

## Drafting a Beloved Charter

- Look up Bible verses that are expressive for you of the way God values our lives. You may wish to slowly read over the Scriptures on the following pages—circle any phrases that really jump out at you or speak to you deeply. Or, if there are other verses that remind you of the way God sees you, write those down as well.
- Arrange those verses into a meaningful personal charter that expresses the things God is saying directly to you about your belovedness. (You'll find some examples on page 2 of this document.)
- The very first word of your charter should be your own name, so that the entire thing is addressed to you.
- You'll need to do some careful translation with any passages that are not already phrased as direct address from God ... i.e., you might translate the first portion of John 3:16 into: "For I so loved you that I sent you my only beloved son ...".
- Don't try to put every single meaningful idea into the charter, just the words from God you are currently finding the most compelling. Your whole charter will likely be 4-6 sentences. If you find this exercise helpful, you can always revise your charter over time as different verses attract your attention.
- Imagine God speaking these words to you. Ask the Holy Spirit to press home the message of your own belovedness. Notice your own inner responses (including places you feel resistant) and share them with God.
- As you become increasingly convinced of your own belovedness, ask God to show the belovedness of everyone else you encounter as well. Practice mentally applying your Beloved Charter not only to yourself, but also to each person you encounter.

***Example: Trevor Hudson's Beloved Charter***

Trevor, you are my beloved child in whom I delight. You did not choose Me but I chose you. You are my friend. I formed your inward parts and knitted you together in your mother's womb. You are fearfully and wonderfully made, made a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and honor. You have been created in Christ Jesus for good works which I have already prepared to be your way of life. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned and the flame shall not consume you. You are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you. I know all your longings; your sighing is not hidden from Me. Nothing will ever be able to separate you from my love in Christ Jesus, your Lord. Abide in my love.

***Example: Henri Nouwen's Beloved Charter***

I have called you by name, from the very beginning. You are mine and I am yours. You are my Beloved, on you my favor rests. I have molded you in the depths on the earth and knit you together in your mother's womb. I have carved you in the palms of my hands and hidden you in the shadow of my embrace. I look at you with infinite tenderness and care for you with care more intimate than that of a mother for her child. I have counted every hair on your head and guided you at every step. Wherever you go, I go with you, and wherever you rest, I keep watch. I will give you food that will satisfy all your hunger and drink that will quench all your thirst. I will not hide my face from you. You know me as your own as I know you as my own. You belong to me. ... Nothing will ever separate you from my love.

***Example: Jennifer H's Beloved Charter***

Jennifer, my dear, from the foundations of the earth I knew you. I formed you and set you apart to do good works. I qualified you for this work of ministry and have given you every good and perfect gift to complete it. I go before and prepare the way. Come and follow Me! I delight in you. You are mine. I rejoice over you with singing and call you my own. Abide in me and I in you and you will bear much fruit. Rest in Me. Nothing can separate you from my love. I cover you, watch over you, protect, and guide you. I love you, my daughter and my bride. All I have is yours and you are mine.

Psalm 139:13-16 ESV

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

Ephesians 2:4-9 ESV

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God ...

Matthew 6:25-34 ESV

“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ...

Luke 12:6-7 ESV

Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Romans 5:8 ESV

But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

2 Corinthians 12:9 ESV

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

John 3:16 ESV

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Romans 8:28 ESV

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Titus 3:4-7 ESV

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy

Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Hebrews 4:16 ESV

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

1 Samuel 16:7 ESV

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."

Romans 5:6-8 ESV

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 8:1-39 ESV

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

John 1:12 ESV

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God ...

2 Peter 1:3 ESV

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory

Genesis 1:27 ESV

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

1 John 1:9 ESV

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Romans 8:32 ESV

He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

Ephesians 2:10 ESV

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Zephaniah 3:17 ESV

The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

Isaiah 41:10-24 ESV

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Psalms 8:1-9 ESV

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. ...

Ephesians 3:20 ESV

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us ...

Romans 8:35 ESV

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

Song of Solomon 2:4 ESV

He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

Psalms 62:5 ESV

For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him.

Isaiah 49:15-16 ESV

“Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are continually before me.

Psalms 139:14 ESV

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.

John 15:15 ESV

No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.

My Beloved Charter