

RANSOMED HEART

LOVE GOD. LIVE FREE.

September/October 2019

Dear Friends,

You did not miss my September letter, in case you were wondering. Life remains insanely busy—for all of us—and I simply didn't have the time to write something meaningful.

To tell the tale more accurately, I had no margin left after all of September's demands, and I chose not to force myself to do what we all typically do: find a slim piece of sacred space reserved for something else, and use it to cram more work in. Choosing not to is called kindness or wisdom or soul care or survival in a mad hour. Slowly, surely, I am learning.

So here we are in October, and we'll call this our September/October letter, for I do have something I want to share with you, something I think will prove immensely helpful in this moment we call our time, our hour upon the earth. It comes from the first epistle of the Apostle John. I was drawn to the letter for many reasons, but mostly by this verse:

“Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.” (1 John 4:16)

I know I need a deeper life in God; I certainly need more of God in me. Because of this mad hour. I want to live, abide, make my home in God, and I want him to thoroughly saturate me. So this verse got my attention, because John is showing us the actual path into that life.

As I got into the letter, reading it through several times, I realized John was writing at a time very much like our own. The theme of the letter is regarding the battle between death and life, darkness and light, hatred and love, foul spirits, untrustworthy people—and how lovers of Jesus navigate such a situation. (Sound familiar?) John was writing at a time which he and the other apostles (including Paul) believed was very near the end of the age:

Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. (2:18)

Let me quickly point out that these authors wrote by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We can assume they were not mistaken or deluded. I realize that nearly 2,000 years have gone by, and it is easy to dismiss John's assessment by thinking, “Well...he wasn't exactly right; I mean, it wasn't the last hour because so much time has transpired since then.” There is another, humbler, way to consider it: If the closest disciples of Jesus and the leaders of the church believed it was the “last hour” or the “end of the age,” then perhaps we are living in the last few seconds, the last fleeting moments.

Which I believe we are.

However you slice it, John was writing to those who follow Jesus and find themselves living in a very dark time.

We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. (5:8)

He focuses the spiritual battle around his disciples as the contest between love and hatred:

For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. Do not be surprised, my brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him. (3:11-15)

I have written in the past that I believe Hatred is a major force rampaging on the earth today. Not just human hatred, though that is enough to wreak destruction. I am speaking of demonic hatred, foul spirits of hatred that do find cooperative human beings and get them to carry out things like bombings and such. But you don't have to be in the direct or indirect path of terrorists to be under the wrath of Hatred. Jesus himself told us, "You will be hated by all nations because of me" (Matthew 24:9).

What I want to put into your hands is an awareness of how real Hatred's presence is on the earth—especially against the saints. The evil one hates you, hates your love of Jesus, and hates and envies your position of favor and blessing. Jesus has given us a shield, a power, and a way of disarming this in our lives. That power is the Love of God. The secret weapon is Love. "Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him" (4:16).

Here at Ransomed Heart we have found that praying—commanding—the Love of God as a shield against all Hatred in this hour is a wonderful, wonderful provision of God for getting out from under this darkness. What I mean is something very direct and deliberate, like this:

I bring the Love of God the Father, the Love of Jesus Christ, the Love of the Holy Spirit over my heart and over my life today, over my home and family [name them], over my household and domain. I command the Love of God to fill and shield my household and domain. I command the Love of God against all Hatred set against us—Love as our shield against Hatred in this hour. I command this in the name of Jesus Christ.

Try it for a few days...you'll see. The effects are wonderful.

I simply wanted to extend that relief to you.

In love,


John