

# RANSOMED HEART

LOVE GOD. LIVE FREE.

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March 2019

Dear Friends,

I'm sitting in a hotel room waiting to visit some extended family. Stasi and I flew here for a memorial service. Gosh, I hate these occasions. So awkward. So painful. Death was never meant to be part of the human experience, and we reel when it strikes. You learn so quickly who has hope, and who doesn't. Hard as it is, it is also a tender opportunity to bring Jesus, but a delicate one as all of you know who have walked others through loss.

I was already thinking about this letter before we got the call, before the hard news. This seems like a confirmation of what I wanted to share with you. So here goes...

I think most of you understand we are living in a very late hour; that these could very fairly be called the last days. If Paul thought *his* hour was getting late, then think how much later ours is!! This is a hard time for the saints on this earth, because such dark forces have been set loose. One of those rampaging is Death. Not just physical death (though have you noticed how many out-of-the-blue deaths have been taking place in your world?!). But "the end" of things, like relationships, fellowships, dreams, projects, etc.

If you want to thrive at this moment, you can—but you've got to lean into and draw upon the greater resources of the Kingdom of God. He always has provision for us. And that's what I want to talk about: The Life of God made available to us.

One of the most compelling images in the Old Testament is the picture Ezekiel gave us of the river that flows from the throne of God:

I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar. He then brought me out through the north gate and led me around the outside to the outer gate facing east, and the water was trickling from the south side. As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off a thousand cubits and then led me through water that was ankle-deep. He measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee-deep. He measured off another thousand and led me through water that was up to the waist. He measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in—a river that no one could cross. (Ezekiel 47:1-5)

The imagery speaks of the abundance of God, his unending, unceasing, inextinguishable LIFE, pouring forth from his Presence. The image is repeated in Revelation, where it makes clear this river is the River of Life:

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.  
(Revelation 22:1-2)

The Life of God, for his people, flowing as a river, but also as a tree and its fruit. I can't wait to drink from that water, taste that glorious fruit! God doesn't keep his life to himself; he pours it forth for all creation, and *especially* his sons and daughters. We know Jesus wants us to draw upon this life, for he said he came that we might have his Life, and have it abundantly (John 10:10). Scripture says we are meant to "reign in life" through Jesus Christ (Romans 5:17).

O how we need more of the Life of God in us, particularly in these days.

So I've been compelled recently to pray that the River of Life would flow through our lives, renewing us, bringing us the Life of God in greater measure. That the River would also flow through the work of Ransomed Heart.

I think you will find this very, very helpful—to be calling upon the River of Life into your lives, your households, your "kingdoms." I offer this prayer as a help, or model, for you to adapt to your situation, and to pray right along with us...

"Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit—we love you God! We worship you! We give our hearts and lives to you in every way. You are our Life, Father, and there is no other. Jesus, you came that we might have Life. Romans says we reign in life through your Life, Lord. And so we present our lives to you in a fresh way, to be filled with your magnificent Life! We pray that the River of Life, the very Life of God, would flow through our lives in abundance. We pray the River of Life would flow through our homes and families; our work; our kingdoms. We pray that the River of Life would flow through the team and the work of Ransomed Heart in the world. Fill us, fill this mission, with your inextinguishable Life, God! May your abundant Life sweep away all death, and destruction, and everything set against us. We call forth Life—more life in us; more life in Ransomed Heart; more of the River of Life flowing through this work in the world. In the mighty Name of Life Himself, Jesus Christ, the risen Lord! All praise and glory to him! Amen."

Offered in love,

  
John