

RANSOMED HEART

LOVE GOD. LIVE FREE.

April 2014

Dear Friends and Allies,

I had a sweet experience this weekend.

But first the back story. Last week I encountered some relational tension with a few people – just the usual misunderstanding + sin + brokenness stuff that tends to blow things out of proportion and leave a nasty fallout. (Surely you know what I am describing.) The joy came when I woke Saturday morning and realized none of the “hangover” was there – no shame, no guilt, no fear, no regret, no second-guessing. It was...surprising, and delightful. A sweet relief.

O the joy when we finally feel that Jesus has restored us in a particular area of our lives.

Do you know this joy? I think it was meant to be our growing “normal.”

The scriptures sure talk a lot about us walking in genuine freedom, and wholeness, born out of God restoring our lives. (The Good News is that God restores our lives.) “Salvation” is nothing if it doesn’t include the restoration of your humanity. Yes, there are seasons when we have to grit our teeth and tough it out. But my goodness – that wasn’t supposed to comprise our entire Christian life!

With the arrival of Jesus, the Messiah, that fateful dilemma is resolved. Those who enter into Christ’s being-here-for-us no longer have to live under a continuous, low-lying black cloud. A new power is in operation. The Spirit of life in Christ, like a strong wind, has magnificently cleared the air, freeing you from a fated lifetime of brutal tyranny at the hands of sin and death...[leading] us out into...a spacious, free life. (Romans 8:1-2,6)

A spacious, free life. Doesn’t that just sound lovely? I don’t think God promises one thing in the Bible but delivers something less in our lives.

So – here’s my question: What are you doing to pursue wholeness this year?

I ask because it doesn’t tend to “just happen.” Usually it comes because we put ourselves into situations where God can bring it to us, work it out *in* us. If you’ve hung around RH for any length of time, you’ve heard us use the phrase “Four Streams” to describe the *process* God uses to heal lives. Sometimes we need inner healing; sometimes we need interpretation of our story; sometimes we need to be set free from some dark hold; sometimes we need to learn how to live all that out in a genuine life with God. Healing, Counseling, Deliverance, Discipleship.

All four streams are needed. (This will help you understand why some people get better and others don’t – typically it is because those who are stuck are ignoring several of the streams.) The best

ministries and Christian counselors know this, and operate with all four streams.

Which brings me back to my question: What are you doing this year to pursue your wholeness? What is your plan? How are you making yourself available to the Four Streams?

As I look around the building here at Ransomed Heart, I realize that every single one of us have seen a Christian counselor at some point in our lives. (Many are right now.) I don't think we are a particularly broken sample; in fact, these are some of the most whole people I know. I simply think we realized that in order to get to wholeness we had to pursue it, go find the streams for ourselves. If you ignore this, how will you get better?

I know, I know, I know – neglecting our life comes easier than falling out of bed. A friend will ask me, “How are you doing these days?” and my first reaction typically is, *I have no idea; I'm too busy to think about that; stop looking at me.* We are the age of busyness, distraction, and depletion. We are the scattered ones. Self-neglect also happens to be the enemy's choice method with you, because as you neglect you get weak, and then he can take you out.

You will have to be intentional about your restoration. But it is worth it! My goodness – everything else you want in this life depends upon it!

One of the resources we have been steadily building over the last several years is a listing of counselors who are working from this perspective. You can find this growing network on our Allies Network (under the “Connect” tab at ransomedheart.com). If you need a counselor and don't have a personal referral, come search the Network.

We also need your help to build up the counselor network! Our hope as a ministry is to have Kingdom-hearted counselors within driving distance to our allies. We need your help to make that dream a possibility. Have you spent time with a Life-giving counselor? Make sure they know about the Allies Network and have them post their counseling practice. I can't begin to number the times someone has said to us, “My counselor gave me Captivating... Wild at Heart... Waking the Dead.” I wish we would have grabbed their names right then and there! So we need your help in finding them.

The joy of wholeness is available. But in this bloody war, here at the end of the age, too many of God's people are barely making it. Take your restoration seriously. And help us build a network of “restorers” who can help strengthen the Church here in the most trying of times.

Thanks. We're here for you. We love you! We're in this together.

Love,


John