

RANSOMED HEART

LOVE GOD. LIVE FREE.

January 2012 (can you believe it?!)

Dearest Friends,

Well...here it is. The new year.

We finally got the last of the Christmas decorations packed up and put away. I'm pretty much done with egg nog for awhile. And I'll be just fine if I don't hear "Rockin around the Christmas Tree" for another ten months. Please.

This is that time of year we start thinking about making changes – "new year, new you" and all that. Now, let me be quick to say I'm not big on New Year's Resolutions. They usually only set us up for a fall. (How many resolutions have you made over the years, and how many of those have actually resulted in lasting freedom?) But I do want to make a few suggestions in the direction of a marvelous year for you...

This is a good time to ask yourself, *What do I want to be different this year?*

Really. Sit with that for ten minutes. Let your heart surface. Write it down. And then...take it to Jesus in prayer. *Lord – come into this. Show me the way. Give me the first step, or the next step.*

Ask Jesus, *What is the theme of this year, Lord?*

I do this every January 1st, and it has proven a mighty rescue many times over. Usually Jesus will say one simple thing. Three years ago it was, "Love." And all through the year, I found myself needing to return to the simple truth of love. It helped to orient me; it helped me to interpret things. Two years ago it was, "Restoration," and that proved to be the year I took a short sabbatical and sought the restoration I needed. Last year it was, "My glory," and wow – it was the year of *Beautiful Outlaw* and I could say a hundred things about how "My glory" proved true. So ask Jesus, *What is the theme of this year, Lord?* And when he speaks, write it down! Post it somewhere you will see it often. In very big letters.

Pray the "Daily Prayer."

It's not a magic wand or a lottery ticket, but the folks who have made a practice of this will tell you it has been huuuuge for them. So simple, really. But a rescue. A breakthrough. It clears the fog. And so much more. You can find a version to print or an audio download free at www.ransomedheart.com. Look under "More," then "Prayers." Times are hard. Quick little, "Jesus be with me" prayers just aren't going to cut it anymore.

Get yourself into some sort of community.

I know, I know – it's hard, its messy, it is never ever exactly what you want. But you need it anyways. Look at Jesus – even the Son of God chose to live in community with a handful of men and women because he needed to. Now, community is not 5,000 people on Sunday

morning. That can be awesome, but you need people *in your life*. Start a small group. Take the risk. Invite some folks over and spend three months going through one of our DVD series. Just give it three months and see what Jesus does.

Take the battle seriously.

Too many folks are still trying to live as though there are only two big players in their life – them, and God. And they're mad that God isn't coming through more often. Friends, enough with the naiveté. You live in a world at war, and that war is heating up. Live like it. Fight back. There is more freedom than you ever thought possible...but only if you fight back. Stop interpreting hassles as merely "hassles." Stop thinking things will get better with time. This is Normandy – live like it!

Take your healing seriously.

Yes, you can have a new year, new you. You can. If you'll take your healing seriously. I mean your inner healing, the restoration of your soul. We've all taken hits in this war, and our souls are in great need of wholeness and freedom and life. Well...it isn't going to happen unless you pursue it! Get some counseling. Or healing prayer. Ask Jesus, *What do I need to do for my healing and restoration? What do you have for me, Lord? Where are you leading?*

With a whole heart, you are unstoppable. With a wounded heart, you are limping along. With a broken heart, you are very, very vulnerable.

Fall in love with God again.

There's a reason "love God with everything that is within you" is the first and greatest command. Nothing in life works right until we practice this. But when we *do* fall in love with God, love him with everything we are, it is the single greatest act of re-orientation we could ask for – the single greatest shift towards wholeness, happiness, life and clarity that any person could ever choose. But the funny thing is, even among God's own people, very few actually make this the main thing. Friends – this is the main thing. If it's been years since you read *The Sacred Romance*, read it again. If you haven't yet opened *Beautiful Outlaw*, now is the time.

OK, this was a little fatherly counsel, here at the start of 2012.

Everything we do here at Ransomed Heart is designed to help you with these suggestions. Come by the website, plug in. Listen to our podcasts, join us at an event. We'd LOVE to walk with you in loving God and finding wholeness.

With love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'John' written in a cursive, flowing style.

PS There are still places open at our February Captivating retreat for women – a rare and rich opportunity! In one event you can drink deeply in everything I've mentioned above. How beautiful is that? Come and join us! Register online at www.ransomedheart.com.