The Love Letter

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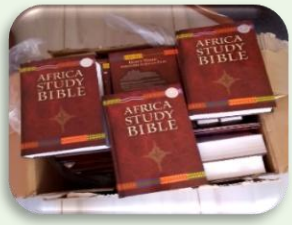
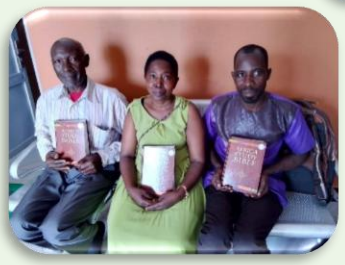
THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!!

Thank you to all those who were a part of sowing around 150 Bibles into the pastors in many parts of Uganda, leaders in rural Bungoma, Kenya, and 50 youth! It took some time to purchase the Bibles as well as Philip, Julius, and Peter having to travel to many places to personally give them to the pastors. Each one who received the study bibles was so grateful and filled with joy to have such a special resource to help them sow the Word into their people! The leaders that helped Peter in the rural area kept thanking him for all the people who didn't even know them purchasing them, Bibles! Let's pray that each Bible will be used to touch many hearts and lives in the coming years! Below are a few pictures and more will come later as not all the Bibles have been distributed yet!





Staying Centered

It feels like time and days are going faster! It's been almost 3 months since I wrote "Is Your Heart Centered or Distracted?" Shortly after that, my life felt like a fast-spinning merry-go-round with everything trying to pull me away from the center where I could be flung off and get hurt! That is about how I felt by mid-July! Ugh! We had a full calendar from mid-May with special friends visiting us from Germany at different times as well as a wonderful time with our family! That was on top of all our regular tasks! My heart and life felt centered at the beginning, but by the end of those two months my heart and life weren't in a good place. My days felt "***top heavy" with too many activities,*** or they were "***out of balance like the wheels on a bicycle or car!"*** Life was not running smoothly. I was challenged to stay focused and receive all I needed from Father!

In my last Love Letter, He showed me that in our natural world He is like our sun, the center of our solar system that is unchanging and is the source of life? ***He never wanted us to be far away from Him!*** Father always planned for us to have a personal heart-to-heart relationship with Him and experience His extravagant love every day! Jesus came to reveal His Father and show us the way home to where we have always belonged. When we accept Jesus as our Savior and Lord, we become part of His family with our identity being His sons/daughters, like Jesus is. Father always wanted us to be close. While writing this, He dropped ***a new thought*** into my heart that ***to be truly centered means to live with God in the center of every part of our lives***. He's shown me more about what my life centered on Him looks like! Our life is a process of continually asking and letting Him line up our lives, so we are more like Him. As you read this, may He show you at least one thing that helps you become more centered too!

Where is Our Source?

Recently Holy Spirit lovingly showed me how I had lost seeing Him as the One supplying all that I needed each day! In fact, I saw the center hub of a bicycle wheel and He said, **"I AM the HUB, the center of the wheel!"** He wants us to keep our eyes on Him and nothing else. Our natural world can keep us so busy, we get distracted by other things and don't pay attention or make time to receive what we need from Father God. Because His Kingdom is largely invisible to our outer world, we can too easily look to self as our source, expecting self to figure out how to solve problems or supply what is

needed! The world trains us that way! Have you ever seen a power strip that you can plug many electrical items into? That strip is meant to be plugged into an electric socket on a wall where there is unlimited power for everything connected to it. But sometimes we think or act like **we** can supply all that is needed! That is like plugging the power strip into the power strip! There is no power if it's not plugged into a true source of power! Trying to figure things out ourselves is really going away from being centered and looking to our true Father to provide! There is no other source that knows everything! He is the unlimited One who will never run out of whatever we may need! Father knows best and knows what we need better than us!

From the beginning Father God created everything His family needed in the garden. Then He blessed them and expected them to be fruitful, multiply and fill the whole earth with His Kingdom, His ways, and much more! **Gen. 1:28** The kingdoms of this world will pass away, but His Kingdom will endure forever! His Kingdom is eternal and has no end. The things of this world won't last, but the Bible says He is the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God worthy of honor and glory forever! **1 Tim. 1:17** As I get older, I'm aware that my time on earth is getting shorter, but my heart and life are centered on Him which will be the center of my life forever!

His Kingdom is Within

Jesus came to die in our place so that we can experience the Father just like Jesus did and does! When asked about the Kingdom of God, Jesus said God's Kingdom is coming but not in a way that you will be able to see it with your eyes because **God's Kingdom is within you**! **Luke 17:20-21** I spent several days meditating on those words. The importance of being ***"God-inside minded,"*** took on greater meaning to me! Father is no longer the center of the universe; He wants to be the center of my heart/life! He has always desired that our hearts would be one, centered on Him and His Kingdom! If His Kingdom is inside us, that means our focus should be on Him and His ways should impact how we see ourselves and what we do! Other verses came to mind – **"For in Him we live and move and have our being..." Acts 17:28, "…this mystery … which is Christ in you the hope of glory." Col. 1:27.** We all need to see Christ in us the way Father does!

*"The **way"*** into His Kingdom came through Jesus. **John 14:6** So, why was Jesus always talking about His Father? He is the way, but Father is the destination! After Adam and Eve fell into satan's ways, Father, Son and Holy Spirit's eternal purpose became to bring His Kingdom back to the earth again. The Bible is really a story about Father getting His family back! God's Kingdom came back to the earth when Jesus stepped out of eternity into history, lived a sinless life, died on the cross to pay our debt, and redeem us back to our original place in God's family. He also came to destroy the works of the devil forever**. 1 John 3:8** Father, Son, and Holy Spirit always ***planned for us to live in the center of their love*** enjoying the kind of life they share – sweet communion, fellowship, eternal joy, fullness, glory, and so much more. We were never meant to be separated from them. When we open our hearts to Father's love, receive salvation and all His free gifts, He comes in and makes His home ***in us and with us***! Check out **John 14:23 and Rom. 8:32.** When we see His Kingdom inside us, we can let Him lead us each day supplying all that we need!

Hindrances to Staying Centered

The God of this world, satan, tries to hinder us from living in our true identity "in Christ." The ***"things of this world"*** are constantly in front of our eyes and bodies influencing us – our hearts, our choices, and what life is all about. Even as believers in Jesus, our fleshly bodies and soul have been trained by the natural world. We often react quickly without thinking about Jesus or the Word. ***Our "soul and flesh"*** are easily connected to the things of this world and like to decide what we'll do, think, eat, etc. They often rule over our spirit stopping our spirit from acting like Christ. The Bible tells us that ***the flesh is against the Spirit, and the Spirit is against the flesh***. **Gal. 5:16-23** Jesus asked His disciples to watch and pray for Him, but when He came back later, He found them sleeping and said, **"The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Matt. 26:41 NKJV** If self (our flesh) is the one in charge of our daily life, at some point self will face something that is too big for him or her. Circumstances beyond us can cause fear, anxiety, stress, or other emotions and no answers. Our flesh and soul really can be weak!

Another hindrance to walking in our true identity and being centered in Christ is being ***"performance oriented."*** I grew up ***thinking I needed to "do something" to merit love*** or be seen or noticed. Over the years I have heard messages at different churches that talked about how to be a good Christian. I tried hard to do my best but that's exhausting! I never was sure if I had done enough. If I made a mistake, I felt bad about

myself. Somehow, I got an image that said, "***Do good, get good, but do bad, get bad."*** Those thoughts are way off center of how Father sees us. If we are trying to add to what Jesus did, we aren't valuing His sacrifice to redeem us! We aren't **"human doings"** but **"human beings!"** We lose our center if we do things to please others or get our identity from something rather than our identity from being His children.

My last hindrance is ***days being so full of activities that there is no time to relax, be still and silent.*** We each have a unique temperament and energy level which influences how much energy we expend each day. But today's world is so fast paced with everyone being exposed to the internet and all our modern technology that how we use our time each day has changed greatly! In the 1950's television was just starting, and all the stations went off at midnight and came back at 6 or 7 am. Now we have access 24/7 with so many channels, movies, sports, video games, etc. that our lives are seldom lived with any quiet or without something going on in the background. Today's culture can keep us stirred up until we fall into bed exhausted never finding or making time to relax or think about God, causing us to be off-center!

Ways to Stay Centered in Christ

There are no formulas or set of steps to follow to stay centered in Christ. Why? Because relationships are meant to flow and grow as you get closer to someone and that means God too! Below are a few of the ways I get myself re-centered on Him and His Kingdom within! Ask Him to show you which one is for you. Don't try to do them all at the same time. Establishing a new pattern or habit takes time. So, relax and let Holy Spirit lead you!

1.See your ***spirit*** as ***the real you*** that the Spirit of God breathed into you. **Job 33:4** You are ***a spirit***, you ***have a soul*** (mind, will, and emotions) and ***you live in a body***. **1 Thes. 5:23** See Christ living in your spirit and thank Him! Read **1 John 4:4, 1 John 4:17**

2. We can get too busy with the things of this world! Ask Him 3 questions about what needs to change – ***What am I to stop doing? What am I to continue doing? What am I to start doing?***

3. During your day take time to **"Pause"** before you get stirred up or overwhelmed.
- Practice deep breathing too! (*Check out John Eldredge's Pause app*)
- Practice appreciation – who He is, what He has done for you and so much more!

4. Ask yourself – who's in the driver's seat of your life? ***Be like a little child*** and let Father be the One in control of the things you face that you can't control. Let Him lead you, carry you, etc.

5. Focus on your identity on the inside and how Father sees you rather than the outside and what other people think of you. Leif Hetland has 4 questions he asks Papa: What do You ***SEE*** in me? What do You ***SAY*** about me? What do You ***THINK*** about me? What do You ***FEEL*** about me?

6. Read these verses out loud: **Gal. 2:20, Rom. 6:4**, **2 Cor. 5:17, Col. 3:10** Keep saying them till they become real in your heart. Look in a mirror and say them or close your eyes and see yourself being like Jesus. Focus on the new creation you are now and see Christ in you!

7. Turn off all the noise of the world and focus your heart on Him. Then do what Barry Adams says, ***"Find a quiet place and breathe deeply. Whisper: "Father, thank You for forming Christ within me! Let His love do the shaping***. Learn to abide in Him. Start each day asking and receiving something from Him.

8. If these ideas are too much for you, this one is simple even a child can get – let your heart be centered on the central truth – "***I am loved by the Father and I belong to Him!"*** Let your heart rest in His love and live loved daily!

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The Father's Blessing!

I bless you to live from your spirit and receive Father's love daily resting in your true identity of being His son/daughter forever. I pray that the things of this world, and the fast-paced time we live in cannot pull your flesh and soul away from being centered on Him! May He give you eyes to see His kingdom within you, knowing you belong and are a part of His family. I bless your heart and whole being to have God-sight when you look at yourself. May you see the fullness and glory of the new creation that you are in Christ. I pray you make time to get quiet each day, hear His voice and freely receive the good things He loves to give His children!