

“The Root of Bitterness”



I want to tell you a story of pride and prejudice, righteousness and bitterness, loving and longing. It is the story of Missionary Joe Johnson, a Pentecostal Church of God preacher that has served his Heavenly Father preaching all the revelation that he knows as far away as Peru and the Arctic Circle. He believed it was his duty to bring the message of the Kingdom to all the world (Matthew 24:14) – that was until the morning of the Feast of Firstfruits 2004 – when a chaplain and a colonel appeared on Missionary Joe and Sister Jan Johnson's Georgia doorstep with the news – their baby boy Justin, the boy Joe had lead to the Savior and had taught how to fish and hunt, the soldier son who'd gone off to Iraq a month earlier to defend his country and bring peace to the Iraqi people, was suddenly dead at 22, killed by a roadside bomb planted in a Baghdad slum by a soldier of Islam – a terrorist.

"What were the odds, with thousands of people in Iraq, that somebody in my family would get killed?" the grieving father wondered outloud, "What were the odds...?"

The death of Justin, a 1st Cavalry Division machine gunner, stunned his parents with a shock that still breaks the heart of two grieving parents.

Today Missionary Joe is on a new mission as he mans the M-240 atop a Humvee as the desert chill sets in on a lonely stretch of highway in western Iraq, warily watching the sides of the road, an unlikely Army corporal at age 48, a Pentecostal missionary on a crusade against Islam, a father who came here for revenge. But something is wrong with Missionary Joe – something is stirring inside, "I shouldn't even have come here," he now says. And if he leaves Iraq with no blood on his hands, he says, that's fine, with him. He was called to spread the message of the Kingdom and he went to Iraq for all the wrong reasons.

Missionary Joe wasn't even there that day the tragic news arrived at his home in Rome, Georgia. That was something Sister Jan, his wife, had to endure all alone. Missionary Joe, the self-employed house-builder was in Fort Lewis, Washington was trying to qualify for a place in a Washington National Guard unit ticketed for Iraq. Normally, he built one house for the family budget and another to finance his missionary ministry. But now consumed with vengeance he had taken leave of his calling to go to war. With six years of long-ago Army and Navy service, Missionary Joe had joined the National Guard in 2003, wanting to serve his country again, this time in combat, and to go to Iraq while his son, Justin, was there.

Last April 11, a year and a day after his son was killed, Missionary Joe kissed his grieving wife goodbye and told his Iraq-bound Georgia National Guard unit, the 48th Infantry Brigade, he was ready to join them. They ended up at a dustblown base in Iraq's far west, pulling escort duty for fuel convoys on the bomb-pocked desert highways coming up from Jordan.

"I don't like that Joe's there," Sister Jan said, "But it's something he felt he had to do. People heal in different ways. This is how he heals after Justin's death."

Why did he do it? "It's a lot of things combined," the wiry, slow-talking Georgia preacher with a boyish, sunburned face, convinces himself, "One, a sense of duty. I was angry at the terrorists for 9/11 and the beheadings. Second, I'd only trained. I wanted combat." And then, he said, "there's some revenge involved. I'd be lying if I said there wasn't." "I don't really have love for Muslim people," Missionary Joe said. "I'm sure there are good Muslims. I try not to be racist." Although he hasn't read the Quran, or spoken with a Muslim, he has "heard" the Islamic book "teaches to kill Jews and infidels. And it's hard to love people who hate you." However, he qualified himself by saying he had learned to love the Iraqi children, and said he'd hoped "to see them grow up to know right and wrong."

Now the fatherly passion has cooled, and the over-aged corporal and out-of-place minister is left to face the cold realities of war on a lonely stretch of alien highway. Then it happened, on the first day of Chanukah, roadside bombs rocked his convoy one after another, and Missionary Joe thought this is it – my number is up! He thought what it would do to his wife and other son if he too were killed in action. Sister Jan had called the night before, she's not dealing well with depression and other health problems, but also she just got word their eldest soldier son, Josh, 26, might be sent to Iraq or Afghanistan. He realized, I don't want to be here anymore – I want to go home. Suddenly a speeding car passed his convoy and Missionary Joe failed to level his gun and open fire, which "I think anyone else," fearing car bombs, "would have done," he said. He had compromised his mission. It's OK; they weren't terrorists, just scared civilians trying to get out of the line of fire. "I really don't want to kill innocent people," he now says. "I don't want to live with that the rest of my life." Whatever it was, he said, "I got it out of my system." The bitterness is gone.

Missionary Joe is coming home soon; his battalion leaves Iraq in early May, 2006 just in time for Missionary Joe's own enlistment term to expire. "That's it," he said, no re-enlistment for him. What about revenge? "If I go home and didn't kill a terrorist, it's not going to ruin my life," he said. "Maybe I'd just as soon not. I don't know what it would do to my head."

When he gets home he's got one last thing to do, remove the silver bracelet he's worn on his right wrist throughout his deployment, bearing Justin's name and date of death. Then Missionary Joe's mission will be complete and he can once again be about the Father's business.

It's easy to love the lovable. It's easy for ministers to preach on love, goodness, decency, patience, longsuffering, and temperance. But I have lived long enough to see well meaning people do ugly things. I have seen congregations that loved one another for what ever reason split and divide. I have looked into the tear filled eyes of a servant of Yahweh as I pour anointing oil over their head and pray the prayer of ordination over them and they rise up humbled hugging you in divine appreciation, anxious to be spent for the Kingdom. Then some years later, after they become acrimonious, accusative, arrogant, bitter and spoiled leave the Fellowship they were called to. How does that happen?

I want to talk to you today about bitter roots. I wanted to be sure I understood the word "bitter" so I looked up the word for a full definition: "Having a peculiar, acrid, biting taste; causing pain or smart; piercing; painful; sharp; severe; causing, or fitted to cause, pain or distress to the mind; calamitous; poignant. **"It is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken Yahweh thy Elohim (Jeremiah 2:19),"** characterized by sharpness, severity, or cruelty; harsh; stern; virulent; as, *bitter* reproach. **"Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them (Colossians 3:19)"** mournful; sad; distressing; painful; pitiable. **"The Egyptians . . . made their lives bitter with hard bondage (Exodus 1:14)."** The synonyms for bitter are: *acrid; sharp; harsh; pungent; stinging; cutting; severe; acrimonious.*

Now our Messiah once said to an early congregation in our Movement in Laodicea, **"I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. (Revelation 3:15, 16)"** Our Messiah is using the analogy of someone spitting something repulsive out of their mouth because it is unpalatable and disgusting. Not at all what they had hoped for when they raised the cup to their lips.

The Scriptures say: **"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. (Matthew 5:13)"**

"For we are unto Yahweh a sweet savour of Messiah, in them that are saved... (2 Corinthians 2:15)"

I wonder, what is it like to Yahweh when we become so absolutely bitter; so arrogant and acrimonious; so prone to point out the difficulties of other people and so absolutely unwilling to accept any degree of responsibility that all we can do is point away from ourselves? What does Yahweh think about that?

"Rebbe YahShua said to his Talmidim (disciples): "It is impossible that no offenses should come... (Luke 17:1)" This is true. I found that out in school. I found that out in Churches. I found that out in Synagogues. I found that out in various boards, committees and groups. I found that is true amongst ministers and Rabbis. I found that out in Corporations. I found that is true in any group of people. People are offensive.

"It is impossible that no offenses should come..." People are going to have their feelings hurt. People are going to hurt one another. People are going to bicker. People are going to be offended.

"...but woe to him through whom they do come! (Luke 17:1)" (warning the perpetrator, the one causing the offense) **"It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he**

were thrown into the sea... (Luke 17:2)” Have you ever seen a millstone? They are huge. If you tie that around someone’s neck and throw him overboard he’s going to plunge like a rock straight to the bottom. He’s going to drown. **“...than that he should offend one of these little ones. (Luke 17:2)”** Talking here about Yahweh’s children.

What do new people that come into our congregation for the first time see? I can tell you what I see. I see loving people. I see a family that will do anything for one another. I see love. But if that is not conveyed to people that come in here, we might as well have thugs with baseball bats at the door driving people away – the result is the same.

In Luke 17:1,2 our Messiah is telling us two important things: from time to time people are going to get offended; but woe to them that offend His people.

He goes on to say: **“Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him... (Luke 17:3)”** That is the hardest thing for me to do but I’ve got to learn to obey my Savior in everything. In this regard I am extremely weak. **“...and if he repents, forgive him. (Luke 17:3)”** That is a very big “if.” It has been my experience, that when someone has done something pretty bad, and they really are in the wrong and you do rebuke them in love and humility, it is very rare that they really repent. Usually they just regroup to attack another day and you’ve lost a friend. And usually you never gain them back.

“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass (those in collision with the Word of Yahweh), you who are spiritual (close to Yahweh, those that are introspective, very aware of your own weakness and shortcomings and willing to acknowledge them) restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. (Galatians 6:1)”

There comes a time in a relationship that two people may find themselves on a collision course. They can either collide or someone can stop and try to avoid the collision. It takes someone saying, “How can I you and I solve this problem? I am here to help us solve this problem together. **“...restore such a one...”** remember, that is our goal.

Now I have seen another attitude – the legalistic attitude – that has no place in our Movement. The legalistic attitude says if someone commits a sin and I can see that it is a sin, I, who am very tough on myself, and have a greater sense of self control, I control my appetites, so, since I will not allow myself do that which is sinful I will not allow anyone else get away with it. Weakness makes me furious and I will find a way to make the sinner pay!

There are many errors impregnated into the legalistic attitude but the core error is that they honestly believe if they do not get involved, the sinner will get away with sinning.

What is Yahweh’s approach to the Believer caught in sin? It is the attitude of the parent that cannot bear the thought of their child hurting itself. The parent would rather punish the child than to allow that child to hurt itself. **“For whom Yahweh loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives (Proverbs 3:11, 12). (Hebrews 12:6)”** What is our Heavenly Father’s motive? His motive is love, protection, and preservation. It is not vindictive, legalistic, or repressive.

“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the Torah of Messiah. For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing (oooooh, that is tough language), he deceives himself (guilty of self worship). But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load. (Galatians 6:2-5)”

Wait a minute, didn’t we just receive the commandment to **“Bear one another’s burdens”**? Now it says, **“each one shall bear his own load.”** Isn’t this double speak – a contradiction? What this is saying, is that we are going to bear our own burden what is supernatural is when we care enough to get under the other person’s burden and lift it up together. At that moment something happens – you are both bearing both burdens. What our Heavenly Father has shown me is that as leaders we must sow more compassion and less legalism! When roots of bitterness seem to take deep root in someone’s heart the one thing they seem to be able to do so easily is to refuse the other person.

What a person that refuses to identify with those they have been called to minister to can do is throw a lot of smoke in the air to deflect the real issue. When you’re discussing an issue and the issue is clearly cut out. It has parameters and the issue is clearly obvious. All of the sudden as a defensive mechanism they will pick some idea or happenstance way out in left field and say, “Yes, but you did thus and such and you’re wrong because of this!” They do this because they are cornered, the issue is clear and they are wrong but instead of saying “You’re right,” they pull out of their bag of tricks the old smoke screen. They would rather accuse, point a finger and plant a root of bitterness.

“...no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. (James 3:8)”

All my life I have heard the school yard yarn: “Sticks and stones can break my bones but words can never harm me!” That is utterly not true. Hitler could never have killed 6 million Jews if he had not painted a villainous word picture first. Words can harm; words can cut, and words can hurt; words can destroy marriages; words can cause suicides; words can cause deep psychosis; and words can destroy a life.

“With it we bless our Elohim and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of Elohim. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring send forth fresh *water* and bitter from the same opening? Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh. Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts (no matter how good you think you have kept it concealed), do not boast and lie against the truth (Because at that moment you are absolutely wrong; completely contrary to Messiah, contrary to Torah, contrary to our Faith, and contrary to Yahweh). This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy (Fruit of the Spirit). Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. (James 3:9-18)”

What is the root of bitterness? Believe it or not, the root of bitterness cannot grow in a person that is spiritual. For Messiah cannot co-exist with HaSatan. The Holy Spirit cannot co-exist with a legalistic attitude. The Spiritual Life is not the kind of soil that a root of bitterness can grow in. If there is bitterness in your heart it is evidence of a lack of the Holy Spirit. Bitterness and holiness are mutually exclusive – they cannot co-exist.

The deeper the root of bitterness – you did this; you didn’t do that; you wouldn’t listen; you paid no attention; whatever it is – the less of Yahweh’s Holy Spirit is in them. The more they accuse the more guilty they are of the very offense they’ve raised. The very guilty will take that very guilt and point a finger and get louder about a particular kind of sin or problem than any other offense in order to conceal and confuse the issue in the ignorant assumption that by so doing the individual they are accusing won’t realize who has the greater measure of guilt.

About now, you’re wondering to whom I am talking to. Rather than me trying to accuse you lets go to the Scriptural dipstick to check your level

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love (ahavah – sacrificial love), I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have *the gift of prophecy* (you wouldn’t believe how much stuff I get on prophecy – people are more impressed with the *gift of* prophecy than any other Scriptural topic I know), and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains (I can’t do that. I fully admit here today that I do not have that kind of faith. Unfortunately, there are other preacher that will lie and try to extort money from you making believe they have that kind of faith. But when someone comes to me seeking a miracle I beseech the Heavenly Father the same way they do – in hope. And I’m honest with them because we’re talking about matters of life and death. But even if I did have that kind of faith and did not have love I am nothing!), but have not love, I am nothing (It doesn’t matter about anything else if I am bitter and do not have love I am nothing!). And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor* (giving to all kind of charities), and though I give my body to be burned (willing to be a martyr), but have not love, it profits me nothing.

Love suffers long (sometime we do and some time we don’t) and is kind; love does not envy (someone’s possessions or position); love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked (not thin skinned), thinks no evil (aha! suspicion confirmed); does not rejoice in iniquity (caught you – now I’m happy!), but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails. But whether *there are* prophecies, they will fail; whether *there are* tongues, they will cease; whether *there is* knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come (Kingdom manifested), then that which is in part will be done away.

When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

And now abide faith (Book of James), **hope** (1 & 2 Peter), **love** (1,2 & 3 John), **these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13)**”

OK, I'm bitter what can I do? **“Repent, and let every one of you be immersed in the authority of Messiah YahShua for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)”** What is the Holy Spirit? He is the agent of love. **“...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:22, 23)”** **“Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.”** Yahweh shed forth this.

“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of Yahweh! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of Yahweh, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

Everyone who sins breaks the Torah; in fact, sin is lawlessness. But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.

Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of Yahweh appeared was to destroy the devil's work. No one who is born of Yahweh will continue to sin, because Yahweh's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of Yahweh. This is how we know who the children of Yahweh are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of Yahweh; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.

This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. Do not be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.

This is how we know what love is: Messiah YahShua laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of Yahweh be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence whenever our hearts condemn us. For Yahweh is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before Yahweh and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him. And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Messiah YahShua, and to love one another as he commanded us. Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us. (1 John 3)” And the Spirit is Yahweh's very character. The channel by which the Spirit flows is the Torah.

“Correct me, Yahweh, but only with justice (fairness, equity and discretion) **— not in your anger, lest you reduce me to nothing. (Jeremiah 10:24)”** Are you listening to Jeremiah HaNavi (the Prophet)? He is asking for correction.

King David asked for correction after his murderous sexual sin with BathSheba: **“Have mercy on me, O Elohim, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.**

For I know (acknowledge) **my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.** (Why was David a man after Yahweh's heart? Because he was a repentant. He repented and did not accuse when he was shown he was wrong.) **Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.**

Surely in iniquity I was born, and in an atmosphere of sin doth my mother conceive me. Surely truth you have desired in the inward parts, and in the hidden part Wisdom you caused me to know.

Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O Elohim, and renew a right spirit (as opposed to a wrong, murderous, perverted, acrimonious spirit) **within me.**

Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation (Are you happy to be here? Do you realize the preciousness of being in covenant with Yahweh through His only begotten Son? Do you know what it means to stand thankful before Yahweh's Throne?) **and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.**

Then (when I am no longer impeded by self-justification and sin but have repented and been restored, then I can be productive for the Kingdom.) **I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you. Save me from bloodguilt, O Elohim, the Elohim who saves me, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness. O Yahweh, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of Elohim are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O Elohim, you will not despise. In your good pleasure make Zion prosper; build up the walls of Jerusalem.**

Then there will be righteous sacrifices, whole burnt offerings to delight you; then bulls will be offered on your altar. (Psalm 51)"

When I was in Israel I saw a millstone – they are hugged – some weighing 500 lbs. I think it would do us all good to see an ancient millstone and realize how important Yahweh takes his people. He does not want us to hurt, hinder, turn away, thwart, frustrate, confuse, turn off, cause to become bitter, any little one seeking only the same joy of salvation you are. All most people want is a spiritual home to worship in – a place to belong.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on YahShua, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the gallows, despising its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of Yahweh. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men (and He was perfect.), so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. (Hebrews 12;1-3)"

I wish we could imagine ourselves at Gilgullet (Golgotha). The clouds are rolling in. The thunder is rolling. The day is darker than you can imagine both in the physical and in the spiritual. There you are with your legal pad looking on the person hanging on that tree. You're angry and you begin to rail off all the instances and persons that have wronged you. You get closer to the tree and with fury you cry out, "Are you listening to me!" And splat, right on your legal pad is a drop of holy blood. In fact for every grievance on that pad – splat another drop of blood. Just remember, no matter what you think you suffered, He suffered it all for you.

Every one of us, including your Rabbi, is seriously flawed. We are not perfect, we are not righteous and we are not holy except in part – that part of the Holy Spirit we trying to hold on to. **"So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Messiah in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Messiah, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from Yahweh, who reconciled us to himself through Messiah and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that Yahweh was reconciling the world to himself in Messiah, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Messiah's ambassadors, as though Yahweh were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Messiah's behalf: Be reconciled to Yahweh. Yahweh made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of Yahweh. (2 Corinthians 5:16-21)"**

What kind of little child do you think Yahweh wants to see born into his family? Wait a minute – Who and what is Yahweh? What is He like? Is He good, kind, righteous, holy, patient, longsuffering, merciful, and is He forgiving? Do you think He wants a bitter, angry, easily provoked, self-righteous, accusative, acrimonious, snot-nosed little brat? I can tell you what He wants. He wants a child that is full of **"love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."**

"In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: "My son, do not make light of Yahweh's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because Yahweh disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son. (Proverbs 3:11,12)" Endure hardship as discipline; Yahweh is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? (Hebrews 12:4-7)"

To avoid any root of bitterness we must live a life in communion with our Heavenly Father. You cannot walk hand in hand with our Heavenly Father and still be bitter.

"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak. (Matthew 26:41)"

"...love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven...(Matthew 6:44,45)"

You cannot do this and be bitter. There is a sure fire formula to stop bitterness: **rejoice in the truth** and **bear all things** from those you love, **believe** the best of those you love, **hope** for the best for those you love, **endures all things** from those you love. And remember, **Love** never stops loving. If it was ever love, it's still love.

