

## Unrealistic Expectations Lead to Bitterness: the 3 Arrogant Skills; Machinations of Passive-Aggressive Personalities; Conflict Resolution: the Royal Law

### II. Principles:

1. Very few people are loved or treated the way they want to be loved or treated and because of this they enter into frustration after they react to real or perceived circumstances.
2. As we have noted this can result in bitterness which also includes self-pity, holding grudges, and the function of the three arrogant skills: (1) self-justification: bitterness and jealousy, (2) self-deception: implacability and anger, and (3) self-absorption: hatred, malice, revenge, vituperation, vilification, violence, abuse, and vindictiveness.
3. Such a person's initial problem is unrealistic expectations. Either ignorance of doctrine or refusal to admit that certain doctrines are applicable, this carnal believer becomes entangled in the cosmic system and cannot advance in the plan of God.
4. The ultimate result of unrealistic expectations is disillusionment and disenchantment from role-model arrogance. This inevitably results in the feet of clay syndrome where, following alleged failure, the former role model is condemned, maligned, and ostracized.
5. The person involved in iconoclastic arrogance creates an unrealistic set of standards for the role model but an entirely different set of standards for self.
6. The iconoclast is convinced of personal perfection and even when demonstrably wrong is too blind to accept this fact because of self-deception.
7. Meeting alleged sin or wrongdoing with retaliatory sins destroys the spiritual life. The solution is the royal law – the systematic execution of Ephesians 4:32 – but the iconoclast is too self-absorbed to use its healing power.
8. In Ephesians 4:31 we have this assessment by Paul:  
**Ephesians 4:31** - All categories of bitterness [ πικρία, *pikria* ], both wrath [ θυμός, *thumos*: operational anger], and anger [ ὀργή, *orgē*: motivational anger], both vociferation and slander, must be removed from you, together with all evil [ κακία, *kakia*: malice, revenge motivation, revenge modus operandi ].
9. The final word of the verse is *kakia*: wickedness as a habit of mind that includes malice: a deep-seated often unexplainable desire to see another suffer.
10. A passive-aggressive personality tries to manipulate others in order to surreptitiously get their way. The assertion of complete innocence and projection of blame upon the person actually harmed is necessary to maintain the persona of perfection.

11. To transfer one's own failure upon an innocent person is a clear violation of the royal law. Genuine humility and a disposition of loyalty to a fellow believer would require a person, even if innocent, to sacrificially take the blame in order to reestablish harmony. This is most assuredly true when in the wrong.
12. To prolong the argument, to avoid reconciliation, and to stonewall the efforts of those seeking to ameliorate the contretemps is a rejection of three levels of authority: (1) God in heaven who mandates reconciliation (Ephesians 4:32), (2) the innocent party in the dispute, e.g., one's employer (Colossians 3:22), and (3) the person who holds a legitimate position to mediate the matter (Hebrews 13:17).
13. Failure to reconcile has evil impact on the body of Christ. Rumors hover like smog over the congregation, group harmony is broken, the environment for learning is damaged, children, rather than seeing Bible doctrine applied, are exposed to the dark underside of humanity, all this while the innocent party's reputation is unjustly yet severely damaged.
14. There are four ways such a dilemma may be resolved: (1) the execution of the royal law for the believer in spiritual adolescence, (2) for the believer in spiritual sophistication, the application of three problem-solving devices: (a) personal love for God, (b) unconditional love for mankind, and (c) occupation with Christ, (3) taking responsibility for the situation and going about ways to resolve the dispute, and (4) when all else fails the pastor is forced to clear the air from the pulpit.
15. All issues have a bright side no matter how grotesque. The learning of doctrine is often accelerated by real-life illustrations. This issue contributes positively to the series *The Church of the Living God* in that from the get-go everyone gets a good, close look at the one sin that can most efficiently destroy a local church and that is the spreading of discord.
16. It is my mission to nip this in the bud. Reconciliation may not be in the offing for the affected parties but several in the congregation will be extracted from entanglement in a clique while the rest learn what not to do in the future.