

A Letter to God

by David A. Waganer

I've always enjoyed writing letters. However, I also enjoy receiving letters from friends and family members to learn what is happening in their lives.

Yes, I've had to write some letters that I didn't look forward to writing. Some of these have been to creditors that have made mistakes on my bill. Other letters included information that was not very pleasant to write about.

The most difficult letter that I ever wrote was a letter to God. The letter to God took me quite a while to write. The letter was written in frustration and anger over what God had allowed to happen to my children.

You see, we were blessed by God with three children. Believing that each of them was a gift from the Lord, we dedicated them back to the Lord. Interestingly enough, we were also committing ourselves to the Lord in the process.

For a number of years, everything seemed to go fine. The children were special in so many different ways. Each of them seemed to be interested in spiritual matters from very early ages. Each one of them accepted the Lord into their lives at early ages. Nothing seemed quite as important to them as to please the Lord in their lives.

Our oldest two children were boys. Yes, both of them were boys through and through and at times misbehaved at church and at home. However, they both were a real joy to have under our care. Both of them surrendered to serve the Lord as preachers. Each one went off to college and seminary. They both had churches within a days drive of our house. We were able to see them whenever we desired to get together. Our gatherings really became more important as the grandchildren came along.

Then, there was our youngest! Our beautiful daughter was really special. She also was sensitive to the Lord throughout her growing up years. She surrendered her life to missions and went off to college to prepare herself. She had learned about missions and the Cooperative Program from an early age. While she was in college she met her husband, Dan. Dan was also there preparing himself to live out his call to preach. After their senior year, they were married. Then, they went on to seminary. Dan's pastorate lasted throughout his seminary years and then he accepted the pastorate of a church in the city where I lived. What a special feeling we had for the two of them. Shortly after they moved there, I lost my mate. I really leaned upon them through those years.

After they had been at the church for about eighteen months, they started their family. Within five years they had three children. I really grew close to them. Oh, my other children and grandchildren were special also, but distance kept me from becoming intimate with them about my struggles with singleness.

One day they stopped by to see me. They said they needed to talk with me. I thought to myself that they were going to tell me they were going to have another child. However, it was to inform me of something that would change things drastically. Dan remained silent and allowed my daughter to tell me. No, it wasn't a tragic break-up of a family. No, they hadn't been fired from the church. My daughter then started with these words. "Do you remember back when I was in high school that I surrendered my life to serve as a foreign missionary?" Yes, I remembered her call. However, I had kind of placed it on a shelf when she married Dan and he was a pastor. "Dan and I both sense God's call upon our lives to serve as foreign missionaries."

My facial expression must have been a dead give away. Oh, I managed to say the right words but I was aching on the inside. They went on to share that they had already been approved by the Foreign Mission Board and would be leaving for language school in Africa within six weeks. It seemed like an eternity before they left the house on that day. I'm sure that it was more like a few minutes but the tears within needed to flow out and I wanted to keep them inside.

That night, I didn't think I'd ever get to sleep. Between the tears and the realization that this was actually going to happen, I had moments of extreme anger. I managed to hold the anger back for a while but eventually it would come out. No, I wasn't angry with my daughter or son-in-law. I knew that they were doing what they understood to be God's leadership for them. I'm sure they were also hurting and struggling over the sequence of events.

Three or four days after they shared their plans with me, I found myself with a pen and paper beginning to write a letter. It was not a letter to my daughter, it was a letter to God. Let me just read you what I said in that letter to God.

Dear God,

You know that I've attempted to please you with my life. I have attempted to have a daily walk with you on a regular basis. Each of our three children we dedicated back to you to use for your work.

Each of my children came to know you as their personal Savior at early ages. I thank you for saving each of them. Then, you chose to call my two sons into the preaching ministry. Both of them have been serving you faithfully for a number of years as pastors.

Yes, my daughter felt your call to missions while she was in high school. She went off to college and you directed her to marry Dan. Have you recently managed to forget that you had called him to preach the gospel? Have you forgotten the great job he is doing in the church that you allowed him to pastor?

God, I'm very angry with you for what you are doing to my daughter and her family! I thought that we could count on you to take care of our needs. What kind of a God do we serve anyway??

During the night, I had a dream. It was as if God had received my letter. As I recall, the Lord began by reassuring me of his constant presence in my life. He also, assured me that he was still in control. He dealt with me at the point of my earlier commitment to dedicate my children to him to use as he saw fit. He inquired if I really meant that or was just going through the motions? He inquired if I really wanted them to do His will in their lives? Of course I do was my response. He then said, Then why are you so angry with me? Your daughter and son-in-law are doing what I want them to do. It was then that I awakened and realized that I needed to quit attempting to be their God and allow God to be God of their lives.

I'm certain that there are many parents that are unwilling to let God do what he wills through their children's lives. However, I climbed from the bed and dropped to my knees and sought the Lord's forgiveness and his grace became sufficient for me to face the imminent.

Seven years have passed since my daughter and her family moved from here. They are happy doing what God wants for their lives. I miss them desperately! However, I have an inner peace that comes from the Lord. There are thousands of miles between where they are and where I live. There's not one inch between where they are, where I am, and where God wants us to be. We are all seeking to be where God wants us to be and doing what he wants us to do. Are there some areas of your life which you need to commit back to God.

Here is a tablet and pencil. Take the time to write your letter today.

END