

RANSOMED HEART

LOVE GOD. LIVE FREE.

September 2011

Friends,

In my monthly letters this year we've been exploring the personality of Jesus – his beautiful, scandalous, utterly compelling personality. We've looked at his...

Humanity – Jesus wasn't faking it in Gethsemane. He wasn't Einstein dropping in to take the first grade math quiz. The Incarnation was real; his was the most human face of all.

Playfulness – like when he “caught” the boys fishing after his resurrection, how he shows up on the beach like a tourist, repeats the miraculous catch that drew them all in three years earlier, then has them to breakfast.

Extravagant (dare we say, scandalous) generosity – to the tune of 908 bottles of wine for Cana, late into the party.

Fierce intention – how demons shuddered before him, how he cleared the temple like a locomotive. Jesus wasn't Gandhi.

Cunning – how utterly brilliant Jesus is with the woman at the well, when she tries to make him mad and he sets a beautiful trap to catch her.

Humility – how the Word of God needed to learn to talk, how God, who is in all places at all times, had to get around like a guy who can't come up with bus fare.

We've talked about loving Jesus – how life comes down to this one, simple act: “Jesus, I love you. I love you, I love you, I love you.” It is the single most orienting thing we can ever do.

I hope you have enjoyed getting a glimpse into his personality. And I am so very, very excited that *Beautiful Outlaw* – the book from which all this was drawn – is almost here! Back in January, when I was writing the book, Jesus spoke to me Isaiah 63:4: “For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redemption has come.” I sensed that at this time, in this context, the “year of his redemption” means the redeeming of how people see Jesus and what they know him to be like. Wouldn't that be *awesome!*!??

I want so badly for people to know Jesus *as he really is*. To have Jesus, really have him, is to have the greatest treasure in all worlds. To have his life and love and joy and freedom simply cannot be compared. And to love Jesus – that settles the deepest question of human existence. And we *can* have Jesus. Really. Despite the vandalizing of Jesus both by religion and the world, he is still very much himself – though it takes a good bit of uncovering these days to know him as he is.

This is the revolution I want to see. I want a breakout of the true Jesus – no more wacky, goofy, no more wispy, girly-ghost imagery, no more hyper-religious. Jesus as he *is*. Playful, cunning, fierce, humble, scandalous, generous, free.

This is what our team has been working on for eight months. I think *Beautiful Outlaw* could bring those we love to a deep, true encounter with Jesus. I think it could be huge for introducing him to the world. This is one of the most important ministry initiatives we've ever undertaken. I think God is up to something big. Let me give you a sneak peak on some highlights of what we're up to:

- We've created a very, very cool "trailer" for the book, like a movie trailer. You're gonna love it. You can email it around to your friends.
- We prepared eighteen short videos for groups, churches and individuals to more deeply explore the message and help introduce others to this incredible Jesus. We're offering them free to you through the end of the year (yep, *free*).
- We'll be podcasting – both on our regular audio and video podcast channels – about this Jesus, bringing his personality to life.
- We'll be visiting four cities in October – Atlanta (the 11th), Orange County (the 13th), Seattle (14th) and Dallas (26th) where I'll be speaking about this outlaw who is so beautiful.
- We are offering a worldwide "Outlawcast" on November 14th. I'll be speaking live at New Life Church here in Colorado Springs, and we'll be broadcasting it free over the internet for churches, home groups and individuals to use.

There's actually lots more, but this gives you the feel of how excited and invested we are in causing a revolution for Jesus. Two things you can do:

- Pray it would be so! "Come Jesus, come and fight for your name, your reputation through this project. Capture people with who you really are; bless this project in every way!"
- Come right now to www.beautifuloutlaw.net and see the trailer, the videos, special promotions, all that we're doing. You're just gonna love it. Love *him*.

With you, for Jesus,


John