

If definite faults have been discovered through this review, there should be no hesitation in doing what needs to be done to put the relationship that has been harmed back on a solid basis. The check list could be used further as a reminder of those things that should be avoided in the future.

#### Renewing the resentful (bitter) heart

It has been seen that bitterness often results when there is interference with a person's personal ambition or when expectations are unrealized. Prevention must deal with this selfish ambition if it is to be effective.

In Eph. 4:31 the believer is instructed to "get rid of all bitterness. . ." The verb here is a first aorist passive imperative of *αἰσώ* which means "to bear away."<sup>13</sup> Thus it is a command to rid oneself of bitterness. It is an act of the will wherein a believer takes decisive action to purge himself of all grudges, bitter feelings, or schemes of revenge against other people. This is not done in the strength of the flesh, but it is a response to the Word of God. It is grace that enables a person to obey.

To facilitate such action it is helpful to make a list of all those people that are the object of bitterness. With their names, list the reason why they are resented or what they have done that has occasioned the resentment. Take each case and pray that God would give

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<sup>13</sup>J. H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1901), p. 16.