

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your correspondence to the Al Denson Show and for tuning in every week to our program. My prayer for you is to be encouraged in your daily walk with Christ through the words of this booklet. Our hope is that in turn you will tell others of what God is doing through our ministry to youth and parents on TV. I am convinced you will not find another program on any network anywhere that deals with issues today's youth and their parents are facing, and provides answers from a Godly perspective.

In addition, we would love for you to help us by going to our web site at [www.aldenson.com](http://www.aldenson.com). Here you can write to us, order additional material like this booklet, check out all my music, have a daily bible study, and stay up to date on the ministry. You can also send us a prayer request and questions for the TV show. But more importantly, please continue to be in prayer with us as we work together to help those that are in need.

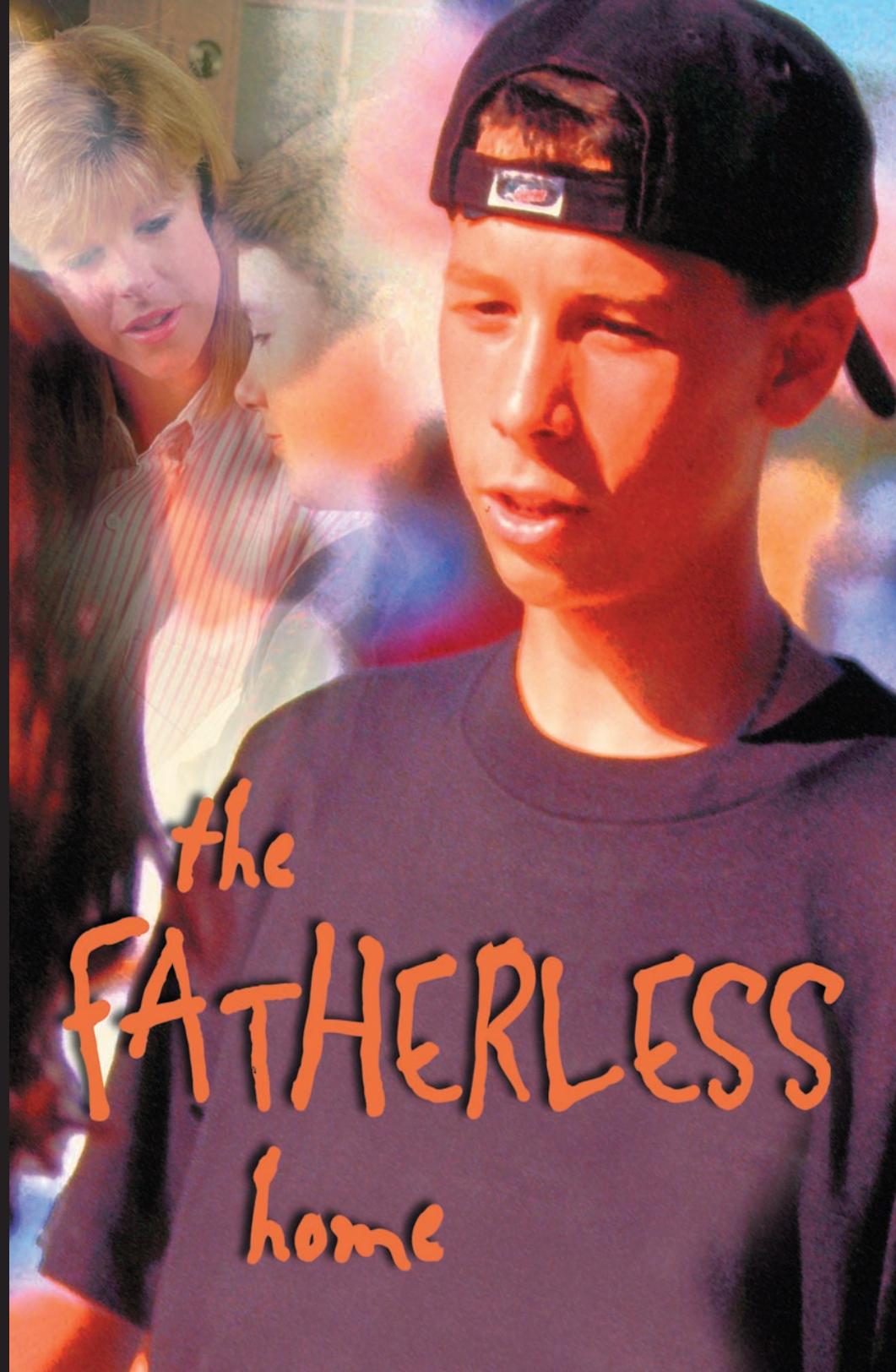
Thanks for watching and God Bless!

Sincerely,



**An Outreach of Celebration Ministries**

The Al Denson Show  
Box 220 Grapevine, TX 76099  
Toll Free 1-877-HOPE101  
Email: [aldenson@aol.com](mailto:aldenson@aol.com)  
Web Site: [www.aldenson.com](http://www.aldenson.com)





Most artists create for only a brief moment in time. That phenomenon was once known as "15 minutes of fame". Yet even in a fickle world, there still emerge a talented few that transcends time and trends. With nearly 15 years as a major label recording artist and seven hit

albums to his credit, Al Denson is that kind of artist.

But the attention and acclaim his artistry has brought him over the years are anything but the routine rewards of worldly success. Rather, they are the fruits of a life of purpose and passion, and a mission that has always reached far beyond merely making music.

The millions of young people Al has performed for, befriended, counseled, consoled and clowned around with in his career already know that. And thousands more are finding out every day.

This past year has seen Al expand his efforts to a global audience through the reach of his daily syndicated television production, "The Al Denson Show." "You've got to reach out to people where they are with the most powerful means and this form of media allows you to build trust and a rapport," says Al. "This has all been so amazing. I can't imagine what lies in store when the Lord finally calls me home, but I don't have to wait for heaven to receive rewards. I get them every time a kid comes up to me and says, 'I heard what you said, and I accepted Christ.' You can't ask for anything more or better than that."

Write Al at: Box 220 Grapevine, TX 76099  
Email: [aldenson@aol.com](mailto:aldenson@aol.com) Web Site: [www.aldenson.com](http://www.aldenson.com)

## the FATHERLESS home

It could be that the most important person you will ever know, for better or for worse, is your father. That relationship has an almost overpowering influence on everything that you are and do. Fathers who are affectionate and

spend time with their kids produce more secure children, healthier children, and children who make better grades in school. The most significant predictor of criminal behavior is not the religious or moral upbringing, or income bracket, but the absence of one's father. Fatherless homes account for 75% of all teenage suicides, 80% of adolescents in psychiatric

hospitals, 60% of rapists, and 70% of juveniles in state operated institutions. 75% of American children living in a single-parent family will experience poverty before they reach the age of 11 years old. The part a father plays in a child's life is never neutral. It does something. It either builds you up or it tears you down.

It has been said that the single greatest social problem facing America today is the growing absence of fathers from their children's homes. Half of all the children born in the United States today will spend 50% of their childhood in a home that has no father figure. In 1995, the number of children in this country affected by divorce was over one million.

In 1996, the number of children living without their fathers grew to over 17 million. You may be a person who understands this all too well because your father has abandoned you, or you may not even know who your father is.

Perhaps your father has died, or maybe you have a dad who loves you, but because of a divorce can't be a full-time father. Your father may live in your home, but for all practical purposes you feel "fatherless" because he is never there for you.

Fathers can range from loving, supportive and involved, to indifferent, abusive and absent. We know that the

influence that our fathers have on us continues to impact our lives in a major way even after they have died, regardless if the relationship was good, bad, or non-existent. Over half of all adults today report that they have unresolved issues with their fathers. If you have a bad relationship with your father it is probably hurting you in several ways:

- You have a distorted view of fathers in general
- Your relationship with authority figures is affected
- Your marriage will be affected
- It will affect the way you relate to your own children
- It will distort reality for you

It has been said that the single greatest social problem facing America today is the growing absence of fathers from their children's homes.

These are all serious consequences that can come as a result of a poor relationship with your father. But the most serious of all is that a distorted view of your father will affect your view of God. If you believe that fathers are indifferent, uninterested and unavailable, then how do you think that will play out in your relationship with God? If you are someone who has been deeply hurt by your father, you may wonder how you will ever fill the ache in your heart, and the emptiness in your life caused by an absent or uncaring father.

There is hope, but in order for you to become healthy in every way and become all that you were created to be, you must be willing to believe that there is a perfect father. One who loves and accepts you unconditionally, who will never break a promise, who will forgive you of all your faults and will refuse to keep a record of your failures. If you want a perfect father, the dad you may have never had, you can have one in the person of your

Heavenly Father. You can enjoy life with God as your dad, but if you want a relationship with Him there are several things you must be willing to do.

**1. You must desire it with all of your heart.**

God is ready and waiting to have a relationship with you, but you must be the one to initiate it. He promises to be there for you, but He will never force Himself on you. You must hunger to have a relationship with Him.

**2. You must be willing to be honest about the pain your earthly father has caused you.**

Yes, it is easier not to think about all of the hurt you have experienced. But the only way to ever get past the hurt is to face it and deal with it. It is like “spiritual surgery.” No one ever wants to have surgery, it’s painful. However, sometimes it is the only way to get well.

**3. You must be willing to accept the truth of God’s Word, regardless of what your feelings are telling you.**

You are going to have to allow your mind to be reprogrammed to the truth of what God’s Word says about you and about God, Himself. Because of the hurt you have suffered, this will at first totally contradict your feelings. But feelings lie. God’s Word doesn’t.

**4. You must be willing to let go of the past.**

Past events can hold you captive. Unless you are willing to be free from the bondage of the past, you will never be able to experience all God has for you. You’ll never be able to look to the future if you are focused on the wounds, hurts, struggles and pain of the past.

You can’t run the race God has for you by running backwards!

God Himself is the Father you have always wanted. He is a perfect dad who loves you with an indescribable love. If you want it, you can have a relationship with this perfect Father by trusting in Jesus as Savior. God will never force Himself on you, but He wants to be your Dad. He won’t ask you to change so that you will be acceptable to Him. He just says that if you want Him to, He’ll love you where you are, the way you are.

It is one thing to get all of these truths into your head; but it is another thing to get them into your heart where they can change the way you live. If you will be willing to accept what the Bible says, you can be free of your past. In order to do this there are several things that you will have to accept:

**1. Accept that God’s Word was written for YOU.**

When you read all the promises in the Bible you may feel like they are for everyone else, but they are written for you. Don’t allow shame or guilt to keep you from believing that.

**2. Instead of always rehearsing the pain your earthly father has caused you, rehearse on a daily basis the truth of how your perfect, Heavenly Father loves and accepts you.**

The Bible promises that the perfect, Heavenly Father will fill all the emptiness in your life caused by a neglectful or absent earthly father. Psalm 27:10 says, “Though my mother and father forsake me, the Lord will receive me” (a father to the fatherless).

God Himself  
is the Father  
you have always  
wanted.



### 3. Accept the fact that your Heavenly Father is nothing like your earthly father.

Your earthly dad may have disappointed you, ignored you, abused you, or even abandoned you. But your heavenly Father never has and never will. He has a perfect track record! This is a very, very important point because what we really believe about God will determine EVERYTHING about us:

- The attitudes we have about our self, and about life in general;
- the way we live;
- the way we relate to our family, and to other people;
- even the way we worship.

You see, it is impossible to trust Him, without knowing the character of our Father. Let me give you an example from scripture. Luke 15 is usually called "The Parable of the Prodigal Son," but it could just as easily be called "The Parable of the Loving Father." You remember the story, I'm sure. The younger boy rebels, runs to a far country, repents, returns home, and the father is so glad to have him back that he throws a party. The older son hears the noise of the celebration and comes to see what is going on. When told that his younger brother is being welcomed home, he pitches a fit.

The way he responded shows us that he really didn't know the character of his loving father. His mistaken concept of what pleases his father is revealed by three statements he makes:

#### 1. "All these years I have served you." Or, "look at all I have done for you!"

He was living under the mistaken impression that service is the key to pleasing the father. But God created us for fellowship, not for service.

#### 2. "I never broke your commandments at any time." He was keeping the rules, but missing the party. He had assumed that pleasing the Father was essentially about keeping the outward "dos" and "dont's" of life.

#### 3. "You never gave me a goat to make merry with my friends." This boy was blind and miserable. The Prodigal son took for granted what was his in the father's house, but the older son was completely blind to what was his in the father's house.

The younger son returned to the fellowship of the father when he came to the end of himself. We have no mention that the other brother ever did. You and I are no different from the older son. The way we respond to other people and the circumstances of life will reveal whether we really know our loving Father, too. In the entire 15th chapter of Luke, the lost sheep, the lost coin, the lost boy, Jesus is trying to get people to see what

God is like. Jesus brought the revelation to this world for the first time that God is a perfect Father. Jesus wants us to know that God is a Father

- who grieves over and with His children;
- who receives us just as we are;
- who doesn't rebuke us;
- who doesn't say "I told you so;"
- who doesn't put us on probation;
- who isn't disappointed or angry with us;
- who will always treat us as if we've never been away when we come home;
- whose attitude toward us of love, mercy and grace is fixed and established.

Is that the way you see your Heavenly Father? Does that describe the Father you know? There is nothing in this life that is more essential to a Christian's spiritual, emotional, mental and physical health than knowing and trusting God. The only way you will ever know freedom, contentment and peace, regardless of your circumstances, is to know your Father and to understand that He is completely trustworthy. Trusting God is like a boat you can climb into during the storms of life when it is dark and the wind and waves of life are really high. That boat has four anchors that keep it secure no matter what:

#### Anchor #1 God's Sovereignty

When we say that God is sovereign, it simply means that He is in charge of the final outcome. Nothing touches us that does not come through Him and without His permission. He is completely in control at all times. Proverbs 19:21 says, "Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails."

#### Anchor #2 God's Goodness

Psalms 73:28 literally says "this is my good, that He is ever with me." In other words, the goodness of God is the nearness of God. The goodness of God is not an immunity from suffering. It simply means that no matter what you are going through, He promises to be right there to go through it with you. God is always and only good.

Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.

# Life is a mixed bag of hurts and helps, and the only way to deal with all of this and get on with your life is to forgive.

## Anchor #3 God's Love

We can know for sure that God's love is unconditional and unending because Jesus demonstrated that love to us. I John 4:9,14,18 says, "This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. God is Love. And Perfect Love drives out fear." God's love does not say,

I love you because  
I love you since  
I love you for as much as  
- or -  
I will love you if  
I will love you when  
I will love you after,  
I will love you provided  
I will love you presuming

Any of these statements would make God's love conditional. God's love does not depend on what we are, but on who he is. God loves unconditionally because he is love. God's love is an action toward us, not a reaction to something good in us.

## Anchor #4 God's Wisdom

Psalms 147:5 says, "His wisdom has no limit." Unlike a human parent, God is too wise to make a mistake where one of His children is concerned.

This is the nature and the character of your Heavenly Father. He is loving, good, wise and in control. When we know Him, really know who and what He is, we can trust Him completely and live the abundant life.

Solid, stable, functioning families in this world are the exception and not the rule. Family time for most people will always be the best of times and the worst of times. Life is a mixed bag of hurts and helps, and the only way to deal with all of this and get on with your life is to forgive.

The emotional wounds that parents inflict, whether intentional or unintentional, are the deepest and most long-lasting of any that we can ever receive in life. Many teenagers carry those wounds for the rest of their lives. The first step in dealing with all of your hurt is to be honest about it. Talk to someone who can help. Your mother or another family member, a teacher, pastor, counselor, or any adult who is mature and wise enough to help you work through your feelings.

You must understand that hurt will happen, that is a fact of life. The only way those hurts can be healed is through FORGIVENESS. This is the KEY to dealing with your pain and anger in a healthy, constructive way. Unfortunately, not even many Christian teens know much about real, scriptural forgiveness.

Are people who forgive, superhuman individuals who have this incredible ability to overlook or excuse horrible wrongdoings on the part of others? To feel merciful toward an enemy? NO. These are normal people who have chosen to live above the "norm." They understand some things about forgiveness that most of the world doesn't:

1. **Forgiveness is not a feeling.** It is a decision you make with an act of your will. It has nothing to do with the person who has offended you. It is first done for your own good.
2. **Forgiveness is undeserved pardon and an undeserved release.** If you think forgiveness is only for those who ask for your forgiveness, or deserve your forgiveness, then you don't understand forgiveness at all.
3. **Forgiveness is not denial, or excusing, or minimizing what happened.** It is being honest and objective about the offense, the pain and the consequences caused by the offender.

Some Christians have a hard time with forgiveness because they believe that if they forgive they are excusing the behavior, or letting the other person off the hook. Nothing could be further from the truth. Forgiveness is acknowledging that what was done is wrong and inexcusable, but choosing to show some-

one else the same kind of forgiveness God showed us. Colossians 3:13 says, "Bear with each other and FORGIVE whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as God forgave you." The forgiveness that Jesus offers is unconditional and complete. We don't deserve it, and He provided it before we ever asked for it or even knew we needed it.

Forgiveness is not a suggestion, it is a commandment, and God gives it to us for our own well-being. When we have been offended, we experience the pain of the offense when it happens. But the initial pain of the wrong done to us is usually quite small compared to the pain of reliving the offense over and over again in our minds. Unforgiveness is like a tape recorder on automatic rewind that plays the hurtful experience again and again.

God knows that unforgiveness is also the soil in which bitterness grows. Bitterness is a poisonous plant with deadly fruit: depression; anger; hostility; resentment; rage; physical, mental and emotional disorders; and the inability to love and trust others. Bitterness makes a person extremely vulnerable to unwise decisions and destructive patterns of living. It is like a cancer of the soul that will go on to destroy you physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally. This is a highly contagious condition that will spread down through generations if left unchecked.



People who choose to forgive are those who have simply said, "I refuse to allow the actions of another person to control and destroy my life. Life is precious and not to be wasted in anger and bitterness. Someone may have meant this for evil in my life, but I choose to use it for good. Someone may have meant it to destroy me, but I choose to let it grow me instead. Someone may have meant it to tear me down, but I choose to let it help make me stronger, wiser and more mature."

One of the reasons that some Christians are unable to live consistently is because they have unforgiveness in their lives. Unforgiveness is serious business and carries with it a high price tag. When a Christian chooses not to be obedient to God and accept the grace to forgive another person, then a root of bitterness begins to grow in his life. That root produces many ugly and deadly fruits. An unforgiving, bitter spirit will always:

- keep you from being able to love and be loved unconditionally;
- cause you to doubt your salvation;
- keep you from being able to pray effectively;
- make it impossible for you to live consistently;
- lead to depression, anger, rage and violence, as well as mental and physical problems.

Remember, no matter how horribly someone has treated you, it could never compare with how horrible you were to God. Your sin drove the nails through the hands and feet of His only Son, and yet He forgave you completely while you were still in your sin.

Don't let unforgiveness keep you from being in fellowship with God, and from being able to live a consistent, godly life. What choice will you make? You can't control what other people do, but you can decide not to allow the actions of another person to control or destroy your life. Life is too short and too precious to be wasted in anger and bitterness. God loves you, and wants you to live life full and free. You need to understand that while forgiveness will be hard, it is not an impossibility because God NEVER asks us to do the impossible.

The thought of forgiving your father may truly seem impossible to you because you have never known real forgiveness yourself, and you can't give what you have never received. Maybe the place where you need to start is by admitting to your Heavenly Father that you are a sinner and in need of His forgiveness. God wants you to be clean and free of all of your sin.

You can become His child by accepting Jesus' death on the cross as payment for your sin, by asking Him to forgive you and to save you. You simply must be willing to open wide your life for Him to come in and take control. The Bible says at the moment you do that, the old you dies and a "new" you is born in its place. The new you is completely and totally forgiven.

Once you have received God's forgiveness, you will be able to pass that same brand of forgiveness along to everyone who has hurt or offended you, even your dad. There is not one reason for you to continue to live the way you have. Right now, you can have the dad you never had. God is ready and waiting with outstretched arms to welcome you into His family, through His Son, Jesus Christ. He will be what you have always wanted and needed. A perfect Father.

Life is too short and  
too precious to be wasted  
in anger and bitterness.