

Charlie,

Since you already have your personal Bible I thought I'd write you a letter instead.

God so love Charlie and Tammy that He gave His only begotten Son to pay Charlie and Tammy's penalty for sin. Wow!!!

God is also the reason for what we have in our marriage. He has blessed us even when we didn't know Him or have a clue that He was active in our lives.

For years I've beat myself up for the things I allowed that I knew were wrong. But in reading your letters last week I have a whole new perspective on what went on during those young years of our lives.

I knew I gave myself to you but didn't realize that you had fallen head over heels in love with me; even though you probably didn't realize it at the time or at least not at first.

I am seeing more clearly that God was in all the things I thought were so wrong and bad. He had a plan for our lives and even with our choices He worked. He loved us all along. That's impossible to understand but I believe it.

As we have travelled this life together we have learned so many things about ourselves, each other and God. He has been so faithful to us and I thank Him that somehow we both were committed to our marriage even during times when we didn't even like each other too much.

You called me 'curly' when my hair was straight as a poker; then when I got a permanent a few years ago and I wasn't at all sure I liked it—you liked it and kept telling me so. Even years ago you really liked long hair but let me know that however I wanted to fix my hair was OK with you. It just took a little time to get used to the changes I would make.

You used to have quite a temper and I always took things you said personally. Not good for either of us. Anger and depression went hand in hand. But even with that we were learning again more about each other, ourselves and God.

We didn't see eye to eye on childrearing either but through God we became a balance and we did the very best we knew how to do. And from looking at the boys, their walk with the Lord, their love for their wives and children I think God used even us to help mold their lives. Mom used to tell me she wished I would have taken some of her good qualities, well I did and so have our boys—they got some of the not so good qualities and some of the good ones and then God has molded them into the

men He wants them to be apart from us using other people and circumstances.

We've spent many years working alongside each other first in CBMC and now Ministry to Men. Even putting the flag up was a learning experience, I think more for you than for me. Then there were all the times we thought so differently on deadlines (what me worry). But again God used mom to help me see that I was to take care of my part of the 'wall' and let you take care of your part. That freed us both up. And as usual there was always enough food. That 10% no show always works.

Then there was the 80%- 20% principle. What an eye opener to realize I was the 80% of the problem.

I'm so quick to tell you almost every thought that crosses my mind, while on the other hand not so with you. But I am so thankful that in recent years you've been able to share more of your thoughts and feelings with me.

You are my best friend, lover, confidant and so much more. Through your love for me I've been able to better understand God's love for me. When I look in your eyes as you look at me, I can sense the great love you have for me and I'm in awe. You have said I saw something in you when you didn't. Well, you show me all the time how valuable I am to you. Thanks!!!

You are so much fun to be around. You have helped me put cotton around things or at least helped me reword some things. And I think my directness has sometimes help you too.

We have both learned through the years that we are so different and that's good. We compliment each other, we don't compete with each other. As a team we possess many wonderful qualities. As a team we also help each other to say 'so what' to situations.

We have learned to laugh at ourselves and each other. I think maybe getting older helps to not take ourselves so seriously.

Speaking of getting older, I'm sure glad we are doing that together. I thank God all the time for what we have and our relationship just keeps getting better.

Happy Easter to my wonderful husband. You've been called many things by many people but a plumb-line definitely fits. Your steady walk with the Lord, your love for Him, me, your family and for men has impacted many lives.

Love,
Tammy