

Study Notes
The Shack: iForgive
Pastor John Bishop, Living Hope Church
Vancouver, WA

Bitterness will affect you sometimes without you realizing it.

You begin to erect walls of separation between you and the person/people who have inflicted pain on you.

Pikrea is a plant; **bitterness is a plant that produces poisonous and toxic fruit.**

God wants you to be free!

The only thing that can be offered to you is the cross of Jesus Christ; He came for you, He *died* for you, He came to take religion out of the picture, He came to *redeem* what was stolen and what was lost, to *restore* your heart.

When someone walks in who has inflicted pain on you, what does it feel like? What emotions come out? How do you respond?

Faith is about unlearning some things you've picked up, habits and rules you've lived your life by, expectations that you have with people around you based on how you grew up or what you missed.

Ask God to open your heart, go deep with Him. Give Him permission to speak into what's there so He can do stuff in you that **ONLY GOD** can do.

How do you "get rid of all bitterness"?

It is when someone walks in that has inflicted pain on you that it will illicit what's already inside you. Sometimes the poison goes so deep you don't even know it's there. You nurse the pain, you learn to live with the pain, you start to almost like the bitterness, and the bitterness becomes your friend.

You cannot forget pain inflicted. **It is NOT a Biblical concept to forget the pain.**

We must REMEMBER more than we forget. We must remember that it was at the cross that blood was shed to forgive our sins; we owe a debt far bigger than any debt anyone owes us.

Ephesians 4:31 *Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander (the poisonous fruit of bitterness) as well as all types of malicious behavior (quit plotting how to get even, quit figuring out how to pay someone back, quit hoping something negative will happen, quit being happy when something bad does happen to them).*

"Get rid of" = completely rid yourself of these things: rage, anger, harsh words

Have you said any harsh words lately? How's the anger level?

You don't know the bitterness inside you until you see the fruit that comes from it. The ones you love the most are generally the ones that will see the fruit the fastest.

Instead of toxic fruit, let's have fruit that will change lives.

Ephesians 4:32 *Instead, be kind to each other (those who have hurt us), tenderhearted (having a heart sweetly broken by God), **forgiving** one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.*

What is forgiveness?

Forgiving is not forgetting; forgiving is not minimizing the pain; forgetting is not about being good with the pain.

Don't over-Christianize things

BE REAL

When you have pain inflicted on you, it hurts. When you don't handle pain the right way, it comes out ugly.

What does it mean to authentically forgive someone that's hurt you?

When you take the pain to the cross; when you forgive others the way God has forgiven you, He will use your pain as a platform to do the greatest things in your life.

Forgiving is giving up the right to get even. Forgiving is to stop putting the person who hurt you in prison. Forgiving is cancelling the debt.

1. iForgive - Identify who hurt you
 - Write down WHO inflicted the pain on you.
 - Write down their NAME. Open up the wound.

This is about you; it's about releasing the person that hurt you and letting God have the pain. Be kind, tenderhearted, forgive just as Christ forgave you.

2. iForgive - Inventory what they **stole** from you, how they hurt you

Forgiveness isn't an event, it's a process; forgiveness is a journey.

If you are a follower of Christ you lost your excuse to not forgive someone at the cross.

If you don't forgive it's saying that the blood of Christ isn't enough for you and that you don't trust God.

There's only **ONE WAY** to Heaven - through faith in the completed work of Jesus Christ. He died on the cross. He rose from the grave. He never committed a sin. When you confess and believe in your heart that He is God you are saved.

We have all accumulated moral debt and need forgiveness

You have to come to the place to let it go and stop trying to strangle people for the debt they owe you.

Going deep is trusting God with the pain that's been inflicted in your life. It's saying that you can't make it to heaven on your own. It's about *trust*, it's about *surrender*. It's about giving financially to Him. It's about being covered in the dust of your rabbi, Jesus Christ.

Forgiving isn't minimizing the pain or saying it doesn't matter.

To forgive is to *release*, to trust God with the people that have hurt you and to stop playing God. You inventory the pain, *HOW* did they hurt you.

The rooms of the shack are chambers of your heart that have been marked by pain.

When you let the walls of bitterness come down, you let the God that allowed it in. When you do that, joy becomes restored to your heart and the weariness you feel right now will go away.

Who has hurt you? How have they hurt you?

3. iForgive - Invite God into the process
 - You won't understand the pain.

Invite God in. This will release healing like nothing else.

Be okay to not be okay. You don't forgive because you're strong. Forgiveness is the most unnatural thing you will ever do.

Your life will either be marked as supernatural because of God or superficial because you are trying to play God.

iForgive

IDENTIFY ... INVENTORY ... INVITE

You are consumed by what consumes you.

Forgiveness is a journey, not an event.

- You have to invite God into the shack, He stands with you there.
- You have to come to the place of surrender and let God take the pain.

Do you trust God enough to believe that His way works?

LET THE PAIN GO!

You won't know the beauty God can bring out of the pain until you surrender it to Him.

The only thing that makes a difference in your heart or changes your life is the cross of Jesus Christ

If you keep looking for the next thing, you will miss the cross.

What if the worst thing ends up being the best thing?

There are moments in your heart and in your life that you will feel and sense the Spirit of God touching you.

NOW is the time to respond to the God that put breath in your body

God was right there with you during the pain, He allowed it

At the cross we can release the pain

- The shack represents the cross; you take the pain to the shack and give it back to God there
- It's at this point that you trust because you have surrendered and allow yourself to be truly and sweetly broken by God

Have you surrendered your life to Jesus Christ?

Can you take the pain and invite God in and let it go?

Destinies are created in the moments when you allow God in

The cross is the place where you can let go of what's been holding on to you, it's the place where **freedom begins**.

Bring the pain in your soul to the shack, the place that represents where we get stuck.

Let God heal and restore what's been stolen and broken.

Trust Him and let go; invite God into a process where anger will be replaced with joy, where pain will begin to be replaced with peace **and the peace of God will begin to change your life**.

Even when you walk through fire, you will not be burned up, when you walk through waters that are too deep, you will not drown – see *Isaiah 43:2*

Let God be your portion and let the cross be enough.

LET IT GO.