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## Hindered by Cockleburs

By Teresa Hampton

Back in the day, my great grandfather tilled his fields with horse driven plows. His horses were called Maw and Dixie. Every now and then when he began plowing, the horses would get feisty. They had gotten cockleburs stuck in their tails. Every time they swished their tails they felt the prickling barbs, and commenced kicking and prancing and whinnying. Pa Lyell knew that there was no use trying to plow until he pulled out all the cockleburs from Maw and Dixie's tails.

The same, I suppose, could be said of the church today. When Christians have cockleburs of sin, like selfishness, pride, jealousy, or... whatever, there is no use trying to get them to work together. There's just a lot of kicking and posturing and complaining.

Early Christians were hindered by cockleburs of sin. Paul addressed this often. Sins of the heart, he said, and all other types of sin had to be put away. *Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you* (Ephesians 4:29-32).

We have important things to do together. There is soil to till and the seed of God's word to plant. It's time to get rid of all the cockleburs so we can focus on accomplishing this great work!

**Today's Verse:** *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering, bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do* (Colossians 3:12-13).

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