

Love God. Live Free.

Late Spring 2024

Dear friends,

I had nearly written off summer.

Stasi and I have a lot of obligations this year, some good, some simply necessary. But when I began to look at our calendar, it was so full of commitments I shrugged my shoulders and said in my heart, *Oh well*. Which is troubling, because we love summer, and it tends to be a very important time of rest and rejuvenation for us.

I know there are people in the world who prefer a different season. But let's be honest: summer is the time when Creation is most alive. Everything is blooming, everything is green and growing. The lush grass invites a barefoot romp. The warm evenings spread a table for barbecues and dinners on the deck. It's a time of year when you have *permission* to take a more laid-back pace.

And by all means, you should grab that permission!

(I realize I'm writing to my friends in the Northern Hemisphere. Forgive me, all our friends in the Southern Hemisphere. You are into fall and looking ahead to winter. But I think the things I have to say here will be just as important to you!)

With longer days, plenty of sunshine, pools opened up, beaches warm and sunny, parks beautiful, and everything leafed out to its fullness, there's just no denying that summer is a life-giving time of year. Which brings me back to my *Oh well*.

Every year on the podcast and often in this letter, I urge you, our friends, to ask Jesus what he has for you over the next several months. Some friends of mine are moving suddenly, and their lives have been thrown into chaos. Other friends are scrambling to find something playful and restorative this summer. But *all the more reason* for them—and each of us—to ask Jesus what he has for us.

It's too easy to fall into old patterns. "But we have to go see my parents." It's too easy to feel that perhaps you can't afford the sort of rest you need. "I don't have time this year." Often, we let that subtle feeling of *I'm not sure this is worth it* get in before we ask Jesus what he has for us.

Which is why I love the asking process.

It is so good, any time of year, to ask Jesus what he has for you. Always.

All those assumptions we make, that deep *Oh well*, might not have anything to do with what Jesus actually wants to offer.

So here's what I've got to do: I first need to break agreements with *Oh well*, with resignation, with feeling like the die is already cast for the summer. Because in one agreement like *Oh well*, I've written off the next three months as unsalvageable.

It's not true. Not for the living God, that's for sure.

**WILD
AT HEART**

You might want to check in on any agreements you're making about summer as well. *Holy Spirit, am I making agreements about this summer? Are we making agreements about this summer (or winter)? Show us, Lord.*

We need to break those agreements in order for Jesus to speak to us. To love us. To be generous. To overcome the mental obstacles we've already put in place.

As I said, summer tends to be a time of year when you have permission to live more reasonably. You can break out the barbecue, sit on your porch in the evenings, go for bike rides, take a vacation. So by all means, *please* ask Jesus what he has for you over the next several months. Lay down your assumptions and just let him speak.

By the way, give it more than four minutes. Don't throw up a quick prayer, give him thirty seconds to speak, and go on with your assumptions. It might take a week or two of asking Jesus each day, *What do you have for us, Lord?* for you to be in a place to hear what he has to say. Stick with it!

After I finish this letter I'm going to do exactly what I've said. I'm renouncing *Oh well*. I'm breaking the agreement that my summer is already sold down the river, and I'm asking Jesus what he has for me. Not just in terms of a special trip or something like that, not just one week of restoration. But more so, *What is the pace you have for me this summer? Where is the joy, Lord?*

I promise he has far more for you than you thought, and I'll wager that most of you are going to be surprised by what you hear.

Offered in love,



John

P.S. We have a couple of podcasts this month on summer soul care, so make sure you don't miss those!

P.P.S. Thank you again for your generous support of this mission; we couldn't do it without you! It's easy to give - just scan this QR code, or, use the good, old-fashioned put a check in the enclosed envelope!

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