

Sowing and Reaping

Words have power to do good or evil, to bless or to curse. We can do this both to others and to ourselves. These words are often spoken flippantly, or in jest, in sarcasm, or as childhood banter, but it is important to understand that even this can cause lasting bondage.

Leviticus 5:4 Proverbs 12:18 Proverbs 18:21 2 Corinthians 9:6 James 3:1-12

Bitter Roots and Inner Vows

Bitter roots are judgements or expectancies that we live into which are based on patterns of deep wounding, which are allowed to cyclically continue without being cut off and healed. They can be directed towards a collective gender or people group, family roles, authority figures, or even yourself. Statements like “all men are _____,” “no one likes me,” “authorities can’t be trusted,” or “this always happens” can fuel living into these cycles in our lives, if forgiveness and healing are not introduced.

Inner vows are a type of stronghold we put up, promising to protect our hearts from being hurt, and are commonly a response to a bitter root pattern in our lives. Inner vows can also lead to a new bitter root stronghold being erected. They take the form of internal promises to protect ourselves, such as “I will never” (...be like my mother, appear weak, cry, trust certain people, etc) or “I will always” (... be perfect, be strong, be in control, etc).

The fruit of a bitter root or inner vow will often manifest as

- Unexplained anxiety, depression, or low self-esteem
- Patterns that we inexplicably cannot change
- Being overly sensitive, passive, fearful, numb, or vulnerable
- Emotional actions being harder than they should be
- Certain situations/people having more power over us than they logically should

It is extremely common for them to have origins in childhood pain.

Inner vows are a way of becoming self-reliant apart from God, and shutting down the needs and emotions that he has given us. When praying for healing of inner vows and bitter roots, we ask God to cut them off, and then heal the damage at their source (often a traumatic memory). This sets us free to live in his identity and purpose for us. This healing process is a time to emphasize words of truth regarding who we are in God’s image. Forgiveness for those who have hurt us, causing these roots, is usually an important part of this process, too.

Hebrews 12:15 – let no bitter root grow up and cause trouble

Proverbs 4:23 – we are guard our hearts by God’s strength, and not out own!

Curses

Speaking words over another person also has the power to direct or bind elements of their life. Often this has a similar cause as an inner vow, such as a word said in anger, in jest, or flippantly in a moment (“You just don’t get it, and you never will! “You can’t do anything right!”). These words have been subconsciously accepted and formed a bitter root expectancy trapping the person in a pattern. Like inner vows, these curses also often have roots in childhood, commonly having been spoken non-maliciously by a parent or other authority figure.

Sometimes a curse can also be from a person deliberately releasing the enemy’s spiritual power to interfere with another person’s relationship with God, or be a destructive force in their life. This may be in the form of a spoken word, or an object can be empowered to intentionally interfere with the person who possesses or uses it. Such a curse may be based in the occult, or in the beliefs of another spiritual tradition, with symbols or objects passively holding elements of power.

In either case, curses can disrupt a person’s emotions, physical health, and/or relationship with God. Healing from a curse is similar to that of an inner vow. We ask God to break the curse and remove any root expectation or judgement that may exist, replacing it with his truth. Personal repentance may be appropriate if the curse has been actively accepted in any way. Forgiveness of anyone who may have intentionally placed a curse is often an important element of the healing process as well.

Blessings

The Bible is full of God blessing his people, as well as people imparting God’s blessing on others. We are still empowered to do that today. Just as words have the power to tear down, we can also build each other up using words. Just as a person can live into a negative root expectation, we can bless them, establishing positive patterns and expectations for them to live into instead. Children are often blessed to grow up and flourish in Godly ways. Places can be blessed and dedicated for God’s use, for God’s deliberate protection, or for those in the place to hold God’s blessing. Family lines may carry a generational blessing or gift.

Genesis 12:1-3 – God’s original blessing to Abraham and his family

Numbers 6:22-27 – God’s instructions on how to speak blessing over Israel

Matthew 5:1-12 – The Beatitudes – God’s blessings on his people

Mark 10:16 – Jesus blesses the children

1 Corinthians 15:58 – Paul’s words of blessing for strength to the church at Corinth

We are especially called to bless those who curse us, or who wish ill against us.

Luke 6:27-31 Romans 12:14 1 Corinthians 4:11-13