

## A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

As we have worked to bring healing to many, we realize that there are a variety of ways that the Father uses to reach and connect with the hearts of His people. As a result, we attempt to incorporate many of these approaches into the counseling and ministry experience. This includes the written word, audio, video/movies, music and pictures/paintings. This painting, “Forever and Ever,” shown below, is in the ministry guest level of our home. As people have come for ministry and they have noticed this picture, it has elicited a variety of responses.

FOREVER AND EVER



Here is what the painter, Greg Olsen ([www.gregolsen.com](http://www.gregolsen.com)), shares as a caption to this work:

*“Surrounded by His enduring love, we are warm, safe and secure. That reassuring calm comes not by a spoken word or by gazing with our eyes upon His strong arms. It comes from the embrace which our heart feels and through the tender senses of our spirit. All around us we have the physical wonders and beauties of nature that bear the signature of their Creator and remind us of His enduring love. Although His presence is unseen by our eyes, His unending love is felt in our hearts.”*

### A DIFFERENT VIEW

Although some of our counselees do connect with the “love, warmth, safety and security” that the painting seeks to bring forth, not all are able to make that association—especially at the beginning of the ministry process. Some actually feel quite uncomfortable if they place themselves as the child in this picture. They may have no memories of sitting in their father’s lap, and the thought of sitting in the lap of Jesus (and thus Father God, Jn. 14:9) is a “foreign concept.” For others, sitting in the lap of someone as a child stirs up memories that they would rather forget. And still for others, this posture of being that dependent, vulnerable (weak) and “childlike”—what Jesus has said is critical to being part of His Kingdom (Matt 18:3)—was against a lifetime of being strong and being a “survivor.”

## A CHANGING PICTURE

As we help our counselees see the wounds that have occurred to the “child within” and as they begin to allow the Father to bring His healing love to those deep places, the “picture” begins to change for them. Indifference to or disdain for the painting begins to change to a desire to be that child in the lap of Jesus. And for those who may have had an “intellectual understanding” of the painting, it now becomes something that they can begin to experience in their relationship with God. And in many of these, the healing tears flow as they allow themselves to grieve what they have lost along the way . . . and they are also able to feel the grief of the Father.

## WHAT DO YOU FEEL?

The question is, “What do you feel when you look at this painting?” Are you able to feel the “love, warmth, safety and security,” or are there other feelings that come to the surface? Are you indifferent or numb as you look at the painting? Can you imagine YOU being that child in the lap of Jesus (and the Father)? Take a little time to view this painting and invite the Father to share His heart with you about how He sees you in this scene. Resist the temptation to run from the painting, concluding that it is an irrelevant exercise. Let Him speak into the place within that needs to “come as a child.”

## SHARING YOUR RESPONSE

We would be very interested in hearing from you and letting us know how this painting affected you. Please know that there is no “correct response” to this exercise. The Father understands where you’re at and will use everything at His disposal to help you in your journey into His heart. If you do email us and share, please let us know if you would allow us to, in turn, share your thoughts with others (with your name omitted).

From the Father's Heart,

Jerry and Denise Basel