

Holding a Grudge

by Barney Stanton

It costs to carry a grudge. *Webster's* defines it as "envy, strong resentment against someone, malice or ill will."

James said "*Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: ...*" (James 5:9, KJV). I have seen brethren sit on opposite sides of the building because they held a grudge against someone. I remember one service a brother was there, and then another brother came in; the first one got up and left because he held a grudge.

A story was told of a divided congregation. One side would have nothing to do with the other. Each one had a coal pile in different corners of the building. A little red-headed boy wrote on the blackboard: "One Lord, one faith, and two coal piles." A grudge will cause you to lose your soul if you carry it to death and do not repent of it.

Jesus put it this way: "*But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses*" (Matt. 6:15). Jesus told Peter to forgive "*seventy times seven*" (Matt. 18:22). Peter said to "*be hospitable to one another without grumbling*" (1 Pet. 4:9).

Think of Jesus as He hung on the cross, dying, and looking down on that mob as they wagged their heads and mocked him! He said, "*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do*" (Lk. 23:34).

The visitor leaned on the rail fence, watching an old farmer plow. "I don't like to tell you how to run your business," the visitor said, "but you could save yourself a lot of work by saying 'Gee and Haw' to that mule instead of just pulling on the lines." The old farmer replied, "Recon yore right, but that critter kicked me five years ago and I ain't spoke to him since!"

James said, "*But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. ... For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there*" (James 3:14, 16).

Brethren, don't let a grudge cause you to lose your soul! As Dee Bowman says, "If you miss heaven, you've just missed all there is!"

— via bulletin from Saratoga, Arkansas

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