

NOTHING BETWEEN US

A Root of Bitterness

HEBREWS 12:14-15

"Make sure that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no root of bitterness springs up."

Paul commands: Let all bitterness, anger, and wrath, shouting, and slander be removed from you, along with all malice. The first word in Paul's list is bitterness. Usually, everything else starts there. Today, we'll focus on Hebrews 12:14-15, where the writer of Hebrews speaks to local congregations and urges them to be vigilant and watch together for any roots of bitterness that spring up. Today, we'll talk about how this is accomplished.

I. Peace Has to be Chased

A. Hebrews 12:14: _____ peace with everyone, and holiness—without it no one will see the Lord.
B. Paul writes: So then, let us pursue what promotes peace and what builds up one another.
C. Peter quotes the Psalm: Let him seek peace and pursue it, … (1 Peter 3:11)

II. Who We Pursue Peace With

A. Hebrews 12:14: Pursue peace _____, …
B. Hebrews 12:14: Pursue peace …, and _____ —without it no one will see the Lord.
   1. How we treat each other and how we stand with God are not separated.
   2. 1 John 4:20: If anyone says, "I love God," and yet hates his brother or sister, he is a liar. For the person who does not love his brother or sister whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.

III. Roots Grow in the Dark

A. Hebrews 12:15a: _____ that no one falls short of the grace of God …
   1. "Make sure" means to look over, to keep watch. It is given to all of us.
B. Falling behind what?
   1. Hebrews 12:15a: Make sure that no one falls short of _____ …
   2. Falls short means to lag behind, to come up lacking.
C. Now the phrase itself. No root of bitterness.
   1. Hebrews 12:15b: that no _____ springs up, causing trouble and defiling many.
   2. See Deuteronomy 29:18-19. In Moses' day, the root was a person — one man, one family, one clan whose heart had quietly turned away from God.
   3. Bitterness doesn't always grow out of a grievance against somebody else.
      a) Sometimes it grows out of grief.
      b) Ruth 1:20: "Don't call me Naomi. Call me Mara," she answered, "for the Almighty has made me very bitter.
      c) Even this type of bitterness must be dealt with:
         (1) Ephesians 4:32: Let all bitterness, … be _____ from you, …
         (2) You don't negotiate with a root in the sewer line. You get it out.

IV. Bitterness Never Stays Home

A. Hebrews 12:15: …that no root of bitterness springs up, _____ and defiling many
   1. Bitterness is not a private matter.
   2. A root that springs up doesn't stay in one heart. It defiles many.
B. How does that happen?

V. Looking to Jesus: Blood That Speaks a Better Work

A. Hebrews 12:3: For _____ who endured such hostility from sinners against himself, so that you won't grow weary and give up. If anybody in history had a right to a root of bitterness, it was Him.
B. 1 Peter 2:23: when he was insulted, he did not insult in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten but _____ himself to the one who judges justly. — You hand the case to the Judge —

VI. As We Close…

A. Look for the root in yourself. (Psalm 139:23-24)
B. Decide that you won't be anybody's soil.
C. Keep an eye on each other. Roots are patient. Grace is stronger.

Questions

1. Why doesn't peace happen by accident in a church? What does it look like to chase it with a specific person?
2. What would it look like for every member to keep watch for people falling behind grace? How do you do that without becoming a busybody?
3. Why is bitterness so easy to hide, even from us? What waters it?
4. How does one person's grievance spread to others? Describe the difference between being a friend to a hurting person and being soil for their bitterness.
5. How does knowing what Christ's blood says over you change what you're willing to keep holding against someone else? Is there a root you need to bring into the light this week?

Answers

The grace of God
Pursue
Removed
Consider him
Holiness
Make sure
Root of bitterness
With everyone
Causing trouble
Entrusted