

RANSOMED HEART

LOVE GOD. LIVE FREE.

March 2014

Dear Friends,

I find myself wondering this month what you do with disappointment. We all face it, and those who find themselves coming more alive actually face it more often, because they *are* coming alive but the world around them is not. The soul that is being healed by Jesus grows more and more aware of what it was made for...and more and more aware that everything in this life falls short.

I'm not sure we expected this – that as we grew towards wholeness we would find ourselves actually more disappointed. But of course – deadened skin barely notices a burn while sensitive skin feels it acutely. “Hope deferred makes the heart sick,” as Proverbs says (13:12). I'll wager there's actually a lot of heart-sick hearts walking around out there, beneath the distraction of our busyness and veneer of casual conversation. I know folks who wish they were married but are not; others who are married but wish they were not; folks who cannot have children and those who are taking care of their children's children; folks who would take any job at this point and those who would give anything to get out of their job at this point. Too many friends have physical issues, or soul issues, which seem insurmountable.

It's a broken world, dear hearts. Of course disappointment gets in. The question is, what will we do with it?

I'd like to offer a warning, and hope.

The warning goes like this: disappointment is the ground in us in which the enemy tries to sow seeds against God. Like the seed of resentment. A dear friend who is currently suffering physically wrote me yesterday that he feels like the assault, “is an effort of evil to turn my heart against Jesus.” Can you relate to that? I sure can, and it is horrible. Satan whispers in our disappointments that God does not care, that he is not coming through, that he could have done something but did not.

Through chronic disappointment, or shattering disappointment, he even tries to sow in us hatred towards God (though we cringe to admit it, loathe it while it is taking place). Satan resents God, hates him, and envies us. So he uses disappointment to sow into us his feelings towards God. The heart in pain is most vulnerable to this. *Especially* at a period of history like ours. Let me explain why...

I believe we are living at the end of the age. (More than a million children are prostituted into the sex trade every year; a monstrous wickedness, and only one symptom of our times. Exactly how much more evil do the days have to get to be called “the last days?” Is there more evidence you are waiting for?)

One of the tragedies of the last days is a great apostasy, a turning from God.

At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other...
Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold (Matt 24:10,12)

The enemy would love nothing more than to fill the earth with his hatred. Perhaps you have noticed – a greater measure of relationships collapsing, betrayals, assaults, or in the piercing of your own heart and a loss of hope though you did not know the source. When you take the dilemma of disappointment, and how vulnerable we are to feelings against God, and then you add to it the intensity of such days as Jesus was describing – I hope you see how delicate our situation is.

We must not, must not, must not let the enemy use our disappointments to turn our hearts against God, turn our love “cold.” The most effective thing to do, right in the midst of the disappointment, is to begin loving God. Really – right then and there, begin to love God, out loud, wholeheartedly. (You will need to be intentional about this. As you do, you will suddenly expose just how wicked the plot really is.) This turning to love God rescues our hearts from resentment, and hatred.

Hope rescues, too; let us not forget hope.

The life you are longing for *will be yours*. All of it. Guaranteed. We must start here, and work backwards – we must begin with the fact that God has rescued us in Jesus, and provided for a future surpassing our wildest hopes. When disappointment strikes, whether great or small, we can say to ourselves, “I will have ‘this’ (whatever it is we don’t have, or had but lost); I will have this very soon, and it will be wonderful, and it will never be taken away.”

I had to bring myself back to this the other night, so I sat down with my journal and made myself – in the midst of disappointment – write down what I’m looking forward to in the coming kingdom. Because this is the utter core of the Christian faith, and if we don’t cling to this, we will turn to this broken world and try to get from it what our being-restored-hearts increasingly long for. And disappointment will strike harder, and the enemy will turn upon us.

I don’t want him to sow in the hearts of God’s people resentment towards God, even hatred towards him. I don’t want this in my heart. So we must love Jesus right in the midst of disappointment, and remind ourselves of the hope that we have. This will rescue us during these trying days.

With love,



John

PS We would be grateful if you could help us out financially this month. Ask Jesus about that – we trust him, and you.