

March 2006

Dear Friends,

I meant to write you sooner, early in February. That was my desire. Now here it is the middle of March, and this is my first chance to sit down and say something meaningful to you. (At least, I hope it will be meaningful!). So much has been going on here at Ransomed Heart!

Early in our young history as a ministry we put into words the tenets that express our desire for the kind of ministry we want to be, as well as our sense of how God would have us live and work together in the mission he's given us.¹ Two of those tenets are:

Walk with God – follow the Wild Goose

I've spoken before about the early Celtic Christians calling the Holy Spirit the Wild Goose. It wasn't a pejorative term as we have today ("a wild goose chase"). It was a term of honor and affection, for they knew that God cannot be tamed, and that if you follow his Spirit you *will* be led into adventure upon adventure. Look at Paul's life.

Operate by both Wisdom and Revelation

We never ignore wisdom. We also listen to God, and sometimes he leads us in directions that seem at the time counter-intuitive. (Abraham, sacrifice your son. Gideon, you need a smaller army).

You've noticed haven't you that as you begin to walk in conversational intimacy with God you find yourself living, choosing and relating differently? You begin to reflect the Wild Goose nature of our God. Without being irresponsible or flaky, you *do live a bit unpredictably* and this, at times, affects others. As a ministry, we try and submit all our plans and decisions to God, listening for his affirmation or course-corrections. It's a wonderful way to run a ministry, but it does make for some awkward moments. We find ourselves apologizing for decisions that inevitably disappoint people.

I'm thinking of a description Wendell Berry used of a character in one of his novels: "His wildness lay in his refusal – or inability – to lie within other people's expectations." He could have been describing God. You'll find this description becomes more and more true of you as well, as you follow this God.

Back to the exciting things happening at Ransomed Heart. In December we went out into the field to meet with allies and friends, and we discovered that this movement is way ahead of us, that God and many of you are in fact carrying the message forward in hundreds of amazing ways,

¹You can find those tenets on our website www.ransomedheart.com, under "Who We Are."

and there is *now* a profound need for more resources, counsel, and direction to help you in your journey. We were struck by all we saw and heard, and in the midst of this all was God clearly speaking and redirecting our plans...

One immediate change was to cancel both Advanced retreats for men and women this year. That was hard to do. We love those retreats, for they build upon the Captivating and Wild At Heart retreats and help you go deeper in the message (help ensure irreversible change). And, by way of ripple effect, help you better rescue the hearts of others and help them to stay with it. We know we've disappointed a number of folks with that decision.

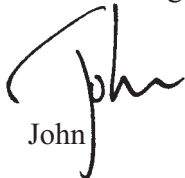
But we can only speak to one group of men and one group of women at the Advanced. Meanwhile, there is this cry for "more" coming to us from all over the world. So, what we believe is best is for us to take the time and energy we would have devoted in 2006 to the Advanced and use that space to develop the resources, helps, counsel and aids to help our allies go deeper in the message personally, and help you lead others as well. For one example, we are going to film a Captivating video series in 2006 in the same vein as we did the Wild at Heart Band of Brothers DVD series, to enable women to bring this message to thousands of women we could never reach. (Filming in August, with a 2007 release of a ten-part series).

We also plan to release a number of teaching series on audio CD – much more teaching than we could offer at the Advanced – as lasting resources for your nourishment and discipleship. We're in the midst of creating one on Prayer. It's proving to be very powerful (and should be available this summer). Lots of other resources are somewhere in production even now.

Another big shift taking place here is a movement towards international events. All over the U.S. our friends and allies are putting on events of their own now, carrying this message forward.² But internationally, the need is great. We just returned from an event in Dublin that confirmed this. And in June, we are holding a national Wild at Heart conference in Calgary (tell your Canadian friends!).

So, we continue to follow the Wild Goose. We *are* sorry for disappointing some of you. But we are very, very excited about the future, and the resources that will help you in your walk with God, and your rescue of the hearts of others. So do pray for us. I mean it. This is not the token close to a newsletter. We *need* your prayers!! Everyday. And, make sure you are stopping by our website regularly so you can get in on the new resources coming out this year. Finally, thank you so much for your generous support of us. We are truly grateful, and poised for even greater impact.

For the Kingdom,



John

²Find out more on our website under "Community – Groups in Your Area"