

LETTER TO AN ANXIOUS HEART

Dear Beloved,

I know the crushing thoughts that pervade your heart. I hear the waves of anxious thinking that bombard your mind. I need you to know, I have looked you over, and I know your heart of hearts. I know all the good and all the dastardly, all the hidden things you want no one to know, and I need you to know, I'm here, not going anywhere. I'm here to lead you into a way that is everlasting - a way of hope, life, and peace (*Psalms 139:23-24ⁱ*).

Let that word, "peace," hang in the air for a moment - it is yours. It's what I offer. It is the peace that comes when you finally come to the end of yourself. When you finally realize your utter inability to control anything. It is a peace that comes when you recognize, in deep conversation with me, that I am utterly in control. You will know you are getting there when your mind shifts from fixating on everything you wish you were, to every good thing you've already been given. Listen to me dear one, I am not done with you. Your anxious mind wants to try and figure out a way through, it wants to bring control to what feels out of control. I'm inviting you to embrace your lack of control. I'm inviting you to the shelter I long to provide for you, *my* peace. It is a peace that will shock and amaze those around you; it surpasses and transcends what the world can understand. My peace is a guard for the deepest recesses of your heart and mind. Embrace it, even when it feels impossible to make sense (*Philippians 4:6-7ⁱⁱ*).

I am a caregiver by nature - a nurturer of the broken, the gentle hand that restores. You are bent - I won't break you. Your spark smolders - I will not snuff you out. I will walk alongside, at the pace you can bear, because you are what I'm after (*Matthew 12:20ⁱⁱⁱ*). You worry about so many things. I need you to know I see the constant whirlpool of shame, blame, guilt, and inadequacy. Do you still not know me? Do you not know I see what no one else sees? I look past the outside of the cup to what is within. I look past the frenetic. I look past your sense of inferiority. I look past all of what occupies your mind to the part of you that, like a child, looks for an Abba, a Daddy. I see your heart, and I like what I see (*1 Samuel 16:7^{iv}*).

There are a few things I need you to know. The waters will rise, yet I am still with you. You may feel as though the raging river will sweep you away, but I will not allow it to take you. You may walk through red hot coals in this life - I will keep you from being burned. You will not be set afire. **I am with you** (*Isaiah 43:3^v*).

Don't you know my name? I'm the "Warrior Hearted One." I have a fierce love for those I love. I know fighting, and I am on your side. Let me take up your cause, you can relax in me. I am your salvation. Can I tell you a deep secret? One I wrote long ago? Lean in close, let me whisper my truth to your deepest longing. "I

ⁱ "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

ⁱⁱ "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

ⁱⁱⁱ "A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he has brought justice through to victory."

^{iv} "But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.'"

^v "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze."

take great delight in you.” I see you, and I delight in YOU. I know, the enemy has filled your mind with lies and half-truths, but I know nothing of them because I did not create them. They are a horrible fiction that has hidden my truth. You are my treasure, my love. My child, I long to sing over you in joy! (*Zephaniah 3:17^{vi}*)

I know it feels like there are so many things to fix, so many things to worry about, so many things that if you don't engage them will fall off the face of this earth. This is not my truth. My truth is that I can take care of it. For fun I spend my days dressing the flowers, feeding the birds, capping the mountains with white, and stirring the oceans. How much more do you think you are worth to me? Stop, don't answer that. I already have. You are worth everything, my very life - put on the line to bring you back into my presence (*Matthew 6:25-34^{vii}*, *John 3:16^{viii}*), and, get this, I did all that while you were at your absolute worst (*Romans 5:8^{ix}*). So, what makes you think I can't handle what you feel you are now?

Let me close with this. Hard days are in front of you - unimaginable pain, inscrutable distress. Don't lose heart, my dear one. I am the overcomer. I've overcome the stronghold of sin. I've overcome your dead heart and shocked it back to life. I've overcome the greatest enemy of all: death (*John 16:33^x*, *1 Corinthians 15:55-57^{xi}*). So, when I say this, believe it. I have a special book, a journal of sorts. In it I record the names of those who are mine. It is my “family reunion” list, and dear one, you are on it. I will have special compassion on you because you are my special child whom I love dearly. Rest in that (*Malachi 3:16-17^{xii}*).

Love
DAD
(Your Abba)

^{vi} “The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing.”

^{vii} “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

^{viii} “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

^{ix} “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

^x “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

^{xi} “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

^{xii} “A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the Lord and honored his name. ‘On the day when I act,’ says the Lord Almighty, ‘they will be my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as a father has compassion and spares his son who serves him.’”