

1. *Do you still love the world, my son?*
2. *What will it profit you to gain the whole world yet forfeit your own soul?*
3. *Are you seeking to know and do my will?*
4. *Do you really believe I was at my very best when I created you?*
5. *Are you a humble or proud man?*
6. *Do you need to be more bold for me?*
7. *Have you given yourself completely to my Son, Jesus, the best you know how? Do you have any area you are unwilling to yield?*
8. *Are you giving Satan too much credit, or not enough?*
9. *Have any of your strengths become weaknesses?*
10. *Is there anything for which you need forgiveness?*
11. *What is the cause that you would be willing to die for?*
12. *How, then, should you reorder your life?*
13. *Do you really know me?*
14. *Success that really matters depends upon a few keys areas. Which of these areas do you need to re-emphasize? faith and trust in God, work, integrity, living within means, maintaining health, relationships, good deeds, salvation, and (as applicable) marriage, provider, establishing children, praying saving faith for family?*
15. *Are you preoccupied with finding personal fulfillment?*
16. *What changes should you make in the brief time you have remaining?*
17. *How would you live differently if told you only have one year left? ... one day?*

Why not put your answers somewhere handy and pray through them again during the next week?

Business leader, author, and speaker, Patrick Morley helps men to think more deeply about their lives, to be reconciled with Christ, and to be equipped for a larger impact on the world.
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A LOOK IN THE MIRROR™

AN EQUIPPING NEWSLETTER FOR MEN

Number 40

A Letter From God

Patrick M. Morley

Editor's note: An expanded version of this "letter from God" appeared in *The Seven Seasons of a Man's Life* (Zondervan). It has struck a deep chord in many men. The application questions can be used as a "mini" personal retreat, perhaps on a Saturday morning before the family is stirring.

A man felt a great anxiety about the direction of his life. *I wish God would write me a letter and tell me what to do*, he thought. If God chose to write us a letter today, what might He say? Using the Scriptures, it might go something like this ...

Dear son ...

It is almost your time. The chariot of fire and the horsemen of Israel will soon be coming. Perhaps you can hear their hoofbeats. I cannot tell you how long you have, but trust me, the time is short.

I am writing so you will take stock of your life. I want you to change based on a new commitment to my larger purposes – while you still have time.

I am going to give you some things to ponder. Do this in a quiet place. Don't be in a rush. Give yourself plenty of time. Think it over.

You have wanted success, but you have been living by your own ideas. I do want you to be successful, but on my terms. You measure success in the quantity of your possessions. I measure success in the quality of your character. You are interested in your goal. I am interested in your soul. What will it profit you to gain the whole world yet forfeit your soul?

Men pursue me out of priority or pain. It's amazing how pressure and pain refocus priorities. From now on try to make decisions based upon your priorities not your pressures, okay?

I made you with dignity and significance. You are my crowning achievement. I was at my very best when I created you. Do you really believe this?

On the other hand, you must recognize your insignificance – not in dignity – but in the grand scheme of the cosmos. Man is a mere vapor that appears for a little. He is dust, a flea, a worm, an insect. So you are a little lower than the

angels, but in the created cosmos you are but a tiny speck. Have you been thinking too highly of yourself?

Be careful not to overemphasize either significance or insignificance. Don't lose your brokenness before me. But don't think too little of yourself or you will be afraid to try something bold. At the end of their lives most men wish they had been more bold. Do you need to be more bold for me?

You can have life in my Son, if you accept that his innocent blood was shed for your sins and that by surrendering to him in faith you are saved because of my grace and kindness – not because you are good, but because I am merciful. I am, remember, holy, holy, holy.

Have you given yourself completely to Jesus, the best you know how? Are you holding any area back? Let me encourage you to surrender all, or at least be willing to surrender all. I will help you.

I allow suffering to strike the believer and unbeliever alike. This futility will make you groan, but I have given you my Spirit. I want my creation to be liberated from its bondage to decay. When the way is hard, men turn to me. I realize this leaves you wounded. What is your wound? Call on me in the day of your trouble and I will help you.

Satan is a defeated foe. My Son made a public spectacle of him, having triumphed on the cross. Greater am I in you than the devil who is in the world. If you resist him he will flee from you. You need not fear him, unless you take him too lightly.

Remember that Satan will try to attack you in your strengths. If you are a good businessman he will tempt you to pour yourself into your work. If you are a good churchman he will tempt you to “give yourself to God” at the expense of your family, and so on. Are you giving Satan too much credit, or not enough? Have any of your strengths become weaknesses?

I am quick to restore you to right relationship with me when you ask.

You will still stumble every day. I am quick to restore you to right relationship with me when you ask. Do this daily. Don't let things build up between us. Is there anything for which you need forgiveness? Confess it, repent, and I will restore.

Have you been looking for something worth living for? It would be better if you found something worth dying for. Give your life to that, and I will be your joy. What is the cause that you would be willing to die for?

You have been satisfied to know about me; I want you to know me. I want to spend time with you every day. You cannot walk with me if we do not communicate. Forget the idea of only a daily quiet time. I want to be with you all the time. I want to be your closest friend. Pray without ceasing.

Meditate on my word day and night. Do you really know me?

Success that really matters depends upon a few key areas: loving and trusting me, finding fulfilling work, modeling a life of integrity, living within your means, maintaining your health (my temple), establishing loving relationships, and serving others. Also, for those who marry, developing a strong marriage, helping children become established, and praying for family members to come to saving faith. Do you get it? Do you see what's important? Which of these areas do you need to re-emphasize?

Your central flaw, son, has been your preoccupation with self. Are you too focused on finding personal fulfillment? Don't feel too badly, most every man does the same. It's part of fallen human nature. But I want you to reflect on the larger reasons why I have put you where you are.

I am looking for men willing to penetrate their arenas – whether business, government, education, medicine, law, the arts, media, entertainment, military, sports, science, or religion – and represent me there. I need men who will witness for me among the idols of the world. Be faithful. Use your skill, cling to your integrity and, whatever you do, don't be ashamed of me.

I am looking forward to having you with me. I will give you a new home, and a new body. You'll be glad to know we do things differently here. There are no tears. No death or crying or pain.

I need men who will witness for me among the idols of the world.

You will join with saints from all the ages -- Moses, Joshua, David, Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Elijah, Elisha, Ezekiel, Peter, James, John, Paul, Timothy, Luke and throngs of lesser knowns – people from every tribe, every language, every people, and every nation. You will be my servant, and you will reign for ever and ever.

What changes should you make in the brief time you have remaining? How would you live if I told you that you only have one year left on earth? ...one month? ...one week? ...one day?

Live in the shadow of the cross. Soon, my son, you will see me face to face.

Eternally yours,

Your Heavenly Father

QUESTIONS AND DECISIONS

For your convenience the questions in this letter are reproduced below. If you need to do business with God, set aside some quiet time to re-evaluate your life and prayerfully answer these questions in self-examination. Use a separate sheet of paper and pray with a pencil. Also, write down what specific action will you take as a result.