



THE LOVE LETTER

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Check Out Our Website! www.abbasarmsintl.org



There is lots of great stuff to listen to, read, or download on the website! We have all of our **Experiencing The Father's Love** and **Back to the Garden – Discovering Your True Identity** lessons and our set of **Marriage God's Way** lessons that we use to mentor couples before they are married. There are a variety of prayers that we use when ministering to people. All of the back issues of the **Love Letter** are available to download or read on the site. We change the **Father's Blessing** and **Confession** each month that you can speak out and stand for in your life. We announce the dates for our next soaking at our house, and you can read the **praise reports** from our trips to Africa and here in the US. You can also find out about upcoming events and read about us and our ministry.

We also want to encourage you to send the website link to your friends and those that you believe would benefit from the site!! Enjoy!!

Knowing Father's Forgiveness – The Path to Freedom

Many years ago I heard Father say to me that I needed to get a greater revelation of the depths of His forgiveness towards me. Having grown up in the church I got the idea that I needed to forgive others or Father God wouldn't forgive me. I didn't have an accurate image of who He is. Since then Father has been revealing His abundant mercy and forgiveness to me more and more through Jesus' finished work on the cross. What an amazing Father who was willing to have His Son Jesus pay the price for all of our sin, canceling our debt, and making a way for us to come home and be a part of His family! Only in recent years has He increased my understanding of what it means to truly "*forgive from the heart.*"

This revelation has impacted our hearts as well as those we have ministered to over the past few years. We have seen how forgiving those that hurt us leads to greater freedom to walk as Father's true sons and daughters. Forgiveness allows Father to remove the pain and things in our hearts that can block us from experiencing all the love that He has for each of us. I pray that Father would reveal His big heart of forgiveness towards you. May you keep your heart open ready to let Him work in your life!

Our Forgiving Father

One of the best stories about the character of Father is the story Jesus told of a father's response to his two sons in **Luke 15:11-32**. Neither son really honored or valued his relationship with their father. But what did the father's actions show? We are shown a picture of a forgiving father. He kept looking for his younger son to come home, and rather than pointing out all his sin, he covered him with his best robe, showed him love, and threw him a party. He also went looking for his older son who was mad and not willing to come in to the party. The father forgave both sons and simply wanted them to be a part of his family. I read this story for years but never understood that Jesus was revealing how loving and forgiving our Heavenly Father is too! The truth is "love covers a multitude of sins."**1 Pet 4:8, Prov. 10:12**

I remember a time when I felt bad about myself. Father asked if I would let Him cover me with His love and forgiveness. He wants to do that for each of us. We just need to be willing to let Him. Throughout the Old Testament there are several examples that show us our Father's heart to forgive people. David, a man who experienced forgiveness for his sins, wrote of a merciful Father

who "*removes our sins from us as far as the east is from the west.*" **Ps. 103:11-12** Father's forgiving nature is further expressed in **Psalm 130:3-4** "*Lord, if you measured us and marked us with our sins, who would ever have their prayers answered? But Your forgiving love is what makes You so wonderful!*" (*Passion Translation*) Daniel also knew mercy and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God. **Dan. 9:9** I have heard it said that Father God casts our sins into an ocean of His love and puts up a sign that says "no fishing!"

The Israelites knew they could bring an animal to the priests to be sacrificed for their sins. The priest inspected the sacrifice to make sure it was without spot or blemish. Then the person laid his hand on the animal and transferred his sin to the animal and in turn received the rightness of the spotless animal. The blood of the animal was then put on the altar to cover his sins. That allowed a person to walk free of feeling guilty and wrong. This pattern of animal sacrifice for sin was simply a shadow of when Jesus would one day come to be our final sacrifice! Today our sins have not just been covered but removed forever. That is reason to rejoice!! **Heb. 9:26**



The Finished Work of the Cross

From the time that Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, Father set in motion His plan to redeem and bring His family home. Jesus came and lived a sinless life though He was tempted in every way. We were made right by Jesus' one offering for sin forever, **totally forgiven!** Read **Hebrews 10:10-18** and let that reality soak into your heart! Verse 17 says, "*Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.*" There is a need for us to each receive the depths of Jesus Christ's finished work on the cross, so that we live aware of being forgiven "in Christ." This consciousness will give us confidence to come boldly to the throne of grace.

The apostle Paul is a great example of how this revelation of forgiveness can impact and change a person's life. For years he had persecuted those who believed in Jesus having them thrown into prison or killed. Yet after his encounter with the Lord on the road to Damascus, he took the Good News to many and wrote two-thirds of the New Testament. As Paul recounted his salvation experience to King Agrippa, he shared about his call from Jesus "*to open their eyes in order to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are being sanctified by faith in Me.*" **Acts 26:18** While Paul had been taught the law by the religious leaders of his day, he was blessed and made right with God not because of His works, but only because of what Jesus Christ had done on the cross. **Rom. 4:7-8**

We need to renew our minds to the fact that **we are already forgiven.** Living in the past tense of forgiven means Jesus already died for all our sins, past, present, and future. What an amazing work Jesus did for me and you! Father wants us to have the image of all our sins and the things that the enemy has accused us of doing nailed to the cross and removed forever! **Col. 2:13-15** The secret to walking more like Jesus is not being more disciplined, but simply not forgetting that we were cleansed from all our sins. **2 Pet. 1:5-9**

Not only are we forgiven of all our old sins, but we are continuously cleansed of our sins as **1 John 1:7** says, "*...the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.*" Knowing we are forgiven of our sins will give us the power to reign over destructive

habits and live a life of victory. There is a song that goes like this "There is power, power, wonder working power, in the blood of the lamb..." I have personally experienced the power of His blood removing things in my life that tried to weigh me down. Jesus' blood was shed for all of mankind outside of time, so we can apply His blood to any situation we are in, knowing that His blood has the ability to overcome anything the enemy throws at us. **Rev. 12:11** Why not see His blood and forgiveness being like a waterfall that we can stand under and experience perpetual cleansing that never stops! We are forgiven and cleansed forever in Father's eyes.

Forgiving from the heart, not just by the will!

If you have been in the church for any amount of time, you have probably heard many ideas about what it means to forgive. Many people believe that they have fully forgiven others because they made a *choice to forgive, used their will,* and said the words, "I forgive you." That kind of forgiveness usually doesn't pull out the pain and hurt of what happened in a person's heart. **Matthew 18:21-35** gives us a good picture of the mercy and forgiveness that Jesus and His Father are ready to give anyone who asks. When Jesus told Peter we are to forgive seventy times seven, Peter's heart was exposed, as he didn't understand that **forgiveness is endless!** Peter had seen Jesus freely and generously extend forgiveness to the woman caught in adultery, the paralyzed man lowered through the roof to be healed, and others that came to Him. Our Lord is not keeping score! A merciful heart desires to set the guilty free. As James Jordan has said, "*The kind of heart that God wants is a heart that loves to forgive.*" But that kind of heart may take some time to develop. James goes on to talk about forgiveness being a process where we start by choosing to forgive, move to forgiving with love and finally get to the place where we love to forgive.

Jesus told the story in **Matthew 18** to help Peter understand the forgiveness that comes from a loving heart. The story involved a king who had a servant that borrowed a very large amount of money from the king. The servant had not handled the

money well and lost all of it. When the king discovered what he had done, the servant begged the king to forgive him. Out of love the king forgave him and cancelled the huge debt. Yet the servant went out and demanded that a man that owed him a very small amount of money repay him immediately. Since he couldn't pay, the servant to the king had the other man thrown in jail. When the king learned of what the servant had done, he had him thrown in jail and delivered him to the tormentors until he could pay all his debt. At the end of Jesus' story He says, "*So also My heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.*" **Matt. 18:35** If we do not forgive from our heart, we will be in torment. Unforgiveness is like you drinking poison and believing it will kill the person that hurt you. True heart forgiveness is generous and redemptive. It sets us free to bless those that hurt us and brings peace and freedom to us.

Counting the cost and cancelling the debt!

Recently I have gained a greater revelation that heart forgiveness involves "*counting the cost*" before forgiving a person. Deeper more complete heart forgiveness takes place when we consider what that person stole from us, what was lost or what was never received or achieved because of that person. Reading James Jordan's book, *Sonship*, and also listening to Mark Gyde speak at a Fatherheart A School stirred my thoughts to think about what had been taken from me in certain situations. We need to put ourselves in the position of the king, the one who suddenly found out how much his servant owed him. In today's currency this trusted servant owed the king one hundred million US dollars! We can't cancel a debt if we don't understand what was stolen. So when this king chose to forgive his servant, he knew exactly what had been taken from him. This was an expression of mercy, yet this servant turned around and demanded the other man pay him back a much smaller debt.

If Jesus counted the cost of our sin and lovingly forgave us, who are we to not do the same with others! All judgment was given to the Son, yet our human tendency is to judge others and pass sentence on them. **John 5:22** Father wants us to make a list of the debt another owes us and bring it to Him. Jesus is the **true forgiver** that lives inside each of us. Just as Jesus spoke from the cross, "*Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.*" **Luke 23:34** Only Jesus can help us



forgive those that have hurt and stolen from us. Who is the Holy Spirit bringing to your mind that hurt you – your mom, dad, other relatives, authority figures or someone else? We can't cancel a debt if we don't know about it. Ask Holy Spirit to help you make your list of what was stolen and take it to Jesus. See Jesus in you forgiving that person and both of you releasing the person from your judgment and the debt he/she can never repay. Ultimately that person can't give you what they don't have. Can we see it is satan, our enemy, who comes to steal everything good and loving in our lives through other people? As we forgive, we can receive Father's compassion in our heart and begin to see them with Father's eyes. Then our attitude may change towards those that hurt us as we see all that was stolen from them and see the pain in their lives!

Romans 12:17-21 speaks of Father's way to handle those that have stolen from us. We are told not to repay evil with evil or choose to avenge ourselves. Releasing the judgment towards a person doesn't mean we agree with what that person said or did; it simply means that we choose not to act as his or her judge. Heart forgiveness leaves justice up to Father, choosing to overcome evil with good! Paul gives us a good way to respond, "*Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*" (Eph. 4:32) As we remember how much we have been forgiven, it may help us to count the cost and release each person from the debt he or she could never repay us. We each need to cultivate the habit of being quick to forgive!

The Challenge of Our Flesh

Today's society is prone to demanding justice, wanting repayment or suing for even more than what was stolen. Even after we are born again we can still have old fleshly habit patterns that make it difficult to walk in forgiveness easily. There is one more point I would like to highlight about forgiveness. **Forgiveness is a process** and it **may take some time** for Father to complete the work in our hearts.

My friend, Jackie, wrote about an experience of forgiving someone last year as she attended our class, "Back to the Garden." The following are her words as she took her *journey towards freedom in her*

heart, freedom from pain, hurt, anger, judgment and unforgiveness.

"I was handed a fig leaf and asked to write the name of a person who I was harboring unforgiveness towards. I sat there staring at the name I'd written and I could feel the hurt and anger building. I could hear the conversation that set the events into motion that caused deep hurt to someone in my family. The "experiment" caused a lot of damage and though I thought I had dealt with it years ago, the Lord showed me that there were pieces I hadn't looked at or considered that I needed to forgive. Oh how that did not sit well with my flesh! As I heard that from Holy Spirit, my flesh began to respond in old patterns. My jaw and neck muscles tightened up like never before. I knew then from my body's response that there was deep unforgiveness, bitterness and even hatred buried deep inside. That evening after Rick led us in a prayer to forgive the person and said we could now tear up our fig leaf, the Lord told me not to tear up mine. I knew then this was too deep for a short process. The next week I received another fig leaf and was to write the name of a person who made us feel unaccepted, unworthy, even unlovable. Once again I got the same person's name and again, the Lord told me it was too deep a hurt and would take more time.

The Lord has graciously given me a circle of friends I can entrust my heart with and have shared with them what was going on so they could be covering me in prayer as I walk this path. As I shared with one, she told me about a book the Lord had her reading and handed it to me saying it was mine to read now. The book, *Choosing Forgiveness – Your Journey to Freedom*, is written by Nancy Leigh DeMoss. When I first sat down to read it, my flesh fought reading even the first couple pages. Every time I would read it, I could feel this intense anger and hatred rise up in me causing my jaw and neck to tighten even more. I would put it down for a while, but I am thankful to say I am preserving to read it. It's not a very long or large book, it's just very revealing of my heart towards this person. I know I cannot rush through this book and declare myself done in the process. I know I



MUST walk this out in Poppa's perfect timing and allow Him to dig up these wells and flush them clean with His Son's, my Brother's cleansing blood!

Thankfully in this process, I will come out having the Lord crucify my flesh that much more. I also began to reread all the scriptures that speak about forgiving, about loving your enemy, and others. Though I wouldn't say this person was my enemy, one day the Lord asked me to pray these specific verses using their name in it. I knew I did not love this person but wanted to hurt this enemy! To be brutally honest here, I was taken aback that the Lord would ask me to pray something over this person that He Himself had given to me it holding a special meaning in my heart. The verses are from Jude, The Message Bible, verses 1-2. "*I, Jude, am a slave to Jesus Christ and brother to James, writing to those loved by God the Father, called and kept safe by Jesus Christ. Relax, everything's going to be all right; rest, everything's coming together; open your heart, love is on the way.*" Poppa had me praying these over myself and now inserting the name and praying the verses. ... If you too are on this journey to forgiveness, be gentle with yourself. Don't allow satan to beat you up. Open your heart to Poppa's love and gentle care. Trust Him, His timing, and allow Him to show you the process step-by-step-by-step! Receive Poppa's forgiveness, His full and complete forgiveness of your sin of unforgiveness. I am thankful to say that after several months of processing this with the Lord I now have a deep love for this person!"

A Gift of Forgiveness

A gift is something that is freely given and not earned. Jesus died so that we could freely receive all that He has for us. What happens when we know we are forgiven in our hearts? It can birth a deeper love for the one who gave us that gift. Father wants us to receive His forgiveness through what Jesus did on the cross so that we know and rest only in His love. The story in **Luke 7:36-50** tells of a sinful woman who found out where Jesus was eating that night and came boldly to Simon, the Pharisee's house. She didn't care about the Jewish laws she may be breaking or what anyone else thought about her. Her heart was to humbly love, anoint, and wash the feet of the One who she knew had forgiveness to give. While Simon was upset by what the woman was doing, Jesus told a short story about two debtors one owed 500 denari and

Knowing Father's Forgiveness (con't)—the other owed 50. But neither of them could repay their debt so the man *freely forgave* them both. Then Jesus asked which of them will love him more? Simon said, "I guess the one whom more was forgiven." Then after addressing Simon for how he had not cared for His needs, Jesus said, "*I say to you, her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.*"

It is important for us to be thankful and express our gratitude for all our sins that have been forgiven by our Lord! **Often the hardest time I have is with receiving the Lords forgiveness.** Father keeps bringing me back to an image from many years ago of Jesus' blood washing away sin. Someone had said many hurtful words to my husband and me. The Lord asked me to throw all that had happened into a river of His Son's blood that was at flood stage. Then He said, "Can you see them?" I said no because blood is opaque and covers. Then He asked where the words were and I said way down stream as the river was running very fast. The whole incident was so removed from me that I couldn't recall one thing. That is the power of His forgiveness! Recently He had me throw some negative thoughts about myself and what I had done into that river of blood and receive His gift of forgiveness afresh.

The end result of walking in being forgiven and forgiving others is living in a place of freedom and peace. When we truly experience the fullness of His forgiveness in our hearts we will not be concerned about what others think but simply flow with His love and peace. **Col.3:13-15** Jesus came to make peace between Father God and man and then to give us His peace so we can live in it in this world. His desire is that we become more like Him and give the gift of forgiveness to others from hearts filled with His love and peace.

A Blessing for Walking Free From Control

May Father give you a new measure of His grace to truly forgive from the heart! May His love cover you and wash you continuously with His Son's blood and set you free to walk in freedom, love, and peace!



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