**The Big Idea!**

**As a follower of Jesus, I must overcome bitterness by choosing forgiveness and acting in love, even towards those people who have wronged me.**

*Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.  If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.  Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”  To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.”* – **Romans 12:17-20 (ESV)**

# **Steps to Breaking the Bondage of Bitterness:**

1. **Recognize the Root of Bitterness**

*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*. – **Hebrews 12:15 (ESV)**

## **Common reasons for bitterness:**

**- Unforgiveness:**

**- Disappointment:**

**- Betrayal:**

**- Trauma:**

**- Comparison:**

**- Pride:**

1. **Reframe Our Perspective**

*…we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.* – **Romans 8:28 (NASB)**

## **Practical steps to reframe our perspective on life.**

**- Choose to forgive:**

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

**- Refocus on God's love:**

*So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him*. – **1 John 4:16 (ESV)**

**- Practice gratitude:**

*Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you*. – **1 Thessalonians 5:18 (ESV)**

**- Replace negative thoughts with positive ones:**

*Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things*. – **Philippians 4:8 (ESV)**

**- Seek support from others:**

*Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil.  For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!* – **Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 (ESV)**

1. **Replace Bitterness with Blessing**

*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good*. – **Romans 12:21 (ESV)**

## **Ways you can bless people…**

**- Choose to serve others:**

*And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’* – **Matthew 25:40 (ESV)**

**- Practice empathy:**

*Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ*. – **Galatians 6:2 (ESV)**

**Questions about today’s message or about salvation? Contact Pastor Mike at Pastor@RedemptionRock.net or on his cell phone at 774-209-0182.**

Join us again next Sunday as we continue this sermon series called “**Breaking the Chains!**” with the next message called “**The Bondage of Anger!**”