

Lost Love Sought

Elizabeth Barrett Browning was one of the most prominent English poets of the Victorian era. Her poetry was widely popular in Britain and in the United States during her lifetime.

She wrote poetry from about the age of six. At age 15, she became ill, suffering from intense head and spinal pain for the rest of her life, rendering her frail.

Living in London, she wrote prolifically between 1841 and 1844, producing poetry, translation and prose. She campaigned for the abolition of slavery, and her work helped influence reform in the child labor legislation. Much of her work carries a Christian theme, and she is remembered for such poems as *How Do I Love Thee?*

During this time, 1841-44, she met and corresponded with Robert Browning, an English poet and playwright who admired her work. The courtship and marriage between the two were carried out in secret, for fear of her father's disapproval.

Elizabeth's parents so condemned her marriage that they disowned her. She was disinherited by her father and rejected by her brothers.

For 10 years, Elizabeth wrote love letters to her parents seeking reconciliation, but with no reply. Then a large box arrived in the mail from her parents. Excitedly, Elizabeth opened it, only to find all of her letters to her parents unopened and unread.

We know Elizabeth Barrett Browning's love letters today as some of the most beautiful in all of classical English literature. They would have been even more famous if they had stirred the reconciliation with her parents that she longed to achieve.

Given Elizabeth's experience, some might say, "See, what's the use? All that work and no results."

But if only one letter out of the hundreds had been read, and it had healed the relationship between daughter and parents, all her labor would have been repaid.

Restoring relationships is not easy. It requires death to oneself, obedience to God, and love for others – just what Christ displayed when He reconciled us to the Father. Be Christlike today, and restore a lost love.

No one ever said reconciliation was easy – just desirable, possible, and much more joyful than the alternative.

If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men (Romans 12:18 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter

