



# THE HEALING PLACE

God's Healing from Bitterness

Matthew C. Stahl, Th.D., Ph.D.

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BITTERNESS***

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**By**

**MATTHEW C. STAHL, Th.D., Ph.D.**

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Any names given of people used for illustration have been changed as to provide anonymity.

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All Scripture quotes are from the King James Bible except those verses compared and then the source is identified.

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## DEDICATION

TO MY LOVING WIFE, ANGIE, AND FIVE CHILDREN, HANNAH, JOSHUA, EMMA, LUKE, AND JUDE, WHO LABORED WITH ME IN MINISTRY, WEATHERING MANY STORMS TOGETHER.

FURTHERMORE, WITHOUT FAIL, THIS WORK IS DEDICATED TO MY PRECIOUS LORD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST.

### Acknowledgements

*“And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.” Ecclesiastes 4:12*

Angie has been a tremendous blessing, encouraging me to learn all that I can about pastoral counseling. In addition, she has been an excellent example of living the Word of God through all of Satan's attacks in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

My children, being brought along into a pastor's life with me, are also an excellent motivator for me to pursue and master this course so that we can completely understand our enemy's attacks, continue serving the Savior, and be able to help others, also.

## **FOREWORD**

**"The Healing Place  
God's Healing for Bitterness,"**

Dr. Matthew Stahl has real life experience with battles of bitterness. A man who walks daily with the Lord as his guide through the traps that Satan attempts to lay each day.

Bitterness is a part of each of our lives and can become the means in which we find no relief. I am pleased to see a help offered with a real life perspective.

Dr. Stahl has assembled a resource that will enable and remind you about the real enemy and why we are in this struggle; and most importantly using the Bible, reveals the path to victory.

Dr. Rick Tuttle PhD.  
Pastor of Bills Lake Baptist Church, Newaygo, Mi.,  
Dean of Liberty Baptist Bible College and Seminary.  
August 2025

# **PREFACE**

## **THE HEALING PLACE**

### **GOD'S HEALING FOR BITTERNESS**

***Thesis:*** As spiritual attacks go, bitterness is a silent killer to which we seek to help the reader know how to identify its signs, the doors that open us up to it, the dangers of it, and God's cure for and protection from it, for bitterness consistently destroys the life of the one who is in bondage as well as wreaking havoc upon others. God has provided every one of his children the Healing Place from Bitterness.

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. A place which we give to our adversary, and he doesn't relinquish
- B. Know of and find God's healing place, and take back that which is ours
- C. Instruction from the Bible and various authors on the subject
- D. Although not an exhaustive work, much help is here available for those in bitterness
- E. How we know we are bitter, how it came to be and how to find God's healing place

#### **II. BODY**

- A. What is bitterness?
  - 1. Sharp, painful, biting.
  - 2. The bitter root.
- B. Doors that open us up to bitterness.
  - 1. Doors that we open

- 2. Doors that others open for us
- C. The dangers of bitterness.
  - 1. Unknown dangers lurking
  - 2. Destructive behavior evidenced
- D. Deliverance from bitterness.
  - 1. The grace of God
  - 2. Forgiveness the golden rule
- E. Protection from bitterness.
  - 1. Diligent vigilance
  - 2. The proper keeping of ourselves

### III. CONCLUSION

The healing place of God's divine grace from the destructive power of bitterness in our lives is a remarkable journey that does set believers free from its subtleties, doors that open our hearts to it, and its never-ending deadly dangers. Indeed, knowledge is power, and the wisdom of God's deliverance from bitterness and even future protection from it is ours to have and to hold fast to, no longer being a victim but a victor in Christ

Jesus, who has made us free indeed!



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## INTRODUCTION

The late preacher Warren Wiersbe said,

"If the believer cultivates in his life any known sin, he is allowing Satan to get a foothold, a beachhead in his life. Satan will then use this opportunity to invade and take over other areas. So, Paul warns in Ephesians 4:27, *"Neither give place to the devil."* The word *"place"* simply means a place, such as a city or a building. Nevertheless, it carries the idea of a foothold or opportunity, a chance to operate."<sup>1</sup>

"The act of giving or allowing Satan to take any amount of control in our life is referred to as giving ground."<sup>2</sup>

The word "Place" is a specific spot or location, and in the context of the Scripture, God is speaking of ground where one has legal jurisdiction to possess or a license to use. A place that Satan has successfully taken from many Christians is the place of forgiveness, replacing it with the root of bitterness and effectively ruining not just the one who is embittered but so many other people as well.

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Among spiritual attacks, bitterness is one of the most dangerous—because it often works in silence. Our goal is to help readers recognize its signs, understand the doors that open us to it, grasp the damage it causes, and discover God’s cure and protection. Bitterness not only enslaves and destroys the one who carries it, but it also spreads devastation to those around them. Yet, God has provided every one of His children with a place of healing and freedom from bitterness.

Matthew C. Stahl, Th.D., Ph.D.  
August 2025

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **WHAT IS BITTERNESS?**

Anger, the symptom that is quickly passed over, especially in our current culture, is a tell-tale sign of some bitterness in our soul. Anger is an emotion that everyone does express. The Bible even says that God has this emotion, and we are created in his image. The Bible tells the Christian,

*"Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:"* Ephesians 4:26.

We will become angered over many things, some justified and others unjustified, and God's Word and Spirit will direct and properly help us grow in the knowledge of Christ. When injustices happen, there should be anger over that act, yet there must be temperance, or "vigilante justice" can easily break forth into greater evils.

The Wild West's vigilante justice is a good illustration. When someone was apprehended for an actual or perceived wrongdoing, an angry mob would form, demanding instant justice. Usually, there was one voice of reason in town attempting to get the mob to back down and let the process of law proceed. Sometimes this worked, and other times it did not, especially when solid passions and deep hurt have been inflicted, such as the murder of a family member.

In our day, these same feelings and afflictions abound, coming at us in various forms,

yet causing the same degree of pain and anger. Even when justice is served, it is common and natural in our old nature to not forgive those who have wronged us or caused us great pain.

### **Bondage**

The path to bondage has begun, however, when we will choose not to forgive, and we begin to be ruled by another spirit, the spirit of anger. However, anger is not a stand-alone issue but is an offshoot of a sinister root. When someone is ruled by an angry spirit, where one is given over to anger or has a "short fuse," this is an evident token of some deep-seated pain or resentment. Anger breeds bitterness. *Bitterness is defined as, "Keen sorrow; painful affliction; vexation; deep distress of mind."*<sup>3</sup>

### **Bitter - Sharp, Painful, Smiting.**

Painful Experiences in our lives were once referred to as "Bitter," as "that is a bitter pill to swallow." So it is recorded in the book of First Samuel, chapter one, verse ten, "And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore." This verse tells of Hannah, the barren wife of Elkanah, who also had another wife who did bear him children and who cruelly derided Hannah daily. In that day and culture, if a woman could not bear a son for her husband, it was the greatest shame she could face. For clarity, Elkanah having two wives is owing to a custom in that era. If the

man's wife was barren, a "surrogate" wife was added to the family to have children in his name, as was the case with Abraham and Sarah, which was not of God but culture. This cultural norm brought consequences that never would have befallen each family had they waited upon the Lord or accepted the less-than-desirable results as his sovereign will. So the Bible calls Elkanah's second wife Hannah's adversary in verse six, "And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret because the LORD had shut up her womb."

While Hannah was praying silently, the priest, Eli, had observed her distressed and unusual state as Scripture says that he saw her lips moving but heard no voice. Eli even accused her of being drunk! Nevertheless, in kindness, she replied,

*"No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto." 1 Samuel 1:15.*

### **Bitter Root - "The Resurrection Flower."**

There is a small perennial herb called "Bitterroot," whose genus and the species name are *Lewisia* and *rediviva* and is native to the Western United States. Its specific epithet *rediviva* ("revived, reborn") refers to its ability to