

Common Signs of Bitterness

Ask yourself if you are manifesting any of these signs

Rate yourself on a scale of 1-5 (one being the lowest score and 5 being the best)

Make note of the ones you scored the lowest on and write down specific ways you can improve in that area. Then come together with your spouse and ask them to rate you in each area. (The scores may not be the same!) Make changing a matter of specific prayer and ask your spouse to hold you accountable.

1. Gossip and Slander

In the process of complaining, you gossip about your spouse and slander them, thereby defiling others. You have either nothing or very little that is good to say about them.

"See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled..." Hebrews 12:15-17

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2. Ungrateful and Complaining

You aren't grateful for your spouse. You murmur to yourself and complain to others about them.

"Do all things without grumbling or disputing..." Philippians 2:14

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3. Judges Motives

Whatever they do is suspect in your eyes. Even if they do something nice, you think their motive must be off. For example, "They only did that to look good to their parents." "I know it seemed like a nice gesture, but they didn't really mean it."

"Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to them from God." I Cor. 4:5

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4. Self-Centered

You spend a lot of time thinking about yourself. You are very self-absorbed. Your focus is fixed on yourself and the hurts done against you.

"... do not merely look out for your own personal interests..." Philippians 2:4

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5. Excessive Sorrow and Loss of Joy

Grief and hurt have crowded out any joy, peace, or love that you used to have. It has, in fact, filled up your heart. It may, at times, overwhelm you. Lately, you have little or no delight in your relationship with the Lord. Because of your sin, instead of God's peace and joy, you're experiencing intense emotional pain and misery.

"... sorrow has filled your heart." John 16:6
"I shall delight in Thy commandments which I love." Psalm 119:47

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6. Vengeful

You look for ways to avoid your spouse. Perhaps you leave when they are home, pout, or give them the cold shoulder. You're paying them back for what they've done to you.

"Never pay back evil for evil to anyone... Never take your own personal revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God..." Romans 12:17, 19

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7. Brooding

You brood about what your spouse has done. You think about it often and play it over and over in your mind.

"Love does not take into account a wrong suffered." I Corinthians 13:5

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8. A Critical, Judgmental Attitude

It is difficult for you to take your focus off what your spouse has done wrong and focus instead on what you are doing wrong.

"Before you can see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye, first take the beam out of your own eye." Matthew 7:1-5

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