NKJV)

²¹ You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. ²² Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. ²³ For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.”

The Root of BITTERNESS

POISONED by BITTERNESS in Acts 8:23



NKJV - “poisoned by bitterness” - KJV, ESV NASB, etc. - “in the gall of bitterness”

- Lit. Bile - Met. “Gall of bitterness” — stands for extreme wickedness, productive of evil fruit. In the OT it is used (a) of a plant characterized by bitterness (probably wormwood), [Deut. 29:18](#); [Hos. 10:4](#); [Amos 6:12](#); ... as the translation of rosh, “venom;” in [Deut. 32:32](#) “(grapes) of gall.”

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POISONED by BITTERNESS in Acts 8:23



NKJV - “poisoned by bitterness” - KJV, ESV NASB, etc. - “in the gall of bitterness”

- Simon’s heart was NOT right, (21), and was motivated by wickedness to ask for something he had no right to.
- Simon’s friendship with the world was still governing his thoughts which poisoned his actions — (Jam 4:3,4) - perhaps he desired to use spiritual things for material gain — PROFANE like Esau.

The Root of BITTERNESS

Put AWAY BITTERNESS - Eph. 4:31

Ephesians 4:29–32 (NKJV)

²⁹ Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. ³² And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

The Root of BITTERNESS

Put AWAY BITTERNESS - Eph. 4:31



The Root of BITTERNESS

WHY DO PEOPLE BECOME BITTER?



- ▶ **Trials of Fire:** Will They Make You Bitter or Better? — 1 Pet 1:6-9
- ▶ **Blaming God!** — James 1:2-21
- ▶ **Blaming Others!** — Gen 3:12,13; Gal 4:16
- ▶ **Thoughts of unbelief!** The Devil's Evil Seeds! — Num. 13:26-14:12; 1 Cor. 10:1-13; Heb. 3:14-4:1
- ▶ **Jealousy!** — Gen 4:1-9; Jn 21:21
- ▶ **Our own stubbornness!** — Deut 29:19-21; Acts 7:51; 9:5; 26:9-11

The Root of BITTERNESS

WHY DO PEOPLE BECOME BITTER?



It is NOT the external things, nor is it those who have hurt us, that make us **BITTER!**

It is our POISONOUS ATTITUDES toward things, God and others that make us **BITTER!**

The Root of BITTERNESS

HORRIBLE EFFECTS OF BITTERNESS!



- ▶ **Bitterness provides Satan with an opportunity to destroy everything good in our lives!**
 - DESTROYS our relationship with God and our service to Him!
 - DESTROYS marriages & families! — Col. 3:19
 - DESTROYS friendships & relationships! — Gal 5:15
 - DESTROYS US! Mentally! Emotionally! Physically!

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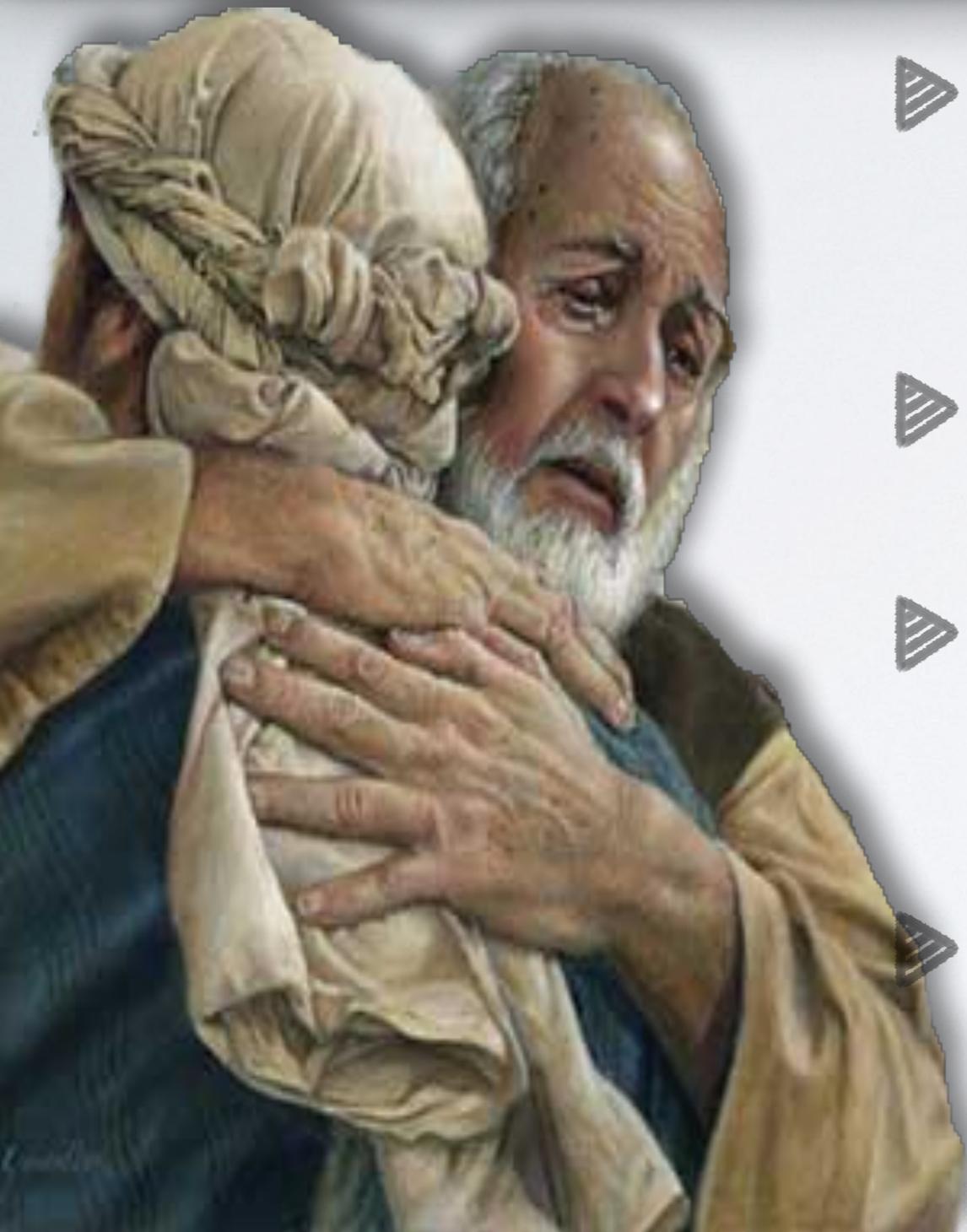
SIGNS of BITTERNESS



- ▶ Don't want to be near or talk to the object of our bitterness
- ▶ Easily frustrated — Everything is an issue (Ga. 5:14, 15)
- ▶ Constant criticism — can't appreciate, nor see anything good in those who are the object of our bitterness — (Acts 26:11)
- ▶ Suspicion & distrust — (1Co 13:7)
- ▶ Can't FORGIVE! — (Mt 6:14,15)

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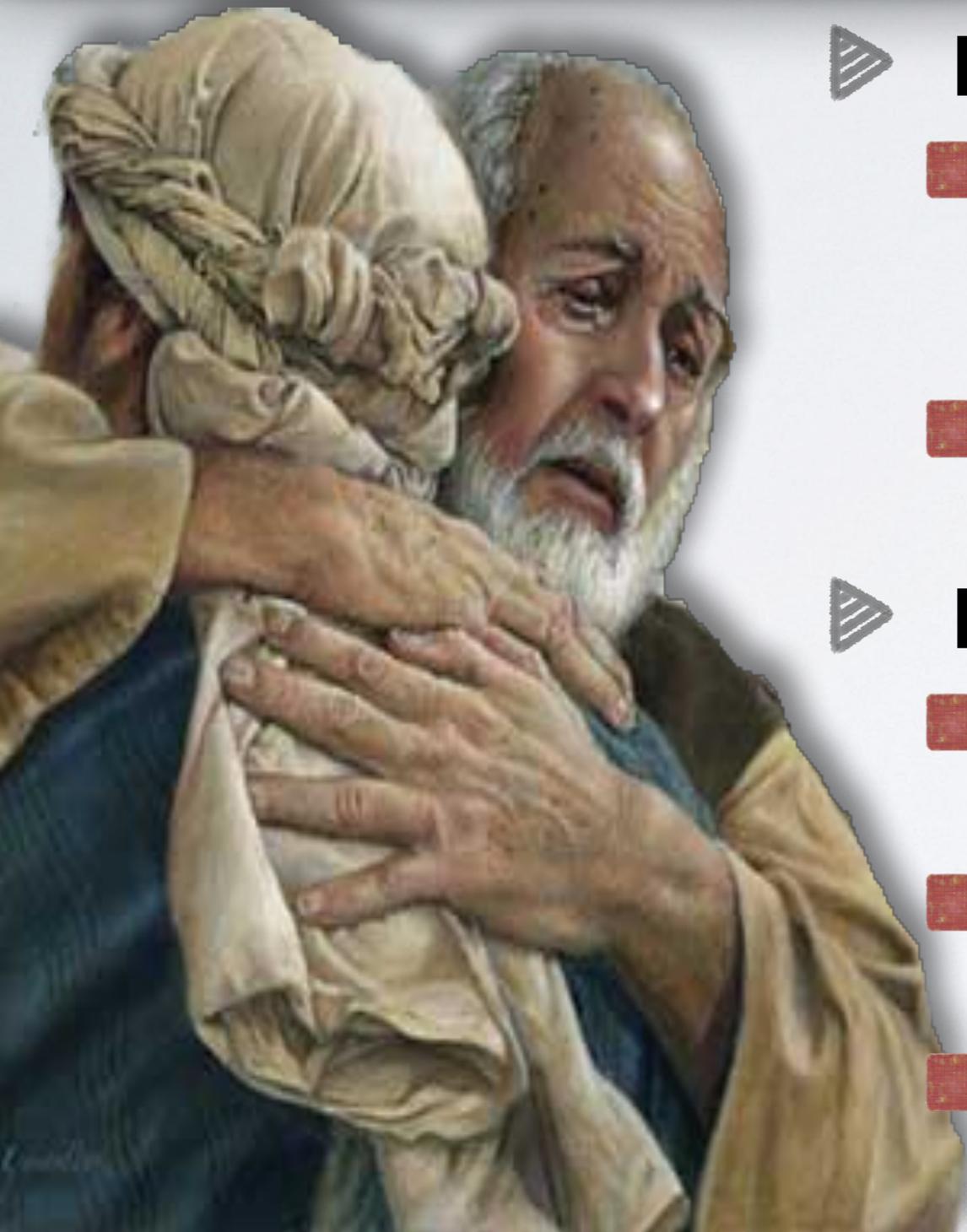
HOW TO AVOID BITTERNESS!



- ▶ **LOVE** — the Most Important Thing! Nurture love instead of anger — 1 Cor. 13
- ▶ **HUMILITY** - “Confess your faults to one another!” --Jam.5:16
- ▶ **GUARD** our hearts! **KEEP** a Positive, contented & Thankful Outlook!— Pro 4:23; Phili 4:4-12
- ▶ **TRUST** the Lord - He will never forsake you! — Phili 4:13; Rom 8:28; Heb 13:5-6

The Root of BITTERNESS

HOW TO OVERCOME BITTERNESS!



▶ **Resolve the source**

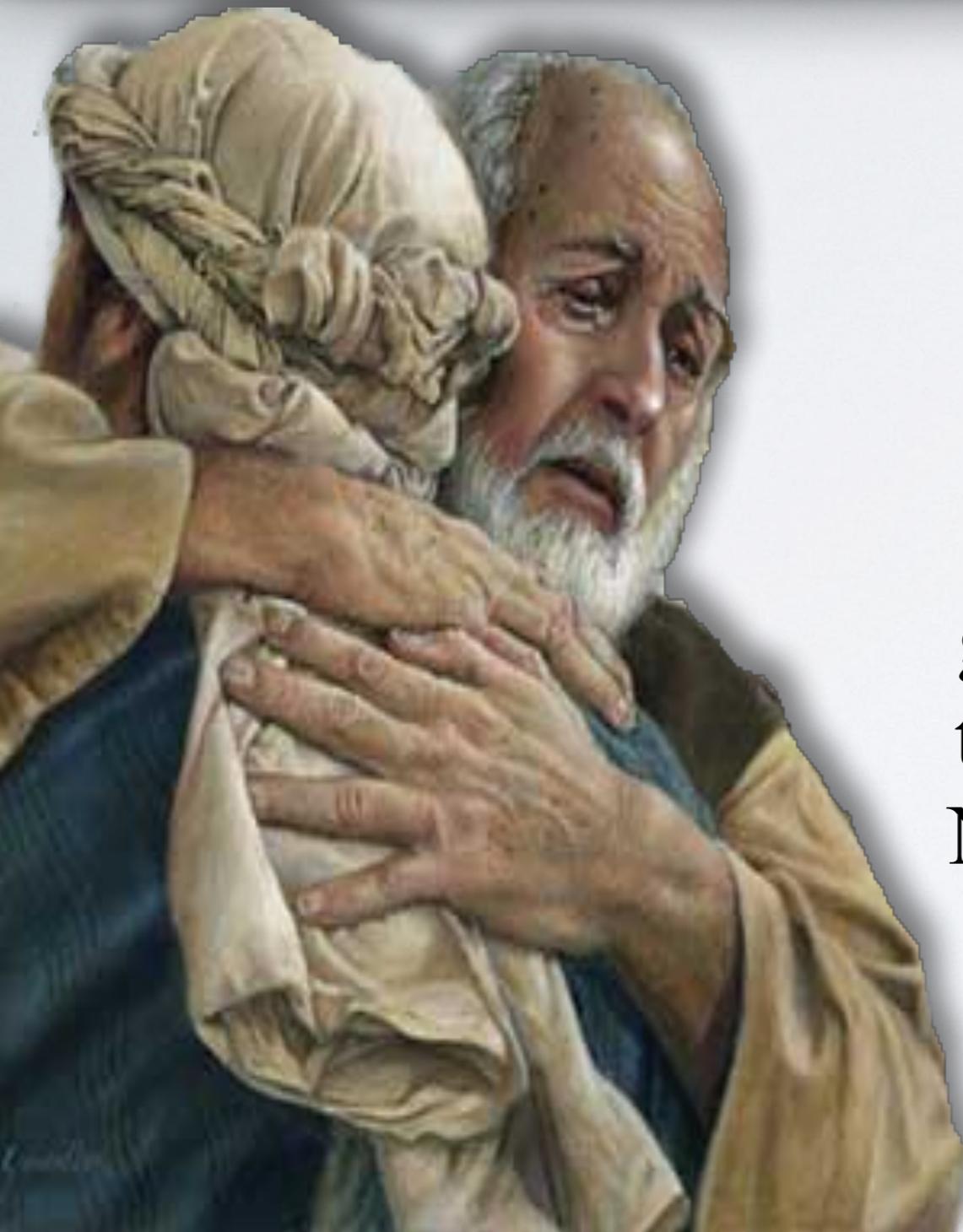
- Communicate instead of internalize - Go to the individual (Matthew 18:15-17)
- Do not give place to wrath (Ephesians 4:25-32)

▶ **Repent & Pray**

- Have your mind transformed by God's love & will — (Rom 12:1,2)
- Pray for forbearance, patience, and peace (Rom 12:18; Jam 1:5)
- Pray for the object of one's bitterness (Romans 12:20)

The Root of BITTERNESS

HOW TO OVERCOME BITTERNESS!



Genesis 50:19–21 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for *am* I in the place of God?

²⁰ But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive. ²¹ Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.”

And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

The Root of BITTERNESS

HOW TO OVERCOME BITTERNESS!



Luke 23:34 (NKJV)

34 Then Jesus said,
“Father, forgive them,
for they do not know
what they do.” And they
divided His garments
and cast lots.

The Root of BITTERNESS

HOW TO OVERCOME BITTERNESS!



Bitterness is like drinking poison while hoping it destroys your enemy!

Seeking to do good — being kind — forgiving — & compassionate — is NOT ONLY a blessing to others, but also OURSELVES! —

Acts 20:35; Gal 6:7-9

WHEN YOU HARBOR BITTERNESS,
happiness
WILL DOCK ELSEWHERE.

- *Andy Rooney*

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The Deadly Root that Devours & Destroys

Charts by Don McClain

Preached April 7, 2019

West 65th Street church of Christ/ P.O. Box 190062 / Little Rock AR 72219 / 501-568-1062

Prepared using Keynote

Email – donmcclain@sbcglobal.net

Our Website: w65stchurchofchrist.com

Deuteronomy 29:14–22 (NKJV)

¹⁴ “I make this covenant and this oath, not with you alone, ¹⁵ but with *him* who stands here with us today before the Lord our God, as well as with *him* who *is* not here with us today ¹⁶ (for you know that we dwelt in the land of Egypt and that we came through the nations which you passed by, ¹⁷ and you saw their abominations and their idols which *were* among them—wood and stone and silver and gold);

Deuteronomy 29:14–22 (NKJV)

¹⁸ so that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the Lord our God, to go *and* serve the gods of these nations, and that there may not be among you a root bearing bitterness or wormwood; ¹⁹ and so it may not happen, when he hears the words of this curse, that he blesses himself in his heart, saying, ‘I shall have peace, even though I follow the dictates of my heart’—as though the drunkard could be included with the sober.

Deuteronomy 29:14–22 (NKJV)

²⁰ “The Lord would not spare him; for then the anger of the Lord and His jealousy would burn against that man, and every curse that is written in this book would settle on him, and the Lord would blot out his name from under heaven. ²¹ And the Lord would separate him from all the tribes of Israel for adversity, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this Book of the Law, ²² so that the coming generation of your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a far land, would say, when they see the plagues of that land and the sicknesses which the Lord has laid on it: