



LETTERS to my **ANGRY** **SELF**

Unmasking a Lady of Rage

DR. D. C. MATTHEWS

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PREFACE

Thank you for downloading this promotional e-book!

The following letters are stories and personal experiences that I have encountered over a period of time. My desire is that through my transparency of my struggle, you will find the necessary tools to tackle anger and win.

Anger is an emotion, which of itself isn't bad; but, it is the spirit of anger that leads to trouble. In each letter, corresponding scripture is given to support this battle against the spirit of anger with the truth of God's Word. I encourage you to read the letters and meditate upon each corresponding scripture.

This book is a supplement to my new book, *The Surrendered Soul: Aligning the Five Parts of Your Soul with the Will of God*, which will be available late 2017. For a more in-depth look at issues of the soul, including anger, please sign up for updates on my website at www.clairealdin.com.

INTRODUCTION

Sitting on the side of the white porcelain bathtub, my head hung low as I desperately searched for answers. I was at the point in my life when I realized that something had to change. In the morning, I would pray and plan to have a good day. By night, I would have had an angry outburst coupled with hurtful words that I could not take back. My most important relationships were spiraling out of control and I had no clue how to repair the damage already done.

Confirming this was the verse in Galatians 5 which reminded me that outbursts of wrath are works of the flesh I had been operating in my flesh, but pleading the blood of Jesus over everyone else. Alone and lonely, I cried out to God. In those moments of solitude, God showed me that at the root of my anger was a spirit of perfectionism. As a child, I was rewarded for perfect attendance, perfect citizenship, and perfect grades. This translated into unrealistic expectations in my adult life. I expected my kids to behave perfectly, to perform in stellar ways, and to make me look like a perfect parent. Boy was I in for a surprise! My anger continued to build. I had no control over others and those within my control were rebelling. I was being forced to deal with me. All of this resulted in being lost and at

a cross road with God. The results are explained in the following letters to my angry self.

CHAPTER ONE

WHAT DID I DO WRONG?

Pork chops fried to a golden brown, mashed potatoes with gravy, and green beans cooked with onions sat on the table, getting colder by the minute. Our son is nestled in bed following a nice bubble bath with his favorite bath toys, so I decide to prop my feet up, watch some television, and rub my enormous belly while I waited for my husband to come home from work. Dozing off halfway between shows, I wake up to find that he is still not at home. Looking around at the clock, I blink several times to make sure that I am seeing correctly. 2:43 am. No sign of him, yet. The house phone hasn't rang and I dare not disturb him at his second job.

This scenario illustrates one similar to the night my first husband came home around 3 a.m. announcing that he was moving out. I happened to be nine months pregnant at the time. His second job was a photography business. He partnered with his friend who operated an upstart magazine. We both were young when we married; I was 20, he was 23. In spite of the fact

that I already had a son by another man, he asked me to marry him. I was ready to be a wife. I had planned this my whole life. Being a wife and mother were key scenarios in my perfect dream. A few months after getting married, we discussed having another child. I got pregnant almost immediately. That's when he began to grow distant. Having a long marriage like that of my grandparents was my goal, yet that goal, my perfect dream, was screaming that it was all coming to an end...and fast.

He tried to be a husband – paying the bills, making sure that we didn't go hungry; however, his working environment had major negative influences. He worked around singles who had no responsibilities. They served their own selfish desires. I could not understand how he could father a child who was not his biologically, but leave when it was time to have his own. This puzzled me for many years. I thought that I had done something wrong – thought that I wasn't a good-enough housekeeper, didn't cook often enough, wasn't sexy enough. Something had to explain his reasoning to leave.

I was angry. The life I planned was not working out the way it should have. I observed other relationships around me. At the time, my parents had been married over 20 years. My grandparents had been married over 40 years. I was the first person I knew to ever get a divorce. That didn't sit well with me. Well, he left that night. After multiple attempts on my behalf to reconcile, he left for good. No explanation. No letter on the pillow...only more heartbreak.

When he and I spoke after 13 years, he admitted that he simply wasn't ready for that kind of responsibility. I wish that was a conversation he had with me before he decided to bail. My anger turned to bitterness. Bitterness spewed word curses and inner vows that left me trapped and in bondage to my own greatest fears. I was tired of carrying that burden. He sounded remorseful that he had not seen his son since he was a newborn. I sent pictures of both boys so at least he would know what they looked like. By this time we both had remarried, but it was much needed closure for a very old wound.

Dear Angry, Abandoned Wife,

Hebrews 12:15 in the Amplified Bible reads “Exercise foresight and be on the watch to look after one another, to see that no one falls back from and fails to secure God’s grace (His unmerited favor and spiritual blessing), in order that no root of resentment (rancor, bitterness, or hatred) shoots forth and causes trouble and bitter torment, and the many become contaminated and defiled by it”.

Your situation may not read the same as mine. More than likely, your story has different characters, but similar results. Was it difficult to say his name? Were you reminded of what that person did and became angry all over again, as if it had only happened yesterday? These are the types of things that set up a root of resentment. I resented the fact that he left. I resented the fact that he couldn’t tell me how he was feeling. I was bitter about his choice to leave me while I was pregnant with his child, as if it meant nothing. My anger and bitterness did not harm him. He continued to live his life; I was the one hurting.

I became contaminated and defiled by the thing done to me, just as the scriptures said. I allowed someone else to have that power over me, my emotions, and my immediate outcomes. I didn't enter into a healthy intimate relationship until a few years later, all as a result of not dealing with this in a healthy way. I clammed up. I built a wall around my heart. I didn't talk about what happened to me. I tried to move forward with life, not knowing I had this huge exposed wound that was getting more and more infected by the day. It was exposed due to the labels I wore: divorced, single mother, and welfare recipient. It was infected because I had internalized the negative connotations associated with those labels. I needed to learn that my situation does not define me. I needed to take that power over my emotions back. He could not have it any longer. He had taken enough.

My release came when I decided to forgive. I had to forgive for my own health. I chose to forgive as an act of my will, not to say that he didn't do anything wrong. He was wrong and has to make an account for his actions, but I had to learn to trust God –

even when I could not trust a man I accepted as my husband before God and witnesses. I needed to understand that although my husband abandoned me and the children, God never left me. It was me that chose not to lean on Him, but instead to my own understanding.

I encourage you to examine your life. What are the situations that left you hurt and abandoned? Rejected and unwilling to trust? Know that God did not orchestrate your hurt. God made provision in His Word for you to be healed and made whole. As you get to know God through His Word, the healing will come. Be open to how God will lead you to find forgiveness.

CHAPTER TWO

MOMMY NEEDS A TIME OUT!

You mean that I can actually drop my kids off and not have to stay with them? I can come back at the end of class and pick them up? These are the thoughts that raced through my head after the instructor clearly said “...bye. See you at 8!” For the first time since the boys were born, I had free time. I didn't know what to do. A part of me wanted to return home to take care of the laundry and cleaning with no distractions or interruptions; however, I stood, motionless, realizing for the first time in a long time that I am a woman outside of being a mother. At that moment, I knew with clarity what the next 90 minutes of freedom would entail: a nice, long, hot bubble bath while enjoying my favorite playlist. Blissful pleasure.

It wasn't too long after the episode described that I began to seek these experiences for my children. Extracurricular activities, Vacation Bible School, summer classes and/or programs - you name it, they were there. What I didn't realize at the time was that with having five children, I would be the primary one doing

all the transporting. My full schedule bordered on chaos as the years went on. The children got older, each with separate interests, different hobbies, and multiple social events. The funds to take a vacation did not exist. Over time, I found myself becoming more resentful, angry even. I love my children, but the daily tasks became overwhelming. I called on my support system when I could, but not at the expense of feeling guilty. I prided myself on the fact that the majority of the time, my children were with me. I wasn't the mother always looking for a sitter. I wasn't going out every weekend. I rarely went to the movies, shopping, out with friends, or even celebrated my birthday. As a matter of fact, I barely went out at all. I continued to struggle, day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year – all while growing more upset that no one noticed my sacrifices. I wanted someone to notice and help, but I said nothing. That seed of resentment did nothing for my personal relationships. Now in my second marriage, I still operated as an independent woman. The inner vow was to never depend on a man again. I did what needed to be done, but it wasn't with a glad heart. I needed him to rescue me, but how can your husband rescue you from you?

Well, God must have heard my prayers. With a promotion at work, I was suddenly eligible for company-sponsored travel to various conferences around the country. My very first opportunity was in Clearwater, Florida. I remember checking into the hotel, getting my room key, opening the door, and exhaling. I sat my suitcase down and realized that I was starving. At that moment, the slightest smile stretched across my face. A smile whose presence had long been forgotten, but we were about to become reacquainted. I stretched across the bed, finally understanding that on this trip, I was alone. I didn't have to ask six other people where they wanted to eat. I didn't have to cast votes or compromise to make anyone else happy. I could eat where I wanted to for a change. I could come and go as I pleased, and without curfew!

It's amazing how as a parent you begin to restrict your own activities based on the responsibilities you have to others. That year, I got my time out. I began to enjoy life again...and it felt great!

Dear Angry, Resentful Mom:

Exodus 33:14 reads "The Lord replied "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest". Have you ever felt like you were just walking through life on auto pilot? At what point did you realize that you needed a break? Did you think it was someone else's responsibility to come to your rescue? What did you do to get that much needed rest? Were you able to recognize that you needed rest before it was too late?

Unfortunately, so many of us fail to recognize that we are no good to anyone else if we do not take care of ourselves. You cannot pour into others from an empty vessel. It is only when we are at our best that we can truly care for others – be it children, a spouse, parents, or other loved ones.

Did my story help you to realize areas where you to need to make some adjustments? How much of the 24 hours we're given do you dedicate to yourself? Make an investment in you. It's needed. Whether you choose to take a daily mental health break, or plan a formal vacation to get away - take some time just for you. It is well worth it and your soul will thank you.

CHAPTER THREE

WHEN SICKNESS SEIZED ME

The more the pressure built, the slower they moved. Filling with fluid, the anticipation of becoming immobile became a credible threat.

While that statement may appear to describe any number of scenarios – a ride at the water park, an animal trying to escape a flood – unfortunately, it refers to my knees. Less than one month away from my 41st birthday, my knees and legs became so swollen, I could barely walk. It was virtually impossible to walk stairs and it hurt terribly to get in and out of my car. I had no choice but to contact my primary care physician for a same day appointment. She was so kind with her touch as she felt the fluid buildup around my knees. She wrapped them with Ace bandages and sent me for tests, promising to contact me with the results. I wasn't expecting a phone call on my cell instructing me to go straight to emergency the following day after the lab results came back. I really didn't expect to hear that the hospital was going to admit me. I didn't understand how a few lab tests could cause such a reaction. Suddenly, the focus was not on why I could

barely walk. It was on the numbers of my lab results. My platelet count had dropped to seven. Normal levels are above 450. Having my gums bleed while brushing my teeth could have ended my life. The doctors had to figure out what caused my platelet count to drop so low. The hospital staff came in to explain the number of examinations that I would need to endure. At the bottom of the list was a simple ultrasound; while at the top of the list was a bone biopsy. I began to panic. Whenever I panic, I break out in hives, so in addition to the IV with lovely, orange, Push-Up ice cream looking goo oozing through to replace my platelets, I got a shot of Benadryl. That liquid Benadryl felt like vodka going through my veins; but suddenly, I wasn't nervous or panicky. Keeping my eyes open to converse with my mom, best friend, pastor, and others who came to check on me became the daunting task. I guess they figured I needed to enjoy that Benadryl-induced sleep because the next thing I remember is waking up to the results of my ultrasound. They hadn't found the cause of the platelet drop, but they found kidney stones and a small tumor on my liver. Great. Come in for one thing and leave knowing five other things that you wish you didn't. The

diagnosis was ITP – idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura – an autoimmune disorder that destroys the platelets needed for blood clotting. My treatment included six months of a steroid called Prednisone. The steroids caused weight gain. I wasn't someone whom I recognized in the mirror anymore. I was angry about gaining so much weight from the steroids. I was angry that my body wasn't as physically fit as I was used to feeling. I was angry for having to sit in a waiting room with the elderly giving me the side eye as if I were too young to need physical therapy. I was angry for having to take so much time off work for the multiple appointments and lab work. That was a rough year all around.

Dear Angry, Sick, and Tired:

Proverbs 4:20-22 reads “*My child, listen carefully to everything I say. Don’t forget a single word, but think about it all. Knowing these teachings will mean true life and good health for you*”. Do you know what the Word says about sickness, illness, and disease? Have you ever felt like you were sick because you were being punished for something you did wrong? Do you accept every diagnosis without seeking to understand root causes and how THAT ended up describing you? Do you even pay attention to how daily activities play a role in our overall health?

Sickness and illness were things I never worried much about. I took care of others who had been sick, but that wasn't my story. I didn't look at the elderly or disabled the same after that. I had a new appreciation for accessible buildings and shower facilities after that. This entire experience was an eye-opener. Not only did it open my eyes about my physical health, but it opened my eyes to the true meaning of "by His stripes, we were healed" (I Peter 2:24). It is not God's desire for us to experience sickness or

disease. If that were the case, He would not have made provision for Jesus to bear the pain so that we would receive healing.

Sickness is not punishment from God. Whatever the diagnosis is, as an heir of God and joint-heir with Christ, claim your healing!

It is my prayer that through my transparency as a wife, mother, and patient that you do not remain in anger or unforgiveness, but claim the victory that is yours today. By no means am I free from my anger issues, but I'm not where I used to be. With something so deeply embedded in my soul, it takes peeling back the layers, and the lies, to reveal the lessons that can empower others. I know now that it's not about me. Through my testimony and each victory over anger, others can be healed.

About the Author

Motivated by a childhood love of reading, Dr. D. C. Matthews writes stories of inspiration to remind others that they, too, can overcome.

Due to the sound teaching of a dedicated pastor, she learned the healing power of a heart surrendered to Christ. The knowledge shared in Dr. D. C. Matthews' books is based on her ministerial training and revelation gained while spending time in the presence of God. Through faith and keen discernment, she has been empowered to help others grow spiritually and excel professionally.

Connect with Dr. D. C. Matthews Online

Coming late 2017 is a more in-depth look at the soul in:

“The Surrendered Soul:

Aligning Your Will with the Five Parts of Your Soul”

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