

## SERMON-BASED STUDY: STUMP REMOVAL (BITTERNESS)

**Hebrews 12:1, 7, 11-15, ESV** – *Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,*

<sup>7</sup> *It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?*

<sup>11</sup> *For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

<sup>12</sup> *Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees,* <sup>13</sup> *and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.* <sup>14</sup> *Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.* <sup>15</sup> *See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled.*

### Notes:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

### QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

### ENGAGE WITH THE MESSAGE

- 1 This week, we were reminded that offenses can lead to bitterness. How does this happen? How can bitterness paralyze a person?

2 How does God use the hard stuff and hurts of life to train us? How can we “stunt” our own growth?

3 How can we look past the offense and the offender and look to God? Why is this difficult to do?

## DIGGING DEEPER

A **Acts 8:22-23, ESV** – <sup>22</sup> Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. <sup>23</sup> For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity.”

4 Looking at the passage above, what is the “gall of bitterness”? How does a person end up there?

5 How is bitterness ultimately a heart issue?

6 What does true repentance look like? Why is repentance necessary for a person who has bitterness in their heart?

B **Ephesians 4:31-32, ESV** – <sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

**Matthew 6:14-15, ESV** – <sup>14</sup> For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, <sup>15</sup> but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

7 How is bitterness the root of the things listed in Ephesians 4:31? Similarly, how is forgiveness the root of the things listed in Ephesians 4:32?

**8** According to Matthew 6:14-15, how does our forgiveness of others affect our relationship with God?

**9** Looking back at Hebrews 12:15, who is affected by a person's bitterness? How can believers "see to it" that no one falls into bitterness?

## TAKING IT HOME

Bitterness is a powerful enemy that can paralyze a person and keep us from being everything that God wants us to be. His desire for us is to get rid of bitterness and keep it out of our life. How are you doing with bitterness? Is there someone who gets you "worked up" just by hearing their name? What steps do you need to take this week to remove bitterness and put on forgiveness? Share with your group or accountability partner what God is showing you. Pray for one another as you strive to be people of forgiveness.

## PRAISES AND PRAYER REQUEST

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## FOR FURTHER STUDY

Romans 12:2

Colossians 3:8, 13

1 John 1:9