



*Rick & Sue McCoy*

# *The Love Letter*

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## Love is a Commandment!

*“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” Jesus answered him, “Love the Lord your God with every passion of your heart, with all the energy of your being, and with every thought that is within you.’ This is the great and supreme commandment. And the second is like it in importance: “You must love your friend in the same way you love yourself. Contained within these commandments to love, you will find all the meaning of the Law and the Prophets.”*

**Matt. 22:36-40 TPT**

When I (Rick) was reading these verses in my Bible several weeks ago, the word “commandment” just seemed to jump off the page at me, and in my spirit, I heard in a firm voice, “Love is a commandment!” It caught me by surprise, and I thought, “Wow, I have never seen love like that before!” Having been an officer in the Army for over 23 years, I knew a lot about giving and receiving commands and orders from a higher authority. Orders were directives given by someone with authority to accomplish a task, but commands were given with authority and the expectation of immediate action without question or hesitation! I like to think of a commandment as something God “commands” us to do and He “meant” for us to do it right now!

There are many commandments given in the scriptures, but Jesus chose these two as the greatest ones for us to obey. If you have accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, then loving yourself, others, and God is no longer an option or something you only do occasionally. In fact, this is so important that Jesus says everything else in the scriptures hangs on (“finds all its meaning,” “is based on,” “takes their meaning from,” or “depends on”) the fulfilling of these two commandments to love! However, Jesus is not talking about just any kind of love when He quotes these commandments in answer



to the Pharisee’s question. This is the special kind of Love Our Heavenly Father has for His sons and daughters. The Hebrew word is “Hesed” the “sticky love” of God that says there is nothing you could ever do, say, or not do that would ever cause Me to stop loving you. Some uses of the word hesed imply that this is a “covenant love” meaning God would have to break His covenant with us if He ever stopped loving us!

### Loving the Lord Our God

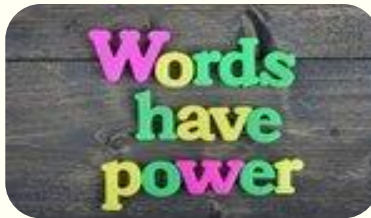
For us to be able to love like this, we must have God’s Love inside of us. **1 John 4:16** says, “*And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him,*” and **1 John 4:19** says, “*We love Him because He first loved us.*” You can’t give away what you haven’t received. We must first receive His love before we can have love to give away to others! We need to make love a priority in our lives so that we can be “rooted and grounded” in His love by faith and be filled with all the fullness of God. **Eph. 3:17-19** Love is more than a feeling, emotion, thought, or word; it is God Himself! God **is** Love! We are created in His image and likeness, and we are just like our big Daddy!

Our first encounter with His Love happens in Heaven before we ever enter our mother’s womb. **Jer. 1:5** I believe during that time in heaven, we receive all the love of the Father, just in seed form. Like a natural seed in the correct environment, all we need is “water (the living Word)” and that love inside of us begins to grow. Jesus said, “*But he who drinks of the water I will give him will never thirst again. The water I give him will become a spring of water welling up to eternal life.*” **John 4:14** Jesus also said that the words He spoke would also have a cleansing effect on us. **John 15:3**

God's Word has a life-giving and cleansing effect on our spirit that allows our heart to experience more of His Heseed Love in our life. As His love grows in our heart, just like a watered seed, it releases the fruits of love: i.e. joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

We already have all the love of God inside of us, but what changes over time is our capacity to experience and walk in more of that love! Jesus said, *"If you abide in my word, you are my disciples, and you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free."* **John 8:31** Knowing His Love in our heart also has the added benefit of setting us free from the effects of sin and death. **John 8:34-35** In the Amplified version, the words "abide in my word" are translated "have knowledge of and participate in my word." Jesus also uses the Greek word "ginosko" which implies an experiential "knowing" of the truth. We must become *"partakers of His divine nature"* for it to impact our hearts!

**2 Pet. 1:4** That's when the Word moves from our head to our heart, and we grow more capacity to experience more of His Love!



### Walking In Love

In our own efforts, we can't "do" love. Our own efforts to love usually just frustrate us and often bring out the wrong responses in us or others! True obedience is an act of love and is motivated by love. *"He who has my commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves me, and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."* **John 14:21** When we love ourselves, our wife, family, others, His Word, or Father himself, Jesus manifests His presence in our lives! We will start walking in more of His love more of the time and our lives will become full of His joy, peace, and rest. Every step of love moves us towards Father, and in His presence is fullness of joy! **Ps. 16:11**

For me, both love commandments have been difficult to walk in, but for different reasons. Our first understanding, attitude, and response to God results from how our natural father was with us. For me, my dad's love seemed distant and cold unless I did something that he liked or caused him to be proud of me. My dad had an explosive anger that he occasionally took out on his three boys. Out of fear and the rejection I felt from him, I chose to become the obedient child. I tried to stay on the good side of the favor line with my dad, because to do otherwise would bring his wrath and more rejection.

After making Jesus my Savior, I had the same attitude about my Heavenly Father that I did towards my dad. That fear-based attitude began to be reinforced as I started to read the Old Testament with my head and not my heart!

I had pulled away from my natural father, and as a result, I was not able to receive my heavenly Father's Love either. At my house, it was not safe to show any emotions and I avoided any more pain of rejection by minimizing interactions with anyone else. Even after getting married and being saved in college, I still had an orphan heart. It wasn't until I was able to forgive my parents and release the fears and debt that I held against them that I was finally able to see God as my true Father and open my heart to receive His Heseed Love. Life began to dramatically change for me, and I began to experience His Love, to get in touch with my emotions again, and start loving myself and others. As His comforting love began to grow inside my heart, I had more joy, more peace, and freedom in my life. His love eventually replaced the need for the false lovers to comfort my pain, and I walked away from the addiction of pornography and lustful thoughts.

Love grew in my heart, and I can remember walking across Penn State University campus and sensing a great love for all the students I passed as I saw the pain and lost look in their faces and eyes. By then, Sue and I had already been teaching Sunday school and reaching out to kids in parks, neighborhoods, and other outreaches through our puppets, skits, and teachings. That led us to contacts that allowed us to go to other nations. As our hearts were awakened to the Father's Love, our passion expanded to reaching the little child inside the grown bodies of men and women. As Sue and my hearts have become more aware of God and His great love in us, we have more love that we can give away to others. Our desire now is to have other people experience what we have received and go even further into His Love and impacting others!

### Loving Self and Others

The second love commandment is still very much a work in progress in my life. The first hurdle has been to begin loving myself. I grew very fast, and as a result, I was always very uncoordinated. I was the last one picked for any game and was never able to play sports in high school. I was also left-handed, which was frowned upon in school as a boy, and it frustrated my dad because I could never tighten nuts or turn a screwdriver without them slipping off.

I hated myself and had very low self-esteem. However, I grew out of my clumsiness after high school, and as the broken parts of my heart have continued to be healed, I can now do many things well and have started loving myself the way I am. PTL! I also had to forgive myself for all the ways and times that I gave in to the addiction to porn and for not loving myself. It was very healing to discover that Father doesn't keep score or a record of all our past deeds! He sees us through the lens of the finished work of the cross and the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ! **Heb. 8:12**

As my loving relationship with my Heavenly Father has grown, so has my ability to love others as I love myself. I have much greater love and compassion for those who are still struggling with pain in their hearts, trapped in addictions, dealing with bad choices they have made, and carrying around all the burdens and cares in their lives. One of the biggest challenges still facing me, however, is to forgive and love those who have given themselves over to Satan and the darkness, who do evil things, who spill innocent blood, and who take unfair advantage of others. Father is giving me the grace to let go of disgust and begin to see them as He does, His sons and daughters!

I also am still dealing with a tendency to be critical or judgmental towards those who do or think differently than what I think is the right way. Instead of being patient to learn more about them and why they believe or do things a certain way, I am quick to judge them as being wrong. Father has pointed out to me that it is one thing to acknowledge and state the facts about someone, but it becomes a judgment when that also changes how I see them or my attitude towards that other person. Ouch! I've been praying for His mercy and forgiveness a lot more now to stop the judgments I seem to keep making towards others and start walking in more of His Love towards them! Father never stops loving them and I have committed myself to do the same! *Father is always looking for someone to love!*

Father is calling all of us to live from a position of continuously being loved by Him. We can live in the house of love that He has prepared for us while we are still on this earth and impact the world with His Love!

**Can you be a child who needs to be loved by a father?  
He's waiting for you!**

*"...we indeed discover that we are not alone, and that the one who is with us wants only one thing: to give us love!" ~ Henry Nouwen ~*

### Praise Reports for 2023!!!

♥ Our YouTube channel where we put the videos we made for our friends in Africa are impacting people in the US and other countries – watched over 44 hours!

[https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=Abbas+Arms+International](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Abbas+Arms+International)

♥ Our website <https://www.abbasarmsintl.org/> had 1,200 visits and 3,700 pages viewed from 30 countries.

♥ Over 500 people viewed videos and other posts on our Facebook page **Abbas Arms International, Inc.**

♥ Father has continued to use the materials and teachings we sowed into Uganda, Kenya, and Zambia.



#### Bungoma, Kenya-Richard Marks

Our visit to his church in 2019 impacted his life and marriage! Richard has continued to see his church grow and prosper. They have over 350 members and large children and youth programs. They are also reaching orphans and younger children with food and activities.



#### Zambia-Eunice

Veronica wept as she listened to the video on heart forgiveness. She then asked Eunice how she could forgive daily her husband's verbal abuse? Willy and Eunice ministered to this couple for two hours, sending us a heartfelt thank you for their marriage being restored!



#### Kenya-Nickson

Having a projector, screen and laptop is an answer to prayer! We can now project new worship and praise songs and use it for teaching with PowerPoint slides, now members come in with notebooks to take notes. We are planning to live stream our services through our Facebook church page.



#### Kenya-Samson

I appreciate them sacrificing their time to make very educative, impactful, life changing teachings on video so that our church, community, and young people benefit and learn through the video teachings. Many have really grown, dramatically in Father's Love, walking in sonship and understanding the sense of belonging. We're learning it's not about how we see ourselves, but how Father sees us, among many other teachings. Even our youth ministry has really grown! Many have given their lives to Christ and been transformed and set free!



#### Uganda-Philip

The videos you sent were clear with powerful messages and easy-to-understand truths from scripture and personal experiences. They are heard by a variety of people in several locations. We use the projector every Sunday for songs and scriptures. The projector and screen are also used by other pastors, leading many to come to a saving knowledge of the Lord!

## Father's Blessing of Love for You!



I bless you to receive all the love Father placed in your heart before you were even born. May His love continually draw you back to Him as you experience all the things of this world. I bless you to walk through each test and trial in your life with the awareness of His love and Him loving you even in the midst of the trials. I bless you to walk in His Love towards everyone who you meet throughout your day and be quick to respond in love to every person and situation you encounter. I bless you to have all the broken parts of your heart healed by His comforting love. I bless you to receive His love and to be able to give it away to everyone that you meet. Be a joy starter

with your family, friends, and everyone you encounter each day. Put a smile on your face as you make eye contact with everyone you meet each day!