

## **Bitterness**

n/a

### **Ready:**

When I became embittered and my innermost being was wounded, I was a fool and didn't understand; I was an unthinking animal toward You. — Psalm 73:21–22

### **Set**

The psalmist tells us that his heart's bitterness caused him to act more like an animal than a man. Sometimes when competitors are displaced by injury or illness, they experience great frustration, isolation, loneliness, and a myriad of other emotions. Those emotions can lead one to thinking and acting senselessly. The pain associated with losing may even drive some to foolishly medicate their pain and grief. Wise coaching can short-circuit that process and keep the team from painful consequences.

The key to heading off senseless and ignorant behavior is to guard our hearts. Even in loss, pain, and loneliness we can keep our hearts from bitterness. We can hold off bitterness through our relationship with Christ. As we read the Bible, we see things from God's perspective. As we pray, we express our hearts to Him. As we spend time with friends and teammates, we experience His presence in the communion of saints.

As we pray today, let's ask God to protect our injured players from bitterness and restore them to full health. Let's further ask Him to guard our hearts from bitterness when we encounter losses or other setbacks. In all things, we need to thank God for the opportunities we have as coaches to shape lives.

### **Go**

1. Has the grief felt after a loss or the pain and isolation from an injury ever led to bitterness?
2. When and where was that?
3. Has that bitterness ever led to foolish attitudes or actions?
4. What were those attitudes or actions?

### **Workout**

Extra Reading: Psalm 73:21–28; Hebrews 12:4–17

### **Overtime**

Father, hold me back from bitterness and foolish attitudes when I encounter difficult days, failure, and loss. Help me to trust You and to coach with a pure heart and a clear mind. Amen.

### **Bible Reference:**

Hebrews 12



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