

Love or Bitterness

All adversities or challenges offer us a choice:

- a. Inner communication (visual/verbal) Committed to human agenda – adversity hinders agenda → anger/fear → surrender FHS → allow Old Man logic to control → resentment & bitterness.
- b. (visual/verbal) committed to spiritual agenda – adversity is opportunity to grow → stay Filled with the Holy Spirit → gratitude – optimism → forgiveness & love

Love

1Cor 13:5 - It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, **it keeps no record of wrongs (doesn't keep score)**

Keeping Score – **logizomai** PMI – to count, to add up, calculate, keep an account, credit to one's account (impute); think, reason, consider, conclude.

- A mathematical accounting of specific events that have occurred in a relationship
- A mathematical account of wrongs suffered by the sins of others – keeping score

Wrongs – **kakos** – wrong, evil, bad, foul, injury, harm, trouble

- Injuries suffered by the relationship failures of others – offenses

Love refuses to count – to add up the record of wrongs

- Love does not keep a count of failures – require a large ledger
- Love does not keep records to build a case to change others or justify anger
- Love erases the significance of the wrong and allows the person to start over

Love patiently accepts character flaws that cause ongoing sin offenses

- Knowing that the person will likely sin against you in the same way

1Cor 13:7 – keeps believing & hoping that the person will grow out of the flaw

Bitterness - keeps meticulous records

Col 3:19 – Husbands love your wives and don't be made bitter (PPImpv) toward them

- **Bitter** – **pikria; pikraino** – sharp, anger, resentment, harshness, hatred, exasperation, irritation, indignant, grieved; **consistently increasing resentment built up over time based on adding up the flaws & failures of another**
- **Note:** Love and bitterness are opposites in relationships
- **Pikraino** PPImpv – wife's flaws, shortcomings & failures - he is keeping score of everything she does that he doesn't like – adding it all up, building a case as to why she is wrong, why she must change or to justify his own sinful anger

Passive voice: he is allowing the specific events to influence his attitude toward his wife

Jam 3:14 – But since you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth.

- 1st Class condition – if and it is true – some believers were filled with bitter envy & selfish ambition – built up anger & jealousy because of competitive ambition;
- cp vs 13 – wise & understanding, good deeds done in humble wisdom

- stop boasting & lying contrary to the truth – competitive boasting and falsehood intended to discredit and destroy the competition

Heb 12:15 – fail to utilize grace → root of bitterness → many defiled

- reject God's purpose for adversity & suffering → bitter toward God
- Root – develop a false belief about God & adversity – time bomb
- Build up anger based on adding up all the adversities and losses

Love refuses to count or add up wrongs suffered but bitterness is a mathematician

Forgiveness - releases sinners from the debt incurred by their sins

- **Aphiemi** – to cancel a monetary debt owed to a creditor

Mt 18:23-34 – parable of the unmerciful servant – forgave his debt – cancelled the monetary debt owed instead of selling him into slavery

2Cor 2:5-8 – man disciplined by the church – forgive him – release him

1Jn 1:9 – God releases us from the debt owed for our sins – paid for on the cross

1Jn 2:12 – sins judicially forgiven permanently – Pf tense

- Love refuses to count the sins – Love erases the record of sins – forgives them
- Forgiveness diligently applied, avoids the build up/adding up to bitterness
- Forgiveness/erasing is intended to be utilized every single time you are wronged; seventy times seven

1. Intimate relationships are initially built on personal preference – conditional love
2. Conditional love is not sufficiently powerful to maintain intimate love
3. Relationships are allowed to continue growing through the use of Christian virtue.
4. Everyone wrongs & is wronged in ongoing relationships
5. Wrongs suffered must be absorbed, given to the Lord & erased as significant
6. Natural tendency is to add them up → build up anger & build a case to justify anger
7. Sins added up intensifies resentment → builds a boundary line in the sand → destruction of the relationship

Ephesians 4:32 And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.