

THEME: SEVEN DEADLY PASSIONS – BITTERNESS

TOPIC: PEOPLE WHO WALKED IN BITTERNESS

TEXT: EPHESIANS 4:31-32; HEBREWS 12:14-15; JAMES 1:19-20; ROMANS 12:17-21; 1 JOHN 4:20; COLOSSIANS 3:13; ECCL. 7:9; MARK 11:25

INTRODUCTION

One of the most well-known stories of bitterness in the Bible is the archetypal tale of Cain and Abel. Cain becomes consumed by bitterness for his brother and God when he feels unjustly treated relative to his prosperous brother Abel. Cain damns God and kills his brother out of hatred and pity for himself. This classic story warns us of the sinful essence of bitterness and to conversely have humility while in despair. We must take ownership of our situations and relinquish what is out of our control to God.

PEOPLE WHO WALKED IN BITTERNESS

1. Cain – He was the first son of Adam, possibly the twin brother of Abel. He got it all wrong when God blessed the offering Abel gave. His reaction is at the root of many people's bitterness.

Once they cannot fathom why some people are blessed they become bitter and want to play God. They wish them dead or that some malady would befall them.

Bitter people cannot understand where certain men and women walk in favour, though they seem undeserving. Unknown to them that that is exactly why it is favour because favour is a blessing one does not merit.

A bitter man cannot understand why in your season of open doors things just seem to work for you. ***Genesis 4:3-6***

Bitterness made Cain's countenance to fall, made him angry because his brother's offering was accepted and favour upon his brother was clearly manifest.

2. The prodigal son's older brother – Luke 15:25-29

The prodigal's older brother is one of the most peculiar characters of the New Testament. He is not often referred to by people. However his story reveals to us a man with a bitter spirit who had no capacity for giving or receiving forgiveness.

Favour and blessing was too much to be given to his sibling in his opinion. His feeling was that his brother did not deserve the forgiveness and acceptance he received after being such a spend rift.

His older brother measured everyone by his own standard and since he only expected from his father a small goat, whoever had an ambition, vision, desire for blessing that is greater was met with extreme bitterness.

Bitter people do not know the price you paid yet they cannot stand the prize you got.

This older brother was in the house, he never left home. He reminds one of the people who have always been in the house of God and cannot understand why God blesses new converts, why God blesses the seed that fell by the way side and finally came back home.

In their opinion the man who backslid and finally came back home should be made to go to the bottomless pit of hell before he is finally accepted. They are so angry they stay away from where you live or near where you move.

The scriptures say he refused to enter when he heard the sound of music. Bitter people do not know how to rejoice with those who are rejoicing. ***Romans 12:15***

CONCLUSION

Time will not permit us to refer to a few more people who were bitter because they were turned down, rejected or their counsel shunned.

Ahithophel was a wise man, gifted by God. He was a Counsellor to King David, he was like the ear and eyes of the king ***2 Samuel 15:31***. When he, having made the mistake and turning to counsel Absalom, he could not stand his counsel being rejected. He hung himself.

How about Absalom himself? He also died hanging by his hair because his father did not play ball or do things the way he wanted.

These precious men allowed their bitterness to destroy them.