

Dulce:

Bitter No More Because of God's Love

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From joining amateur singing contests, Dulce soared to become a versatile singer who is recognized here and abroad. She sang movie theme songs starting in the 1970's and she emerged as winner in many songfests. She was Champion of the Fourth Asian Singing Competition in Hong Kong in 1979 and Grand Prize Winner of Asia Pacific Singing Contest in 1988. She also starred in some stage musicals including "Cats" and "Himala." In 2003, she received the Lifetime Achievement Recognition from the Aliw Awards Foundation.

She is known as the diva with a powerful voice and many remember her for her song "Ako ang Nasawi, Ako ang Nagwagi." But ever since surrendering her life to Jesus Christ in 1997 and experiencing His life-changing love, Dulce has been singing the popular worship song "The Power of Your Love" in her concerts and it has become her new signature song. Not only that, but also as she grew deeper in her walk with the Almighty, she discovered that He was unfolding to her a spiritual truth that would set her free from a dark source of power.

Dulce (a Spanish word meaning sweet), or Maria Teresa Magdalena Llamedo in real life, grew up harboring bitterness against her mother and was in constant conflict with her siblings. Her family struggled to survive each day in Cebu. Her father was often out of town trying to find any odd jobs. On the other hand, she and her five other siblings (two others have died even before she was born) could not depend on their

mother to take care of them. Dulce was the sixth of eight children and she felt responsible for her two younger siblings.

She recalls, “My elder brothers and sisters escaped our harsh life by marrying young or going elsewhere. So I was only eight years old when I had to search for food for my two younger siblings. I would dig for sweet potatoes or any root crops for us to eat.”

Because she felt that her mother neglected her and her other siblings, Dulce hated her. Animosity with her mother and frustration with their poverty led Dulce to flee to Manila, where she eventually became known as a singer.

In spite of her popularity and success in the music industry, Dulce was still overwhelmed with personal problems. She only found refuge when she cried to God and finally asked Him to rule over her life. When she did, she began to see things in a new light, and major changes started to take place. One of these changes was the realization that she had not been honoring her mother by harboring bitterness against her. That led her to forgive her mother and also ask for her forgiveness.

That was a liberating experience for Dulce. But God wanted to deliver her from another bondage which He revealed to her through the Bible.

“I like to read the Bible everyday,” Dulce says. She was surprised however that she often came across Deuteronomy 18:10-12: “Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts out spells, or who is a medium or spiritist, or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord...”

At first, Dulce would avoid reading these verses. She reasoned that anyway she was not sacrificing any of her children as burnt offering like the pagans did in olden times. But at the back of her mind, she knew something was wrong, she was just denying it. The truth is that her family had been deeply involved with the occult. After attending a four-day inner healing and deliverance session in 2005, she learned about the many areas in her life that needed mending. She learned about how her family's past involvements with the occult displeased God and built a stronghold in her life.

Soon after that, she renounced her past involvement with the occult, particularly spiritism, divination, and the use of amulets. She also led her mother, with whom she reconciled with earlier, to an inner healing, deliverance, and renunciation from a pact she made many years ago with the devil. After that, they both experienced the peace of God and the restoration of their mother-daughter relationship.

The day before her father was buried, Dulce and her mother had a heart to heart talk. Her mother revealed to her many things about herself and her past that made Dulce understand her better.

"For the first time in my life, I saw my mother as a wonderful woman who suffered much," Dulce says. Never in her life had she felt much love, compassion, and concern for her aging mother. Dulce experienced a new level of healing.

Dulce continues to experience the liberating power of God's love as she reads and obeys His Word. The more she knows the truth, the more it sets her free.