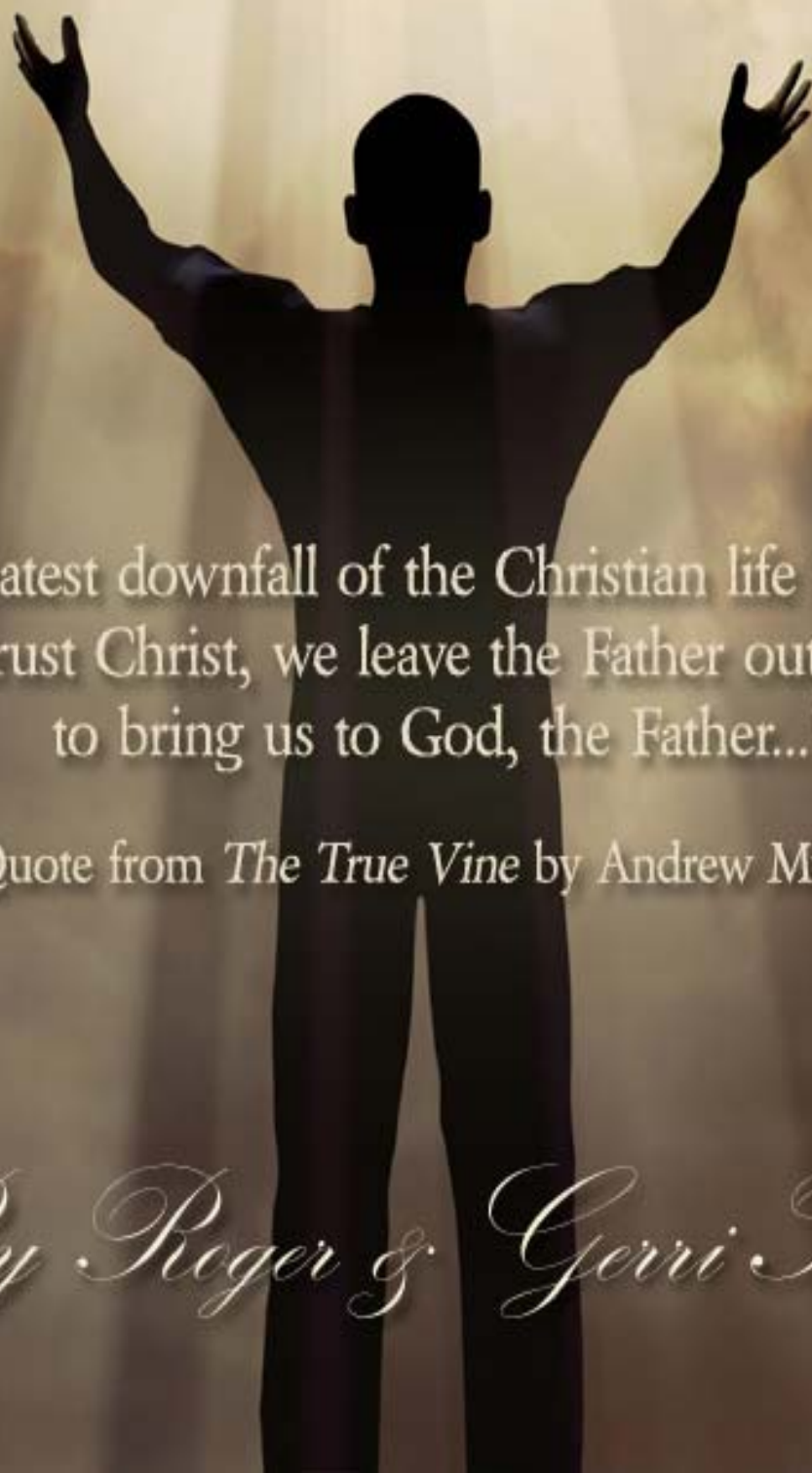


Father's Love



"The greatest downfall of the Christian life is that, even where we trust Christ, we leave the Father out. Christ came to bring us to God, the Father..."

Quote from *The True Vine* by Andrew Murray

By Roger & Gerri Taylor

Father's Love

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“I will be your Father and you will be My sons and daughters,” says the Lord. II Corinthians 6:18

Father's Love

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Forward

One of the greatest honors one can receive in this life is to be asked to write the forward for a book, but for me this is an exceptional honor.

First of all, it is my pleasure to know and love Roger and Gerri Taylor. They are not “hearers of the Word”; they are “doers of the Word.” The message you will find on the pages of this e-book has been lived out in Roger and Gerri’s lives. For them, this is not head knowledge; it is heart knowledge. Their purpose is not to simply write a book, but to give you insight into the love of the Father, a love that has guided their lives. Trust me-their walk matches their talk.

Secondly, this message helped save my life. During the dark night of my soul, I found myself standing at their front door, a broken man filled with self-hatred and self-loathing. Sitting in their living room, they introduced me to the Father that I prayed to, but feared. I could not answer their haunting question: “How is your relationship with your Heavenly Father?” They lovingly showed me how to open the door of my heart to my Abba Father who loved, accepted and forgave me. Now I can say, in the words of the song I learned as a child, “I love Him better every d-a-y...”

I encourage you to plunge into this book, to read its words and meditate on them. My prayer is that the Holy Spirit will use these words to open your heart to the greatest lover the world has ever known-your Heavenly Father.

Pastor Rodney West
A Favored Son

Chapter One

Jesus Is The Way, But Father Is The Destination

What is your purpose for life? We believe we were created by love (Father God) for love and intimate relationship. Love is expressed in relationship with God and man. "Where purpose is unknown, abuse will certainly follow." Myles Monroe

Have you met Jesus? What is His purpose? Have you met the Holy Spirit? What is His purpose?

How is your relationship with your Heavenly Father? What is His purpose?

This is Roger's personal testimony of his encounter with Father's love in 2001

In the fall of 2001, we visited Shiloh Place Ministries in Conway, SC. to receive personal prayer ministry. During the first session with our prayer minister, Johnnie Lewis, he addressed me saying, "Rog, I see by your life history form that you know Jesus personally and that you have also had an encounter with the Holy Spirit, but tell me, how is your relationship with your Heavenly Father?"

I was stunned because in all my years as a Christian, no one had ever asked me that question before. I didn't know what to say. I thought and thought, looking at the floor for what seemed like forever, and finally came to the conclusion that the only way I could answer the question was, "I guess I don't have one. I know He's out there somewhere, but I guess I really don't know Him."

Johnnie's response to me was, "I thought you might answer that way."

This was the beginning of our encounter with the revelation of the Father's love and the possibility of knowing Him personally and intimately.

In your mind, what kind of Father is He? Typically we relate to Father God like we relate to our earthly father. Since there are no 'perfect parents', it is likely that your relationship with your earthly father may not have provided all the love and attention you needed. So ask yourself, is your Heavenly Father loving, kind, dependable, giving, faithful, always there for you, or are His blessings conditional, based on your performance? Is He angry, judgmental, critical, to be feared? (O holy God, O sinful me!) If Jesus does not intercede for you, are you toast? Is Father distant and out there somewhere and untouchable or is Father close and intimate, loving you unconditionally and completely?

Do you realize you can and are supposed to have an intimate, expressed, experiential, personal love relationship with Father? Remember, Jesus is the way, but Father is the destination. (John 14:6) You were created for love and relationship.

I John 4:16, 19 ...*God is love and the one who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him. We love, because He first loved us.*

Quote from The True Vine by Andrew Murray:

“The greatest downfall of the Christian life is that, even where we trust Christ, we leave the Father out. Christ came to bring us to God, the Father...His life of dependency on the Father was a life in the Father's love...Our life must have its breath and being in a heavenly love as much as His. What the Father's love was to Him, His love will be to us...The weakness in our Christian life is that we do not take time to believe that this divine love really does delight in us...Love will awaken your faith and strengthen it. Occupy yourself with that love; worship it; wait for it. You may be sure it will reach out to you, and by its power take you up into itself as your home.”

Many people think they can live without love. Some feel that all people are a source of pain, so they have vowed to keep everyone at a distance. Others have chosen to live in a place where they feel no emotions, no warmth, no passion - believing that if they do not feel then they cannot be hurt again. Others feel that affection and tenderness are signs of weakness. Those are ungodly lies we can live by. These ungodly lies can result in a life of independence, self reliance, isolation, detachment. Then love may be expressed by providing for and teaching family members to survive and be strong and tough. There is little warmth, understanding, or grace. It becomes difficult to meet another's need for love and intimacy. If we do not realize our desperate need for something, we are less likely to pursue and obtain it. One of our greatest weaknesses is our inability to know and admit how needy we really are. Unconsciously, to acknowledge a need for someone means giving that person power to hurt us again. Many of us do not acknowledge our need for intimacy with others. Then when we come to Jesus we often feel our walk is more about duty and discipline than love and intimacy. By and large, the church today reinforces these lies by encouraging and sometimes demanding that we must serve and do, rather than rest and be.

Chapter Two

Four Keys To Opening Your Heart To Intimacy

Intimacy should come to us naturally. We were created by God's love for the purpose of love. Many of us struggle through life because we fear intimacy (in-to-me-see). Either because of a deficiency of parental love or because we experienced some traumatic form of rejection in the past, we set up boundaries and walls to keep people out so that we can protect ourselves from the pain of more rejection. This can hinder us from having intimate fellowship with Father God and healthy relationships with others. To our detriment, our walls work both ways. We find it difficult to love because we have believed a lie about God. The enemy, who is described as 'the father of lies' in John 8:44, continually lies to us about Father's character and purpose for our lives. Our adversary tells us that God does not love us unless we perform well enough to earn His love. He tells us that God is abusive, angry, aloof, impatient and constantly disappointed with us. If the enemy of our souls can convince us that God has rejected us, is upset with us, or has withdrawn from us because of some sin we have committed, he knows we will hide from God and try to live our lives performing well enough to earn His love, thus increasing the depth of our guilt and shame. Then the opportunity for intimacy is greatly hindered.

Here are four keys to opening your heart to intimacy:

Key #1

The IMAGE WE HAVE OF OURSELVES determines the depth of intimacy in which we dwell.

- By survey, 80% of us do not like what we see in the mirror.
- You were created in God's image, and God is love.
- If you are uncomfortable with God, you are uncomfortable with love.
- If you are uncomfortable with love, you are uncomfortable with yourself.
- If you are uncomfortable with yourself, you're going to be uncomfortable with others.
- If you don't believe you are lovable, you find it difficult to receive God's gift of unmerited love and favor. There is no way you can enjoy normal relationships with others if you view yourself differently from the way God views you.
- Personal Testimony – The story of Roger's self-hatred.

As far back as I can remember I've had a problem with self-hatred. In the bullets above, you can see me perfectly described. I met Jesus and I met the Holy Spirit, I was healed and delivered in many areas, yet I was still an angry person filled with low self-esteem and self-hatred. I constantly cried out to the Lord for answers. In January 2002, the vice president of our ministry came for a three day visit. At dinner one evening, she said, "Roger, I believe the Lord has shown me something that He wants to deal with in your life." She began by asking me several questions such as:

If you were in Heaven before you were born and Jesus said to you, "Son, I need someone to go to earth for me and accomplish a task," then unfolded your entire life before you, would you go?

My answer was strong and absolute, "NO!"

Would you choose different parents than you were given?

The answer was, "YES!"

Would you choose your looks as He gave them to you?

"NO!"

She said, "Your answers indicate a rebellion toward life and thus a rebellion toward God. In other words, Roger, you are in spiritual rebellion to God, and to the degree you don't like your parents, your family, your looks, your circumstances, your place in society, etc. you are saying that Father God made a mistake and you don't like it."

Roger said to her, "You have described me perfectly."

She asked, "Can we pray?" I replied, "Of course."

She then led me in prayers of repentance for my rebellion to life and my rebellion to God.

I repented for my death wish and instead chose life and blessing, not death and cursing.

I didn't feel anything as we prayed, and shortly thereafter we turned in for the night. I didn't realize that the next morning I would wake up to a brand new life! When I got up I knew something was very different, but at first I couldn't figure out what it was. I think I realized that the self-hatred was gone when I stepped into the kitchen and saw Gerri. She looked totally different. I saw her beauty and not her faults for the first time since early in our marriage. I saw myself differently and as time went on I realized that I saw everyone else differently.

What a glorious transformation!

As the days have gone by, I have continually grown to love myself more and more and that love has enabled me to love everyone and everything around me like never before, gently and with Father's love. My angry edge is disappearing!

We project to others how we feel about ourselves. Men often struggle with intimacy. They have become numb to love. They bought into a lie that says,

- Men don't feel.
- Men don't cry.
- Men don't get in touch with their emotions.
- Men are not tender, caring, or compassionate.

In essence, many men do not really believe they are called to love and intimacy. Some even believe that it is not masculine to be tender and loving. The problem with this ungodly belief is that it completely contradicts the essence of the gospel. (I Cor 13:1-2 *"If I speak with tongues of men and angels, but do not have love...I am nothing."*)

Men, do you gravitate toward being the boss in your relationships especially with your family? If you do, you are inviting rebellion and walls of protection to go up in those relationships. This is especially true with your wife and children. Command and control, domination and intimidation breed rebellion and a closed heart. Love breeds intimacy. Love must consist of tenderness, honor and respect for others, a tender embrace, a tender touch, a tender look, a tender tone of voice. Make your family your first priority with Father's love flowing through you to them, and then to the world around you. The results will be most rewarding!

Dr. Ed Cole says, "Love is meeting someone else's need at your expense, and lust is meeting your need at someone else's expense." Who is paying the price for your happiness?

Jesus said walking with Father God is all about love. Too often we try to make this Christian life about rules, discipline, or spiritual formulas as we try to impress others or God and win His favor with all of our hyper religious activity. We so easily put the Great Commission, Matt. 28:19-20, *"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel..."* before the Great Commandment, Matt. 22:37-40 *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength and your neighbor as yourself."* (The word neighbor here in the Greek is 'plesion' meaning any other person you live with. First we must be able to receive Father's love. Once we are walking in that experience, the expression of that love will flow from us like an artesian spring and it will affect and influence everyone we come in contact with. It will become the true evidence of our relationship with Him.

Key #2: We must become aware of our NEED FOR INTIMACY.

As much as we may think that we need to be independent, we were not created to live apart from God or others. Even Jesus, who was the image of God, was dependent on His Father. Through His humility and dependence, Christ has been given all dominion and authority. The same applies to us. We must find humility and dependence, not pride and independence. When God placed Adam in the garden, He called His creation good. All Adam's needs were met and Adam walked with God. Yet God knew all of this was not enough for man, saying, *“It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.” Gen 2:18.*

Adam was created with a need for intimacy with another fellow human being. Until Adam's dependence upon God was secure, and a cry to intimacy with another came forth from his heart, he could not be trusted with a woman. When he recognized his need for intimacy and love, God intervened on his behalf and gave him Eve. Adam and Eve stood before one another, naked and unashamed. Although they were two separate people, they became one flesh. They fully knew and were known by each other, with nothing hidden, nothing held back. This is a picture of true intimacy (in-to-me-see)! No masks, no pretending, nothing hidden and everything revealed.

Just as Adam and Eve stood before Father in the garden in utter transparency, so we must also become transparent before the Lord and before others we trust. In bearing each other's burdens through our own transparent lives, we imitate Jesus and His earthly ministry.

Key #3: We must be willing to embrace OUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR INTIMACY.

Many relationship problems we have are a result of our unwillingness to know others and be known by them. Jesus came to restore our capacity for intimacy, despite all the times we may have been hurt or have hurt others. Through Christ, we inherit all the things that had been lost in the Fall - not only salvation, healing and joy, but also our capacity to love fully and to be loved, and to be restored into a life of intimacy. If we do not make love and intimacy a primary pursuit in our relationships, we have missed out on the fullness of what Jesus died for - to restore us to intimacy with the Father. If we are walking in all the Christian disciplines and duties, if we are expressing love, kindness and compassion to everyone else, but not pursuing deeper intimacy with our spouse and family, then we are not accepting our full responsibility for walking as a child of God.

In today's society, the responsibility for intimacy has often fallen upon the female members of the household. The lie that men aren't supposed to feel or be tender and caring if they are to be considered masculine has pervaded even our church circles. Many Christian men shy away from the vulnerability

that comes from sharing not only their emotions, but also their spiritual lives with their wives and families. Women are usually the ones expected to be tender, caring, affectionate and compassionate. The world system expects men to be macho and stern and to provide and succeed. While the distinction between the roles of men and women is important, the Bible never says that a man cannot, or should not, be just as intimate, loving and caring as a woman. Rather, Galatians 3:28 tells us that in Christ there is neither male nor female. We must all be willing to embrace our responsibility for intimacy.

Key #4: INTIMACY REQUIRES US to find our value and self-worth in being who God created us to be - a gift of love to others.

Eph 5:25-29 "Husbands love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her...he who loves his own wife loves himself."

Before a man can first love his wife the way that God wants him to, he must first experience Father's unconditional love (see I Jn 4:19). If he doesn't feel good about himself, he won't be able to achieve true intimacy with his wife. If you don't love yourself, you cannot truly love others without a hook on it. (The hook: we give but we want something in return.) The more we ask Father to fill the void in our hearts with His love and commit to practicing loving actions to our spouses, children, and others, the more comfortable we become with God and ultimately with ourselves. As we begin to submit to a lifestyle of love and intimacy, God is faithful to transform our heart, our character and our nature in ways we would never have thought possible.

Chapter Three

Love & Intimacy Are Your Destiny

The four keys shared with you are important to help you break through the deceptions about intimacy which you may have bought into. You can't withdraw from the bank what hasn't already been deposited.

If you have never received genuine unconditional love in your own life, it may be difficult for you to demonstrate that kind of love to others. If you have experienced not just a lack of love, but any kind of deep wounding, it may seem impossible for you to foster healthy relationships. Until you have an encounter with Father's unconditional love, acceptance and affection in areas of your hidden core pain, it may be difficult to pour out love to others. Places In The Father's Heart or other qualified prayer ministries can help you discover the hidden core pain and walls you may have in your life that will keep you from intimacy with your Heavenly Father and your encounter with His unconditional love.

God has crafted us to be an instrument of His love and to demonstrate His compassion and tenderness to everyone we meet. When we begin to experience His phileo love for us and allow it to flow through us to others, we will begin to be secure in love and intimacy because we will be doing what we were created to do.

Do you communicate with Father, or is Jesus your point of contact? If you communicate with Father, what do you call Him? What you call Him may indicate what kind of relationship you have with Him. Have you received His affectionate, unconditional embrace?

- Roger's Testimony - SPM School 2004.

Earlier I shared about my encounter with the revelation of Father's love in 2001. Here I'd like to share with you my actual experience in receiving His love.

The time is January 2004 at Shiloh Place Ministries School of Ministry. On the first day of school, the first class was instruction on How to Hear God's Voice. Mark Burlinson, our instructor, had taught us the following four points:

1. Quiet yourself – put on the soaking music
2. Focus
3. Listen
4. Journal

Then he said, “Now we are going to practice what we have learned.”

This was a struggle for me and actually began to upset me because, having just coming out of clinical depression, quieting my mind seemed impossible. Soaking music was for *women*! If I couldn't quiet my mind, then focusing was a joke! If I listened, all I'd hear were my own thoughts and my mind racing! Journaling was another one of those *women things* that I didn't do! It all seemed hopeless for me, and I seriously considered leaving the class and coming back later! I knew Father had miraculously provided for us to be in school so I said to self, “Ok, Roger, let's give it a try.”

The soaking music began. I told my mind to shut up, and to my surprise it did! Then I said, “Father, are you really there? Do You really have something to say to me?”

Instantly His response began, “Yes, son, I Am here, and I want to tell you how dearly I love you.”

My immediate response was to interrupt Him and ask my habitual question, “Father, is this You, is this me, or is this the devil?”

I said to myself, “No, I'm not going there again.” I got out my tablet, repented for interrupting, and said, “Father, if You'll begin again, I'd like to write it down.” He immediately began the dialog again and I wrote a full 8 ½ x 11 page of a personal love letter from my Heavenly Father to me. It went straight to my heart and changed my life forever.

- I met Jesus. He changed my life, but my love hunger was not satisfied.
- I met the Holy Spirit. He changed my life, but my love hunger was not satisfied.
- When I met Father through that first love letter, He changed my life dramatically because my deep seated love hunger was being satisfied for the first time in my life.

The intimate, personal relationship with my Father continues to grow each day and continues to change me.

Gerri's Testimony

Father Loves You - I Dared to Call Him Daddy

Many people have tremendous difficulty truly dwelling in a deep abiding relationship with Father God. They know ABOUT Him- what they have read or what others have told them. They may even have an intellectual understanding of His power, gifts and abilities. But right now, during this new Mercy Season, He is calling us to an experience of His fatherly love that is evidenced by deeper intimacy with Him and in family and peer relationships. We all need to be asking ourselves, "is our relationship with

Him transforming our marriage, our parenting, our relationships with others; or are we still hiding behind our masks of hyper religious activity and our insecurities with true love and intimacy?

I believe with everything in me that this message of the Father's Love is one of the most important messages our hearts can receive. I remember in 2001 when I was presented with the following question by a very gifted prayer minister, Johnnie Lewis: "I can see you have a strong relationship with Jesus as Savior and that you have also had a profound, life changing encounter with the Holy Spirit, but how is your relationship with your Heavenly Father?"

As I pondered my answer to this question, I began to realize a deep longing in my heart...Father; I do really want to know YOU. The answer to this question only told me that there was something I had yet to experience from the Father heart of the Trinity. My journey began that day and my life has never been the same since. After years of hot pursuit, I can tell you that I have experienced taking hold of the deepest love I have ever known and not letting go! I have been led into a place of intimacy, of being rooted and established in Father's love, where the four basic love needs of my life - expressed love, affirmation, security, and destiny - have been met on a level I never thought possible.

My marriage of 45 years has been brought to a place of bliss I'd only dreamed of. I now see my parenting roles with my children in completely different ways. I have been freed from codependency with them, which has long plagued our relationships. I am seeing with clearer vision God's plan for me in other relationships, and for the first time in my entire life, I see that there is only ONE *primary* relationship in my life...that is with my Father...and that all others flow out of that one! When it is healthy and intimate, the others are too. It is then that *Matt. 11:28-29* "*Come unto me all ye who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest*" becomes a part of one's being...deep in a place of peace and rest not found in the world that is truly from the heart of Father God. I am no longer just learning about Father's love, but I am beginning to experience the Holy Spirit manifesting His love in my heart and transforming my entire life. It is no longer enough to just teach on God's love, but love expressed is to be the true test of our relationship with God.

We are living in an hour when the social crisis of the nations is fatherlessness; thus the need for us to minister out of a deep personal experience we have had in Father's love. The end time move of God will be a fathering move that restores His loving heart to ours. Our hearts will be restored to intimacy first with Him and then with family and others. So, let the journey begin!

Has your love hunger been satisfied? Did you know you have love hunger? Is your focus on intimacy with your Heavenly Father, or is your focus on performing your religious duty? Are you experiencing

peace, rest and satisfaction in your Christian walk, or are you always striving, working, doing, giving, looking for peace, rest and satisfaction? Do you embrace life and enjoy being loved unconditionally, or do you dread most days and have a tendency towards discouragement?

Your answers to these questions will indicate either that you are experiencing life as Father intended, or that you are walking in spiritual rebellion, an orphan spirit or attitude, performance orientation, and love hunger. Life begins in the being, not in the doing.

Chapter Four

Who Is This Man I Call Daddy (Abba)?

Ideally, in our lives, we largely come to know who our Heavenly Father is by the way we see our earthly father. Because, for the most part, we live in a fatherless generation, it is difficult for the majority of us to clearly see who Father God really is and even more difficult to face Him intimately and call Him Daddy (Abba).

If we have been born again, as we begin to study and grow spiritually we find that Jesus is the perfect picture or exact representation of the Father. Jesus came from the Father (Jn 16:27). We are told that if we had known Jesus, we would have known His Father also (Jn 14:7-8). Jesus said in Jn 14:9, "*He who has seen Me has seen the Father.*" So Jesus is saying in these verses that when we have seen Him, we will know what the Father looks like.

- **Jesus is the exact representation of Father**, therefore He must be humble, loving and compassionate.
- "And He (Jesus) is the exact radiance of His (Father's) glory and the exact representation of His (Father's) nature. Heb. 1:3 parenthesis added, and also Col 1:15.

Jesus spoke only the words the Father spoke and did only the things the Father did (Jn 14:10, 24). So we could sum it up by saying, 'like Father, like Son.' The Father speaks words that restore, encourage, forgive, and bring comfort. It is the voice of the accuser of the brethren that accuses, criticizes, shames, and condemns. It is the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, whose voice comforts. The Father judges no one. He leaves that task to Jesus (Jn 5:22, 24). Father God is complete love and because He is love, He speaks every word with love in mind. Certainly He does bring discipline into our lives, but He will neither judge nor condemn us until the last day, and until that day comes, Father's posture toward us is personified in LOVE. When we face times of trouble, whom do we run to? Whose name do we call? Most of the church today will cry out to Jesus, yet the scriptures clearly tell us to cry out to Father in our time of need. He (Jesus) taught His disciples to pray in this manner, "*Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. Pray in this way: Our Father...*" Matt 6:8-9. We are not attempting to take anything away from the work Jesus did on the cross and in our lives, but **Jesus is the way to the Father.** We do, however, need to receive Father in His rightful place within the

Trinity. To settle for anything less than intimacy with the Father is to fall short of experiencing what Jesus died for! Father's gift of love to us incurs no debt.

The movie *The Passion of The Christ* drives home to all of mankind the reality of the incredible sacrifice made for each of us that day on the cross so that we might intimately know the Father.

Jesus was a man of purpose and destiny; our greatest example of that basic need in our lives. Our heart's cry should always be, 'Father, I want to be like Him.' When Jesus violated the Law of Moses by touching the leper, He demonstrated to us that our Father is not afraid to touch us in all the unclean areas of our lives. His greatest desire is to restore us to wholeness. Later we will talk about some hindrances to receiving the Father's love. One of the greatest hindrances to receiving that love is the unhealed areas in our lives. We all have them and we should never allow fear to keep us from facing them. It is important to remember that Love does not think an unloving thought about you! I Cor 13:5 states Love thinks no evil. Because God is love, He does not think a judgmental or accusatory thought toward you! Because He is love, all the thoughts He thinks toward you are rooted in His unconditional love for you.

After we experience this unconditional love of Father God, we come to know Him intimately, face to face, nothing hidden and everything open and revealed to Him. We are truly Father's happy thought even though there are areas in our lives that still need His touch.

Why then, would we want to keep secrets from Him? Why then, would we want to hide (or think we are hiding) anything from Him? He sees, He knows, yet He still loves us unconditionally. This is why I call Him Daddy! There are some who may believe that this teaching makes God too common and think it can lessen someone's awe, fear and respect for Father. Again, may we pose to them these questions?

Which God would you have more honor and respect for, the angry One or the compassionate One? Which God would you most likely seek intimate relationship with? Which God do your children want you to be the most like? Has a relationship with the angry God brought you into intimacy and love in your relationships? Which God would the wounded and lost most likely be drawn to? Which God do you want to spend eternity with? For many years we believed the lie that the Father was 'Oh holy God' and that we were 'Oh sinful me in His sight.' Nothing could be farther from the truth, and that lie only served to keep us away from the intimate relationship that brings us to a place of rest and comfort, knowing that our love hunger and our love needs are being met by Him. If you feel you have had a

false image of God or have not seen Him as a servant-Father who is humble, loving and compassionate, you may want to pray for this ungodly belief to be broken.

Our Father sent Jesus to earth to: (Remember, where purpose is unknown abuse will certainly follow)

- Suffer for us
- Take our sins upon Himself
- Die for us
- Be resurrected on the third day
- Return to the Father to prepare a place for us (Jn 14:1-3)
- Make the way for us to return to love and intimacy with the Father

But Jesus also established: (Remember, where purpose is unknown abuse will certainly follow)

- Christianity (the Church, the Body of Christ)
- Church leadership
- What ministry should be by example

Jesus also introduced us to our Heavenly Father (Jesus didn't come to represent Himself to us, He came to represent Father)

- By saying only what He heard the Father say. Jn 8:28, 38; Jn 12:49-50
- By doing only what He saw the Father doing. Jn 5:19-20; Jn 5:38.
- Jesus was spirit, soul and body just like we are. He had a brain, the ability to think and be His own person, but He chose to set those things aside to humble Himself and follow Father's example and instruction. He chose to promote His Father, not Himself. Do we have the same privilege, the same opportunities, and the same responsibility?

- Jn 14:6 - The way, the truth, the life
- Jn 14:1-3 - I go to prepare a place for you
- Jn 16:27 - For the Father Himself loves you
- Jn 14:9, 10, 24 - He who has seen Me has seen the Father
- Jn 17:23, 26 - Father loves us as He loves Jesus
- Heb. 1:3 - He (Jesus) is the sole expression of the glory of God
- Col. 1:15 - He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God

So, is Jesus the representation of a distant, cold, uncaring God who is impersonal, angry, violent, judgmental and critical, too holy to approach, one who brings terror to our hearts, one from whom we must be protected, a master to be served in bondage? No. So which is true: your perception of Father,

or Jesus' presentation of Father? Do you need a new perspective of God? We all do to some degree, because we often don't know Him as He truly is.

Luke 11:10 - *Everyone who asks receives; he who seeks, finds, and to him who knocks, it shall be opened.*

Chapter Five

The Results Of Receiving Father's Love

The four basic needs of every individual are:

- Expressed Love
- Affection and Affirmation
- Safety and Security
- Purpose for Life/Destiny,

When those are met it means our love hunger is being satisfied by Father, and we enter a new realm. Most of us have never been here; therefore many changes begin taking place.

For example,

- We see Father differently
- We see ourselves differently
- We see spouses, children, parents, family, friends, and people differently.
- We see the world differently

The unconditional love Father gives us wells up inside of us and we want to give it away to everybody we meet. Dramatic change in how we see and experience relationships occurs.

In addition, we

- Begin to see our circumstances differently.
- See our problems differently. They may be still there, but they lose their power over us.
- See our faith, trust and hope grow.
- See peace and rest become constant companions.
- See joy bubble up and overflow all because of Daddy's embrace.

Are we perfect and without problems? No. But life has changed dramatically. Head knowledge is a poor substitute for the actual experience of Father's expressed love. Head knowledge lacks the power to bring lasting change.

We all have a place in Father's heart. In fact, we *are* a place in Father's heart. Your place is waiting for you. Won't you come? Intimacy awaits you. And unconditional love awaits you.

- **Healing Prayer:**
- It can be helpful to begin opening your heart to Father's love by praying this kind of prayer:

Father, I come to You in Jesus' Name. I ask You to forgive me for misjudging You for so many years. Please forgive me for distancing myself from You and closing my heart to intimacy because I did not understand Your true nature of love and humility.

I choose now to forgive my parental figures (name them) for misrepresenting Father God's love to me. I now bless them and I ask You, Father, to reveal Your love and grace to them.

I choose now to forgive (name them by name):

- *My parent(s)*
- *Pastors*
- *Teachers*
- *Churches*
- *Denominations*
- *Others*

for misrepresenting a loving Father. I now pray a blessing over each of them and I ask that You, Father, reveal Your unconditional love to them. They may still be hurting because they do not know Your grace and unconditional love, Father.

I renounce the ungodly belief that You are an angry God.

I renounce a religious spirit that has sought to earn levels of Your love and acceptance through my human effort or religious striving.

I renounce my sense of shame, guilt, or self-condemnation that I feel because I have never felt good enough to draw close to you, Father.

I choose to receive You as my loving Father. I now see how loving and compassionate You are. I know that I can find rest in Your gentleness and humility. I come home to You, Father, and ask You to bring me into Your loving arms and reveal the love that You have for me. I dare to call you Daddy.

I believe that I have been created for love, to experience Your healing love and to share that love in my relationships with others. It is not enough to have success in my life or in ministry if I don't have a relationship built upon expressed love with You and with my spouse and family.

I renounce the lie that I am not a lover, that I cannot open up my emotions or allow myself to be hurt again. Instead, I ask You to wrap your arms around me, to comfort me in those areas of hurt and pain and to fill me up so that I can, in turn, share Your love with those around me. I choose to love my family as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her. I make a commitment to ask myself

hourly, "Father how can I receive Your love and then give it away to the next person I meet?" I want to live my life as an expression of Your love, no longer focusing on my own worldly successes, but allowing Your character to shine through me to others. I choose to submit to Your love. I choose to call You Daddy!

Chapter Six

The Process Of Receiving Father's Love

*"I will not drive them out before you in a single year, that the land may not become desolate, and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you. I will drive them out before you little by little, until you become fruitful and take possession of the land."
(Exodus 23:29-30)*

"See how great a love the father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God; and such we are...And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure." (I John 3:1, 3)

It is important that we understand certain principles that take effect when the Father's love begins to process within a person's heart. The message and experience of the Father's healing love is not cheap grace or sloppy agape'. It is a message that compels us to the cross. It requires a level of dying to self. It leads us to a place where the cry within us for the Father's love becomes more important than denying our hidden pain and core issues. It is the Father's love that motivates us to the cross, healing and change!

It is important for you to recognize that, just like knowing about Jesus won't get you saved, knowing about Father's love is not the same as a personal experience and encounter with His love. Knowing about His love will not bring the transformation and healing that we all need. This is a PROCESS. It is a JOURNEY. It is not a one time experience, but it is hidden core pain coming out and His love flowing in...more pain out, more Love in...more pain out, more Love in, until we are completely transparent before Him. It is a choice by faith to pursue Him and His unconditional love for us. Intimacy with Father is where Jesus has been trying to lead us since the Church began. He's waiting. Won't you come?

The Process of Being Restored to the Father's Love

Father God desires that everyone be restored to an intimate and affectionate relationship with Him. In this process little events and big events are fed by new information and revelation that deepen our

experience. It will be quickened by trials and adverse circumstances that seem to force us to pursue God's love even when we have been looking for love in all the wrong places.

"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28)

Again, it is a process. The Father's love is not a solution for all our problems. Encounters in the Father's love will help us open up more freely to love and intimacy, but will not change us all at once. People do not get healed all at once. It takes all kinds of ministry and experiences. This is the Christian life.

People will not be changed or have a sense of God's love every time you pray for them, but something is happening when you do pray for them. It is not that they haven't received, but it may be that they are at the beginning of their process where God is softening the hardened areas of their hearts and preparing them to receive His affectionate love.

"For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened." (Luke 11:10)

Each of us will process the Father's love differently, some more quickly than others. There are "cliff divers" and "waders". "Cliff divers" are often those who have been the most wounded as a child and now they are at the end of their rope. They just dive in head over heels because they cannot stand the pain any longer. "Waders" tip toe in a little at a time and wait for the tide to rise. They are usually very analytical or reserved. Often they are not even aware of their need for a revelation or experience of the Father's love.

- **Hidden Core Pain Begins to Push its Way to the Surface.**

"For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body." (Romans 8:19-23)

The flow of love in renewal is meant to bring people's pain to the surface so that the Father's healing love can be released in their lives. This involves the Push-Pull Theory. As God is pulling us into something new, we will feel pushed away from the old. As the Father's love begins to touch us, it will cause the hidden core pain in our lives to begin to rise to the surface. It is like the ice cream bar, "PUSH UP". Father's love pushes in and the pain begins to unconsciously surface.

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts (pushes) out fear..." (I John 4:18)

Many people have an unconscious pain tank that holds various layers of hidden core pain. They usually are not in touch with their childhood pain, but they are with their adult pain. Hidden childhood pain is often the ache of not receiving "storge" or family love that is expressed through large amounts of affectionate touch and positive, loving, tender tones of voice and eye contact. It has left many with fear of intimacy, difficulty in bonding, loss of trust, and difficulties in receiving and giving love.

With each deepening experience in God's love, different layers of pain will be tapped into, and each gallon of pain hurts as much as another when it surfaces. When people's pain begins to surface, often they start to panic as walls of self protection and comfort mechanisms are stripped away. Until their pain outweighs their shame, they are usually not willing to change.

Most people will not voluntarily deal with pain, but must be forced to, especially if the pain is deeply buried. Issues of anger, fear, insecurity, shame, guilt, self condemnation, isolation, etc. may begin to arise more easily. Father will use whatever circumstances He can to bring issues to the surface which have hindered a person from knowing His love.

"And as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive." (Genesis 50:20)

To acknowledge our hidden core pain, we must be willing to address our issues of shame, fear and control. This usually means we must allow our whole lives to be reordered. We do not know how God is going to do it, since we have been helpless to change ourselves in the past. But we must be willing for Him to melt the stony areas of our hearts.

"Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances." (Ezekiel 36:25-27)

- **A Person Often Goes Through A Season of Humiliation.**

"Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time. (I Peter 5:5-6)

Because the Father longs for intimacy with us, He is opposed to anything that separates us from His love. Pride often impedes or prevents this intimacy. A humble man cannot experience humiliation, only a man with pride. It often takes humiliations in our lives to expose areas of pride we are not even aware of that are hindering us from experiencing the Father's love. Remember, He will often offend the mind to get to the heart. Therefore, the quickest path to the Father's love is found in the following key areas:

HUMILITY - *"Truly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. (Matthew 18:3-4)*

SUBMISSION - in Latin, it means "to place yourself underneath and to push up." It is a redemptive act for you. Submission toward God often begins in the natural realm by having a submissive heart toward a spiritual father or mother on earth.

RECEIVING - Most people do not believe that God is a loving and compassionate God who longs to meet the needs of His children. Therefore, they lack faith in His character to be gracious to them and to meet their need for love. This is why having a Biblical understanding of the Father's love usually precedes an affectionate experience.

GIVING -After receiving a measure of revelation of Father's love, we may not gain any further revelation until we begin to give to others what we have already received. Humility increases when we go to the ones to whom we have misrepresented the Father's love in the past and seek forgiveness and restoration in those relationships. As we do, grace increases and strongholds are weakened through repentance and humility. We encourage you to ask Father to show you if there are those in your life that you need to go to and repent and ask forgiveness of. If so, make a list and proceed as He leads. Great freedom comes in this kind of giving and obedience.

A Heart That Is Ready To Receive.

People do not usually change until they hurt enough that they feel they have no other option but to change. Change means facing the pain and moving out of denial and blame shifting. Change is not change until it's change! Trying to change is not change. Planning to change is not change. Promising

to change is not change. Change is not change until you *actually* change and the fruit is evidenced in your life and recognized by others.

Look for seasons in people's lives when their pain is beginning to surface - stressful times when comfort zones are upended. They are usually ripe for the Father's love. Being ripe is when their pain has made them desperate for healing. Hidden core pain is near the surface. No longer are they able to control their emotions and feelings. Previously harnessed emotions that had been suppressed in the past are released upon others as weeping and brokenness or aggressive anger.

If pain is still buried behind layers of self protection, then they are rarely ripe or ready to receive. Prayer ministry is usually not effective with people who are not ripe. They are not yet aware of their need for the Father's love. They think everyone else needs it.

Our First Response Is To Attempt To Avoid The Pain or to Control It.

People who are not able or do not want to face their pain will deny it or focus blame elsewhere when problems arise. "I have dealt with that. It doesn't bother me anymore. They are the ones with the problem." As Christians, we often avoid dealing with our pain through hyper religious activity.

People often will not acknowledge their need to forgive and deal with their hurt because it means that someone had the power to wound them. They gain control of their emotions and stuff their feelings in their pain tank. Then the same circumstances that can bring the pain to the surface and release the Father's love can also bring about disaster and destruction. If we close our ears to truth, we open our hearts to a spirit of deception.

When people make wrong choices and refuse to face their pain, negative thoughts and self deception can begin to strongly influence them. They may run from receiving ministry and start finding fault with others. The amount of blame and criticism they have toward others increases and overflows in every area of their life, work, and ministry. At this point they may turn on counselors, prayer ministers, pastors, family or others who could help them.

"The guilty flee when no one is pursuing." (Proverbs 28:1)

They may move into a place of numbness and their emotions shut down so that they do not have to feel the pain anymore. They may lose their passion for life, love and relationships. Depression is often the result and they wrap themselves in the grave clothes of self destruction.

They May Start Seeking Wrong Answers For Right Needs.

When people choose to run from their pain instead of letting the Father push their pain to the surface with His love, they may seek comfort in their flesh. The counterfeit affections of passion, possession, power, and position become their source of love, identity, and/or comfort. As they begin to listen more freely to the voices of lust, control, or the praise of man, then any faith in the Father's love dissipates and they no longer can find comfort in spiritual things.

Everyone seeks for a safe place of comfort in the natural realm. God has ordained that our spouse be a source of comfort and love to us in the natural realm. However, if we expect our spouse to meet our love needs so we will be satisfied, we set them up for failure and ourselves for disappointment. We are expecting something from them that Father did not equip them to accomplish! This is idolatry! To carry the thought a step further, do you know anyone who got saved and all their love hunger was satisfied? Do you know anyone who met the Holy Spirit and all their love hunger was satisfied? Did Father equip Jesus and the Holy Spirit for that role, or is Father the source of unconditional love that will satisfy our love hunger and truly meet the deepest need in all our lives? If there is too much pain between husband and wife, then one may begin seeking wrong answers for right needs. Emotional dependency, spiritual adultery, pornography or affairs can result. Issues are being pushed to the surface by Father's love; yet, they run to counterfeit love in another person.

Healing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, I come to You in Jesus' Name with a deep desire to experience Your unconditional love for me just like I am. Father I recognize that my deepest need is to experience Your love in my life. Oh, Father, to feel loved, accepted and affirmed, to feel safe and secure in You, to feel whole and alive with a purpose for living brings such hope and excitement to me. Father, I receive Your invitation to come into Your loving arms and experience Your embrace. Begin my process now, today. Father, I give You permission to reveal to me any areas of my life that would hinder our relationship in any way. Show me any pride, unforgiveness, bitterness, hidden core pain or other sin that You see. I renounce all counterfeit affections of passion, possessions, power, or position and the comfort they have brought me. Father, help me prepare my heart to receive Your love and give it away to the next person I meet. Amen.

Chapter Seven

How The World Will Experience The Father's Love

We must be the carriers of Father's love to the world.

"...God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him (I John 4-16)...by this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. (John 13-35)

We have been created for love and intimacy, yet many have been through so much pain they have lost hope that they will ever become a carrier of Father's love to others. Some have waited for an instant, dramatic experience for change to come and they feel rejected because it has not happened to them. That is why making too much of the dramatic experience can be one of the greatest hindrances to the world experiencing Father's love through them. It then becomes very easy to wait for an experience for change and not focus on daily choices to walk in God's love by faith and to give it away to the next person we meet.

Father will give us a gift of love that we do not deserve if we are willing to give it away to others who may not deserve it. It is when we focus daily on His loving nature that anything not comfortable with love in us is displaced. How does God intend for your family and the world to experience His love? You are His plan.

How can this become reality? It requires that we focus on three primary keys in daily life:

- Walking in the Spirit
- Humility before God and man
- Transparent witnessing

- **WALKING IN THE SPIRIT**

"For what the law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did; sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on

the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God..."

(Romans 8:3-7)

Walking in the Spirit is a moment by moment decision to abide in love. It is determined by every decision that we make; whether we choose to focus on the things in Father's heart and live in life and peace, or whether we choose to follow self will and live in insecurity and discomfort.

The days when we choose to walk in the Spirit are fruitful and full of rest and contentment. Then God's

love flows vertically from Him to us and is released horizontally to others as we purpose in our heart to make Father's love known to our family, and then overflow to the nations.

Each day that we are wrapped up in our own need and are more committed to busyness than to love should serve as motivation to walk in the Spirit thereafter, because the days of our flesh are filled with aggressive striving, anxiety, and an angry edge as we seek to build our identity upon the things we do. Remember, life is in the being, not in the doing. By the end of the day our family's countenance hardens as they become insecure in our presence, knowing that they must perform in a certain way to receive honor or value from us. We lay in bed at the end of the day with thoughts of blame shifting, justifying, and waiting for others to apologize to us for not measuring up to our rigid expectations.

Making too much of circumstances can be one of the greatest hindrances to abiding daily in Father's love. Walking in the Spirit is not a walk that is based upon emotions or another's behavior. It is simply dealing with the daily issues in life as each matter comes up. A definition of walking in the Spirit is moment by moment walking in humility and repentance, and surrendering to Father's love in each circumstance as it is now and not waiting for a dramatic experience.

The enemy is terrified of us living life daily abiding in God's love, and he uses three basic tactics to hinder us:

- Decoy
- Despoil
- Destroy

One of the enemy's primary decoys is the dramatic experience. There have been many times in the past when we have hit hard places in our walk, and God has had to take dramatic measures to save us from ourselves. We never forget the feelings of freedom that come when we experience great emotional breakthroughs. Problems begin when we start spending too much time trying to perform to

regain those feelings. Then there are times that we see or hear of someone else's dramatic experience and begin to think to ourselves, "What's the matter with me? Why doesn't God do that in my life? He must not love me as much as He does them." We then lose faith in the voice of the One who calls us His beloved child and begin to doubt that in us His favor rests. We do not have to go through dramatic experiences to walk in Father's love; we enter in by faith, choose humility over pride, and allow God's love to displace our pain and insecurities!

Satan's second tactic is to despoil us of our inheritance. The accuser of the brethren will throw self condemnation at us each time we misrepresent Father's love to our family through being too intense, judgmental or insensitive. We easily get into shame, blame shifting, or self condemnation. Instead of acknowledging our sin against love and asking them to forgive us, we wait for a dramatic experience for change to come.

This leads us into the enemy's third tactic - to destroy our sense of Father's abiding presence by seeking to prevent us from keeping short accounts with God and others. Too often our pride prefers to walk in a sin against love rather than walking in the Spirit. When we fall into sin, we must immediately recognize it and confess it. A daily walk with God requires guarding our hearts and thoughts and taking care of any sins as they arise, not waiting until the next ministry session to repent. If we have misrepresented Father's love to another person, a return to the Spirit is very simple:

- Go to the one whom we have hurt
- Acknowledge our sin
- Ask them to forgive us
- Ask Jesus to forgive us

We are then cleansed of sin and restored to Father's love. We simply enter in by humility and faith.

- **HUMILITY BEFORE GOD AND MAN**

"Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven." (Matthew 18:3-4)

"But the greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted." (Matthew 23:11-12)

"Clothe yourself with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you at the proper time." (I Peter 5:5-6)

"Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest? But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word." (Isaiah 66:1, 3)

The second key to abiding daily in God's love is living a life of humility before man and God. Andrew Murray once said, "Humility before God is best measured by our humility before man." The number one hindrance to abiding in love is the absence of humility. When we justify our behavior, blame shift, accuse, fault find, or seek to vindicate ourselves, this is the absence of humility. When we do not confess our sins against love to others, this is the absence of humility. The absence of humility is the sin that caused Lucifer to lose the place of abiding in God's love.

Humility involves letting go of independence and having things our way. Any area in which we lack humility will not have God's love and grace flowing through it. It is humility that reveals a heart of sincere repentance and hunger for God.

It is our little pet excuses for not walking in God's love, grace, and affirmation toward others that reveals the depth of pride that we walk in.

- "I've got to keep my walls up, or somebody will hurt me again." No, that's the sin of independence.
- "Well, if I am open and transparent, people will reject me." No, that's the sin of pride.
- "I am impatient because I'm so tired and worn out." No. Anything unloving is a sin against love.
- "I am withdrawing from you because I don't feel safe in your presence." No, that's the sin of isolation.
- "You made me act this way." Blame shifting.
- "The children got the best of me and I had all I could take." Justifying.
- "I have to protect myself from you." Dishonoring.

Each of our little excuses takes us farther away from humility, thus farther away from abiding in Father's love. He never leaves us, but our excuses and pride separate us from dwelling in His affectionate love.

"I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5)

"But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God." (Isaiah 59:2)

Justifying or blame shifting may have become a habit structure of thinking (stronghold) that we have used since our youth as we sought to avoid admitting fault and thus feeling like we were deserving of

punishment. A habit is an act (thought) repeated so often that it is involuntary. There is no new decision of mind each time the act (thought) is performed. The habit then becomes a fortress of lies that is contrary to what God has said about you or Himself.

We have convenient names and excuses for sin. Our first step towards true repentance is choosing to call sin what it is. Then these excuses no longer work for us:

- "I wasn't raised that way."
- "I never received much affection as a child."
- "That's not my personality type."

These statements may be true, but now that we are children of the One Who created us by love and for love, if we are not walking in affectionate love, it is a sin against love that we must address. We seek deliberate ways to cover up our sin. We attempt to make ourselves look better than others by focusing on their faults rather than dealing with our own. Then we add hypocrisy to our list of offenses and hide behind a pretense of false righteousness. To be free, we begin to recognize that anything we hide from others in order to make us look good is darkness, and we start drifting off center of Father's love.

Once we reject the preceding two points, we begin to deceive ourselves and eventually we are unable to recognize sin in our own lives. There is nothing much easier than self deception. To protect ourselves from ourselves, it is helpful to give family members and several respected people in the Lord permission to speak the truth to us about attitudes and motivations that they see going on in us. Have them regularly ask the hard questions:

- How is your relationship with your family?
- Are you moving back into aggressive striving at work or intensity at home?
- Would your family, friends or work mates say that you are drifting off center of Father's love?

The blood of Jesus covers our sins, not our excuses. We cannot excuse the present by blaming someone else, looking back to the past, or by waiting for future dramatic experiences. The true dramatic experience is whether we will follow the way of pride and justification of each sin against love, or choose the path of humility, confession, and repentance. Our destiny is determined by our decision!

"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11:29)

Humility is the truest characteristic of our lives in Christ and our experience in Father's love. Humility before our family and others is the only sufficient proof of our humility before God! This is the key that unlocks deeper levels of experience in Father's embrace.

We must walk in humility without becoming the victim of a predator. A thorough study of the victim/predator teaching is necessary to distinguish between true humility and walking in a victim spirit. Please see the eBook listed on our website titled The Victim Spirit, by Arthur Burk.

- **TRANSPARENT WITNESSING**

"And My language and My message were not set forth in persuasive (enticing and plausible) words of wisdom, but they were in demonstration of the (Holy Spirit and power) that is, a proof by the Spirit and power of God, operating on Me and stirring in the minds of My hearers the most holy emotions and thus persuading them (so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men) human philosophy (but in the power of God.)
(I Corinthians 2:4-5 Amp.)

The third key that helps us to abide daily in Father's love is to realize that it is not enough to just get our sins right with God. Our sins against love were not committed privately without affecting other people. We should choose to live as if every conversation we have either blesses or defiles someone else. Even if we do not speak to the person next to us in line at the grocery store, our posture, our countenance, and our attitudes either testify of God's love or our self love and self will. Genuine repentance in our heart will be walked out in our daily lives by our past defeats becoming God's victories in someone else's life. Abiding in Father's love means not only receiving the blessings and benefits of His household, but also being ready at all times to witness to God's personal dealings with us. **What God is doing in us belongs to everyone we meet!**

Three things happen when we are open and transparent about how God has dealt with us and the sin in our lives.

- Transparent witnessing makes us more sensitive to the shame that a particular sin brings. Confessing to others a past sin in our lives becomes a catalyst that helps prevent us from ever wanting to fall back into that sin. We enter into a place of humility in that area, and understand the magnitude of the grace of God that covers our sin.
- Transparent witnessing releases a deeper cleansing and freedom from sin. As long as we keep our sin hidden, only confessing it to God, we do not become sensitive to it, and it easily sneaks

back up on us. But as we begin sharing with others how God is delivering us from certain problems, we experience a deeper cleansing process each time we share.

- Transparent witnessing about God setting us free in an area in our life where we have habitually sinned against love brings other people into recognition of the sin in their own lives, and they come under personal conviction. The honesty and openness of another believer who admits past sins and testifies of Father's love delivering and restoring him will do more to bring someone into acknowledgment of their sin and into repentance than 100 hell fire sermons ever will.

Healing Prayer:

Father I come to You in Jesus' Name and I give You permission to use me to take the message of Your unconditional love to the nations. I ask You to teach me and strengthen me to learn to walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh, and each time I move into the flesh please prompt me so I can choose to walk right back into the Spirit. Father I ask You to teach me humility by showing me the areas of pride in my life that I might be free from it. I ask you to reveal to me any place where I may be walking in a victim or predator spirit. Father, show me my faults that I might be free to see myself and change. Help me become a transparent witness before all men; not only a witness of Your healing of my sinful ways, but also a transparent witness of Your unconditional love for mankind. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

The Epilog & Blessing

This is by no means an exhaustive work on the Father's love. We remain on a constant journey and pursuit for more of His love in our lives everyday. Because this pursuit will end only when we go home to be with Him, we will always have another chapter to write or another glory story to share! It is our desire that this work may encourage you, our reader, to pursue His love in your own life and make Him your magnificent obsession.

We bless you now in the name of the Father, Who loves you; the Son, Who died for you; and the Holy Spirit Who comforts, strengthens and encourages you. We ask that the Father's extravagant love for you become a real experience to you in your spirit, your soul and your body. In the Name of Jesus. Amen.