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# WILDLY UNBIBLICAL

By Don Veinot and Ron Henzel

**R**eal Men Don't Hug Unless...  
 {All "real men" would answer "C" to the posed questions.}

1. Alien beings from a highly advanced society visit the earth. You are the first human they have encountered; and as a token of inter-galactic friendship, they present you with a small but incredibly sophisticated device that is capable of curing all diseases, provide an infinite supply of clean energy, wipe out hunger, and permanently eliminate oppression and violence. What would you do with it?

- A. Present it to the Prime Minister.
- B. Present it to the Secretary General of the United Nations.
- C. Take it apart.

2. As you grow older, what lost quality of youth do you miss most?

- A. Innocence
- B. Idealism
- C. Firecrackers

3. In your opinion, what is the ideal pet?

- A. A cat
- B. A dog
- C. A dog that eats cats

4. One week day your wife wakes up feeling ill and asks you to get your three children ready for school. Which would be your first question?

- A. Do they need to eat or anything?
- B. Are they in school already?
- C. There are three of them?

5. What is the human race's single greatest achievement?

- A. Democracy
- B. Religion
- C. Remote control

6. You have been seeing a woman for several years. She is attractive and intelligent and you always enjoy being with her. One leisurely Sunday afternoon, the two of you are taking it easy. You're watching a soccer game and she's reading the paper when suddenly—out of the blue—she tells you that she thinks she really loves you, but can no longer bear the uncertainty of not knowing where your relationship is going. She says she's not asking whether you want to get married; only whether you believe that you have some kind of future together. What do you say?

A. That you seriously believe the two of you have a future, but you don't want to rush it.

B. That although you also have strong feelings for her, but you cannot honestly say that any time soon you'll be ready to make a lasting commitment, and you don't want to hurt her by holding out false hopes.

C. That you cannot believe the Wallabies lost to South Africa two weeks ago.

7. Okay, so you have decided you really love a woman and you want to share with her all the joys and sorrows the world has to offer, come what may. How do you tell her?



(Continued on next page)



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**"Wild" (Continued from page 1)**

A. You take her to a nice restaurant and tell her after dinner.

B. You take her for a walk on a moonlit beach. You say her name and when she turns to you with the sea breezes blowing her hair and stars in her eyes, you tell her.

C. Tell her what?

8. When would you hug another male?

A. If he's your father and one of you has a fatal disease.

B. If you're performing the Heimlich procedure.

C. If you're a professional football player and a teammate scores the goal to win the world cup, if you also pound him fraternally with your fist hard enough to cause fractures.<sup>1</sup>

The May 1982 release of Bruce Feirstein's book *Real Men Don't Eat Quiche: A Guide to All That is Truly Masculine* launched another era in the American culture. The feminist movement was in full swing; and to some, at least, it seemed as though there was a general questioning of what it meant to be a man. Over time, the book title gave birth to a variety of lists, some humorous—such as the above—and others ascribing depression and other maladies to a general belief of the above. One web site even has a list of the "Top 73 Things 'Real Men' Don't Do." The number-one answer arrived at by online voting is, "Hey, Ralph... Will you come to the bathroom with me?"<sup>2</sup> with 34% of the vote. Comedian Tim Allen has made a living by caricaturing the differences between men and women with his souped-up lawn mower on his television show *Home Improvement* and his notorious mimicking of male communication, "Auuuughhhh, Auuuuughhhh, AUUUUUUGHHHHHHHHH!!!!!"

*Real Men Don't Eat Quiche* may have been written, in part, in reaction to what was becoming the feminization of men through the teachings and conferences of individuals such as New Ager, writer, poet, and conference-speaker Robert Bly. In an article written as a sort of celebration of Robert Bly, Thomas R. Smith comments on Bly's views and teachings of the 1970s:

"In fact, Bly's intellectual engagement with gender matters reaches back at least to his 1973 essay, 'I Came Out of the Mother Naked.' Building on Jung's theory of the co-existence of both masculine and feminine traits in the psyche, Bly's essay stands as a manifesto guiding his subsequent thought on the sexes. He wrote: 'All my clumsy prose amounts to is praise of the feminine soul, whether that soul appears in men or women.'"<sup>3</sup>

In 1975, Bly began his "Great Mother" conferences where he and others promoted the spiritual and cultural values of matriarchy. Conferences he carries on even to this day.

The 1980s saw the birth and growth of the men's movement, and some of the men's conferences had Bly speak at these as well. This eventually led to the writing of *Iron John*, which was first published and released in 1990 by Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc. The book was an immediate best seller with immediate effects among its readers, although not necessarily to the delight of the feminists with whom he had been working up to that point. The reasons are obvious. *Newsweek's* cover for June 24, 1991 displayed a grinning, bare-chested CEO holding a toddler in one arm and a conga drum in the other.<sup>4</sup> In the January 1992 edition of the *New Internationalist* (a publication of Marxist ideology) in an article by Erica Simmons, we read:

"Under the tutelage of Minnesota poet Robert Bly and guided by his bestselling book *Iron John*, thousands of American men are gathering to forge a new masculine identity."<sup>5</sup>

Simmons astutely observes this view draws heavily from Jungian psychology and then writes:

"Bly has diagnosed the psychic wounds of contemporary American men. They are afflicted with inexpressible feelings of grief and are emotionally repressed and socially isolated from one another. They are nice guys who are adept at meeting the needs of women and submerging their own. They have abandoned the old macho version of manhood, but lack a suitable new model of masculinity. They are what Bly calls 'soft men.'"<sup>6</sup>

In describing the sort of men who were involved in this fast-growing phenomenon, she states, "Those who come to Bly want to free their own Wild Man."<sup>7</sup> Of course, soft men are bad, and wild men are good. Thomas R. Smith had pointed out Bly was building on Jungian theory and the internet magazine *Xy* agrees:

"Bly makes use of Jung's theory of archetypes, to argue that within each man there are numerous archetypes that will influence behavior and attitudes, some in healthy ways and some in violent and unhealthy ways. These archetypes include the Wild Man, the King, the Trickster, the Lover, the Quester, and the Warrior. Masculinity is the product of these



deep psychological scripts, and particular archetypes are expressed at different historical periods."<sup>8</sup>

Ideas have consequences, and it seems important to understand the basis of Jung's thinking which influenced Robert Bly and his writings.

## Carl Jung Meets Philemon the Demon

Carl Jung was an associate of Sigmund Freud during the early part of the twentieth century. Jung soon parted ways with Freud, however, and began developing his own psychoanalytic theories—based in large measure on occultism. Historian Mark Noll, author of *The Jung Cult: Origins of a Charismatic Movement*, goes into great detail about the occultic roots of Jung's theories.

According to Noll, Jung begins having a series of visions in 1913 and hears disembodied voices talking to him. He offers his body as a receiver of these messages from the spirit world and, through this process, develops what he calls "active imagination." By 1916, Jung is in regular communication with a spirit being known as Philemon and others who Jung believes reveal to him the foundation for his life and work. His communication with these spirit entities serves as the core of his psychoanalytic theories about "archetypes" and the "collective unconscious."

The "collective unconscious" is simply another name for the spirit world. Jung theorized all of mankind was linked together in the psychic world by this "collective unconscious" and each person who tapped into this world could gain wisdom and insight. As parts of this collective unconscious are numerous archetypes—which he describes as entities such as warrior, mother, wise old man, the self, God, etc.—who could come into a person's consciousness through dreams and mental images.

From a Christian perspective, Jung is describing the spirit world and communication with demonic spirits.

According to Mark Noll, Jung drew heavily upon Theosophy, spiritualism, the writings of Atheist Friedrich Nietzsche and Evolutionist/Pantheist Ernst Haeckel, the historical roots of pagan sun worship, and a nineteenth-century movement in Europe known as the "volkish movements." These were Germanic groups who cultivated the alleged superiority of the Aryan race—which led to the rise of Nazism.

Mark Noll's research provides compelling evidence Jung's theories formed the basis of a new religious cult.

"Jung's earliest psychological theories and method can be interpreted as perhaps nothing more than an anti-Christian return to solar mythology and sun worship based on Romanic beliefs about the natural religion of the ancient Aryan peoples."<sup>9</sup>

The church was not unaffected by Bly's movement as some Christian counselors began embracing these teachings and running their own weekend retreats in *Iron John* fashion. A large church in the Northwest suburbs of Chicago was embarrassed to learn one of the men's retreats included the men running naked through the woods in an effort to let out their "wild man."

## Enter the Promise Keepers

In the same year Bly published *Iron John*, another group entered the burgeoning men's movement. The Promise Keepers, offi-

cially incorporated in December 1990, were already planning and praying for their first conference which was held in July of 1991 at the University of Colorado Events Center with an attendance of 4,200 men. They developed their "Seven Promises:"

1. A Promise Keeper is committed to honoring Jesus Christ through worship, prayer and obedience to God's Word in the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. A Promise Keeper is committed to pursuing vital relationships with a few other men, understanding that he needs brothers to help him keep his promises.

3. A Promise Keeper is committed to practicing spiritual, moral, ethical, and sexual purity.

4. A Promise Keeper is committed to building strong marriages and families through love, protection and biblical values.

5. A Promise Keeper is committed to supporting the mission of his church by honoring and praying for his pastor, and by actively giving his time and resources.

6. A Promise Keeper is committed to reaching beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of biblical unity.

7. A Promise Keeper is committed to influencing his world, being obedient to the Great Commandment (see Mark 12:30-31) and the Great Commission (see Matthew 28:19-20).

While not without its problems as others have rightfully pointed out, the essential idea of these promises was to bring Christian men back to a biblical foundation and live out their lives under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the revealed Scriptures. In a short amount of time (through good organization, marketing, and gaining the attention of the Christian media), Promise Keepers began filling stadiums around the country. What they were teaching was in stark contrast to the men's movement which was

rooted in pagan teachings. The problem was not that the men weren't bringing about the self-actualization of their "wild man," but rather that the "wild man" was crucified with Christ and *He* now was to be the center and focus of their lives. The desire of the leaders of Promise Keepers was that through sound teaching and the motivation which comes from large gatherings, the result would be men who would become responsible, faithful husbands, fathers, and friends. They would be challenged to be a vital part of their local church and to be an example, not only to their children, but to younger believers as well. Commentary on the effectiveness of this strategy is probably better left for someone else to make.

## Iron John Gets Born Again

In 2001, eleven years after the publication of *Iron John*, Thomas Nelson Publishers released *Wild at Heart* by John Eldredge. This volume is currently one of the most popular "Christian" books on the market today. In fact, the May 2003 Christian Bookseller's Association Best Seller List places it at third among the top 50 books and number one in the "Christian Living" category. Thomas Nelson has now started marketing other products related to *Wild at Heart* including a "Field Manual" and tape series.

(Continued on next page)



## "Wild" (Continued from page 3)

The author, John Eldredge, was trained as an actor, eventually became head of the Research Department in the Public Policy Department at Focus on the Family, and is much in demand at men's and pastor's conferences throughout the world. Eldredge has an MA in counseling but has little theological training.

That he is in such demand for what he has written in *Wild at Heart*, however, makes one wonder if pastors or churchgoers are familiar with sound doctrine and the influences of paganism upon his writings.

One of the few negative—though very accurate—critiques of *Wild at Heart* so far was written by Byron Borger, an associate staff member of the Coalition for Christian Outreach in Pennsylvania. Borger is also the owner of Hearts & Minds Bookstore in Dallastown, Pennsylvania.

Borger, who comes from a more liberal theological background than does Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc. (MCOI), has noted serious theological faults with Eldredge's writings and wonders why evangelicals can't see through the false assumptions and pagan roots of Eldredge's philosophy.

As Borger notes:

"The changes needed in *Wild at Heart* ... are not minor; for it to be an altogether reliable book for serious Christians, it would need major and serious reworking. .... This mess of a book has got fatal flaws."<sup>10</sup>

Borger points out that Eldredge draws upon the writings of Robert Bly, author of *Iron John*. The reviewer says Eldredge brings up an interesting discussion about the purpose of man, but then:

"... he [Eldredge] falls back under the influence of those who seem to have most influenced his thinking in this area—for instance, a quasi-Freudian neo-pagan poet and writer, Robert Bly, who was all the rage in the 1980s."<sup>11</sup>

Although Eldredge writes the book in Christianese, Robert Bly is quoted favorably throughout, and in fact, Bly's writings form the core of Eldredge's book and philosophy on men and what it means to be a man. Robert Bly's "wild man" is now reborn as man who needs to get in touch with his wild heart.

The book and the movement based on Eldredge's book have caught the attention of the secular media as well. Patrick Kampert in his article in the *Chicago Tribune* writes:

"My friend Wayne is a commercial airline pilot who lives in the northwest suburbs. He is a fine husband and father and a dedicated Christian. He is the kind of guy who, on the surface, the Promise Keepers might have pointed to years ago as an example of what they hoped to motivate men to become.

"But if you look deeper, Wayne is actually an example of the Promise Keepers backlash among evangelical men that is quietly rolling across the country, stoked by the books of Colorado author John Eldredge."<sup>12</sup>

Although Bly likes the book, Patrick Kampert writes that Bly believes Eldredge "is sometimes impeded by speaking Christianese."<sup>13</sup> However, baptizing Bly's pagan teachings in Christianese has proven to be a highly lucrative endeavor.

## No More Mister Nice Guy

In the "Introduction," Eldredge outlines what he sees as the need for this book by Christian men:

"Most messages for men ultimately fail. The reason is simple: They ignore what is deep and true to a man's heart, his real passions, and simply try to shape him up through various forms of pressure. 'This is the man you ought to be. This is what a good husband/father/Christian/churchgoer ought to do.' Fill in the blanks from there. He is responsible, sensitive, disciplined, faithful, diligent, dutiful, etc. Many of these are good qualities. That these messengers are well intentioned I have no doubt. But the road to hell, as we remember, is paved with good intentions. That they are a near total failure should seem obvious by now.

"No, men need something else. They need a deeper understanding of why they long for adventures and battles and a Beauty—and why God made them *just like that*."<sup>14</sup>

Now while we would certainly agree rules, systems and principles do little to change a person, the Scriptures really don't teach anything approaching the idea that our "wild" hearts are reliable guides to truth or behavior. The Prophet Jeremiah wrote, "*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*"<sup>15</sup> The Apostle Paul in Romans 1 and 2 outlines what a wild heart looks and acts like, and it isn't a pretty picture. The Scriptures are clear: Our problem is not that we *are not* in touch with our wild heart, but rather that we *are*, and we need to allow Jesus Christ to change our hearts by grace alone through faith alone in Him alone.

But it's also important to put Eldredge's view into historical perspective, where we find it to be dismally derivative of previous failures to truly understand what God requires of men. Not only is it a simple matter to trace Eldredge's Jungian influences to their pagan roots, it's also not difficult to find misguided antecedents to his "wild man" theme in church history.

*That he is in such demand for what he has written in Wild at Heart, however, makes one wonder if pastors or churchgoers are familiar with sound doctrine and the influences of paganism upon his writings.*

## A Walk on the Wild Side

Christians everywhere have chronically struggled with reconciling their inherited cultural definitions of masculinity and femininity with the requirements of Scripture. Each struggle has produced its own set of distorted views that proponents tried to equate with biblical teaching, and which discerning believers have had to guard against. Perhaps the most well-known example of this was the medieval concept of "chivalry," and its most famous obituary was Cervantes' magnum opus *Don Quixote*.<sup>16</sup> History shows us both how chivalry was the culturally based, great granddaddy of Eldredge's current distortion as well as how a changing European culture continuously modified it and, finally, abandoned it.

Chivalry started out as music to a wild man's heart—music accompanied by the sound of metal slamming against metal, and more bone-crunching, head-splitting damsel-in-distress action than you could shake a halberd at. Unfortunately, it also originally was accompanied by pillage, plunder, rape, and general mayhem. This is because the word *chivalry* was initially nothing more than a reference to *fully armed fighting men*, who tended to be a rough bunch in a Europe that was still in the process of being evangelized. Nevertheless, once enlisted in the service of the Crusades, chivalry began to be tamed by Christian themes. By the twelfth and thirteenth



centuries, the influence of biblical commands had (thankfully) transformed the word into a reference to a code of conduct characterized by honor and courtesy. Even then, it was a code of honor for male guardians of a feudal social order who kept the vast majority of European *men* in the virtual slavery of serfdom. Sure, back then “wild” men got to roam about the countryside busting heads and saving fair maidens, so long as they were fortunate enough to be born into the one or two percent of the population who didn’t have a family to raise and could afford to be a “knight errant.”

Alas! The real world eventually caught up with them, and the time came to put away childish things. By the end of the sixteenth century, inexorable social forces—including the Protestant Reformation—were conspiring to dump the remaining vestiges of feudalism as unceremoniously as the delusional Quixote’s horse, Rocinante, dismounted its rider when he foolishly sought to defend the honor of his imaginary Empress Dulcinea. For the next few centuries, “wild” men would be confined largely to pirate vessels on the high seas, and had very little to do with Christianity.

But more recently, the generations who straddled the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the English-speaking world witnessed something known as “Muscular Christianity,”<sup>17</sup> which was largely a reaction against the Victorian era’s domestication of masculinity and the resulting fear that it would lead to increasing effeminacy among men. For the British Empire at that time, with all the immense territory it had acquired, this could only be perceived as an invitation to disaster. They needed “manly men” to keep all those colonies in line. And in the United States to where the movement soon spread, an ethic was needed that would keep Protestants in charge of America’s “manifest destiny”<sup>18</sup> in the face of increasing immigration from Catholic regions of Europe. In both cases, “Muscular Christianity” fit the bill.

Now it should be noted many positive things came out of this movement. Until the mid-nineteenth century, the concept of organized sports was virtually anathema among most English-speaking Protestants primarily because of the lasting influence of seventeenth-century Puritans who considered them merely frivolous entertainment (especially on Sunday). Muscular Christianity affirmed the value of God-given physical activity, and it came to be seen as a valuable way for such organizations as the YMCA to retain young male converts to the Gospel who might otherwise backslide without this type of peer support. Without this movement, professional sports such as baseball and football may have had a more difficult time gaining social acceptance, and a large part of twentieth-century American culture might never have happened—at least not as we remember it.

However, it also had its down side (and we’re not talking about the latest .220 hitter who just scored a multi-million-dollar contract with a major league team). Coming right on the heels of Charles Darwin’s *Origin of Species*, it’s no big surprise that Muscular Christianity was highly influenced by the then-new evolutionary theories. One major way that new movement was promoted was through popular novels such as those written by Anglican Minister Charles Kingsley (1819-1875) who wrote *Westward Ho!* (1855) and was also an active promoter of evolution—so much so that Darwin cited him in *The Descent of Man* (1871). Although there’s a danger of oversimplification here, it’s not difficult to see strong affinities between Muscular Christianity and Darwin’s “survival of the fittest” axiom. It seems Kingsley was aware of this danger, but he had inward conflict as to how to resolve it.<sup>19</sup> Kingsley was no Social Darwinist—in fact, as a committed Socialist, he was adamantly op-

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posed to the kind of conclusions the likes of Adolf Hitler would later draw from Darwinism. Eventually, many proponents of Muscular Christianity could be found rationalizing clearly un-Christian behavior in much the same way as later would the Nazis.

This was a problem Kingsley shared with other leaders of the Muscular Christianity movement—a characteristic that Kingsley resisted having applied to himself, especially since it was primarily his enemies who did so. Nevertheless, in 1857, his book *Two Years Ago* firmly established him as a leader in the movement [the same year that British lawyer Thomas Hughes (1822-1896) published *Tom Brown’s School Days*, which elevated him to a similar stature]. While both men opposed the idea of “muscularity without Christianity or moral considerations,”<sup>20</sup> they couldn’t prevent the movement from spawning a “might-makes-right” mentality, or from glorifying militarism and justifying the colonial oppression of other races by white Anglo-Saxons. To say Muscular Christianity was detrimental—to the Protestant missionary movement in particular and a setback for global evangelization in general—is no small understatement.

Yet, Kingsley and Hughes were both professing Christians, so why couldn’t they do more to help their followers avoid these errors? The answer is they had locked themselves into certain cultural assumptions (evolution being only one of them) that tended to obscure a proper understanding of Scripture instead of enhancing it. One of these assumptions was common in Victorian England: The notion that women were morally superior—or at least much more morally sensitive—than men. This led to the widespread be-

(Continued on next page)



## **"Wild" (Continued from page 5)**

lief that morality itself was a feminine trait as opposed to a masculine one. This tended to sabotage every effort to promote morality within Muscular Christianity since the movement was preoccupied with re-invigorating masculinity among male Christians.

But, perhaps, even more problematic was the fact Kingsley sought to revive a concept that traces back to Plato: Masculinity should be defined in terms of aggressiveness and even belligerence and, far from being bad things, these impulses should actually be considered virtuous.<sup>21</sup> Plato used the Greek word *thumos* to summarize his concept of this primal, manly force. *Thumos* commonly was used to refer to passionate emotion, fierce rage, and angry outbursts. Plato saw no contradiction with *thumos* being not only the source of the male sex drive and fist-fights, but also morality. But then, as far as we know, Plato had never read the Law of Moses or the Book of Proverbs, either.

So what kind of "morality" would result when Plato's *thumos* was grafted into Christianity alongside the Victorian notion that traditional morality was effeminate in nature? Such grafting is usually called "syncretism," and it's never a good thing. When Christianity is syncretized with unbiblical concepts, Christianity loses, and sooner or later spiritual bankruptcy follows.

Only after World War I, during which the British suffered nearly a million dead and over two-million wounded did Muscular Christianity begin gradually to fade away. (The U.S., entering the final year of the war, suffered roughly one-tenth of those casualties.) The world had suffered 8.5-million dead and 21.2-million wounded. In the wake of this carnage, the church suddenly discovered it had much bigger issues to deal with than its concept of masculinity. (When the next World War introduced Rosie the Riveter, it made that issue seem strangely quaint, indeed!) Muscular Christianity's bankruptcy was now impossible to hide.

Twenty-four years earlier, in 1894, someone had given a copy of Leo Tolstoy's pacifist tract *The Kingdom of God is Within You* to a Hindu barrister who was practicing law in Natal, South Africa. He would later write in his autobiography that Tolstoy's book "overwhelmed" him. Its message—while no more biblical—was the exact antithesis of the Muscular Christianity the British Empire was then using to help hold itself together. This set off a chain-reaction beginning with the barrister—Mohandes Karamchand (later known as Mahatma) Ghandi—that would eventually dismember the British Empire beginning with the loss of its largest colony—Ghandi's homeland of India. By then, Muscular Christianity had contributed greatly to the failure of evangelism in India. When asked what he thought of Christian civilization, Ghandi replied, "It would be a good idea." All too many English-speaking Christians had sacrificed a clear presentation of the Gospel on the altar of masculinity, and what it supposedly meant to be a "manly man." We're still paying the price for it today.

## **Eldredge's Syncretism**

A century ago, the proponents of Muscular Christianity syncretized Christianity with Victorian culture and Platonic thought which

resulted in spiritual bankruptcy. Today, John Eldredge syncretizes Christianity with Hollywood cultural and occultic/New Age thought, and the result is the same.

In Chapter One of *Wild at Heart*, Eldredge lays out his argument for men to be "wild at heart" by giving a brief analysis of *Legends of the Fall*—a film that stars Anthony Hopkins, Brad Pitt, Aidan Quinn, and Julia Ormond. In the film, Brad Pitt plays Tristan, the "wild man" whose immorality, criminal conduct, and selfishness lead to the deaths of several characters in the movie—including his own wife—as a result of his bootlegging operation. He is a godless man whose only involvement in spiritual matters is his dabbling in Native American spiritism. The two other brothers are Alfred (played by Aidan Quinn) and Samuel (played by Henry Thomas). Both try to live decent and honorable lives. Samuel, however, is killed in World War I, and Alfred becomes a responsible businessman and

runs for Congress.

At the movie's end, Tristan has gone off into the wilderness leaving his child to be cared for by his father and surviving brothers. He eventually is mauled to death by a grisly bear, and the Indian narrator in the film applauds this tragic and senseless end as a "good death." Tristan has left nothing but destruction to all those around him—but Eldredge views him as a heroic character and claims most Christian men really wish to be like Tristan.

According to Eldredge, "I have yet to meet a man who wants to be Alfred or Samuel. I've yet to meet a woman who wants to marry one." Tristan, says Eldredge, "is wild at heart."<sup>22</sup> If what Eldredge says is true, it is a very sad commentary on the spiritual state of those who profess to be Christians. Tristan was certainly wild at heart. But more proper descriptions of Tristan would be: pagan, uncivilized, primitive, selfish, rebellious, and barbaric. Is this a proper role model for a Christian man? John Eldredge promotes this to be so.

In the beginning of Chapter Five, Eldredge quotes from the movie *Michael*, starring John Travolta: "To give a man back his heart is the hardest mission on earth."

Travolta plays a beer-guzzling, cursing, smoking, and womanizing angel who has come from Heaven to give back "heart" to a reporter played by William Hurt. During this process, Travolta succeeds in playing Cupid, and Hurt has premarital sex with his fellow reporter played by Andie McDowell.

For those who would want to examine Eldredge's teachings and claims, he anathematizes them and inoculates others from them. In the second chapter, he states:

"On the other hand, if you're a Pharisee, one of those self-appointed doctrine police ... watch out."<sup>23</sup>

"You can tell what kind of man you've got simply by noting the impact he has on you. Does he make you bored? Does he scare you with his doctrinal Nazism?"<sup>24</sup>

## **The Changing of the Guard**

And so, the stage is set for what will follow. Those who attempt to check the validity of his writings against Scripture are "doctrine police" employing "doctrinal Nazism" for whom you need to watch out. On the other hand, New Ager Robert Bly (who is

*Brennan Manning, another writer who has captured John Eldredge's wild heart, is a Protestant mystic who has been popular in Christian circles during the past two decades.*



quoted prolifically throughout the book) Sam Keen, Brennan Manning, Bruce Cockburn, and a host of other occultists and New Agers are portrayed as sources to be trusted. For those who are unaware, Sam Keen is author of *Fire in the Belly*—another New Age book that came out around the same time as *Iron John*. Jungian Keen, like Bly, is a spiritual disciple of Joseph Campbell (who was mentored by Carl Jung). Keen and Campbell conducted seminars together.

Keen's *Fire in the Belly* suggests each man is on a spiritual journey to achieve manhood, and men are unconsciously in bondage to women. Keen urges men to become both sensitive and fierce (or, as John Eldredge would describe it: dangerous or wild).

In an interview adapted from a National Public Radio series and posted on the Internet, Sam Keen describes his journey out of what he calls a "Southern fundamentalist-Christian tradition." According to Keen, "I gradually broke out of that narrow Christianity, and the experience inoculated me against any form of 'true belief.'" Keen is fearful of a resurgence of what he calls religious fundamentalism all over the world. "All over the world we see a return to absolutism, to authority, to the desire to have the Word of God represented in government. We see it in Islam, in Christianity, and in Judaism."<sup>25</sup>

On Keen's web site, he compares Osama bin Laden's fundamentalism to the fundamentalist beliefs of Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson. He says of Falwell and Robertson:

"They have as much respect for our style of life as Cotton Mather would have for life within the *Playboy* mansion. Unlike most of the enemies we have faced in the Third World, they do not want their share of the secular consumer society; they want to destroy it."<sup>26</sup>

Brennan Manning, another writer who has captured John Eldredge's wild heart, is a Protestant mystic who has been popular in Christian circles during the past two decades.

Manning is characterized as "The New Monk of Mystic Protestantism" by the Spiritual Counterfeits Project (SCP), a Berkeley-based discernment ministry (i.e., doctrine Nazi) headed by former-pagan Tal Brooke.

Author John Caddock explained the heretical and pagan roots of Manning's religious beliefs in the spring 1998 issue of *SCP Journal*. According to Caddock, Manning's promise of intimacy with God "is a mixture of Eastern Mysticism, psychology, New Age theology, liberation theology, Catholicism and Protestantism."<sup>27</sup>

Caddock details one of Manning's techniques for achieving intimacy with God. This is called centering prayer, and it is a technique that Manning learned from Trappist Monks Thomas Keating and Basil Pennington. This involves using the Zen Buddhist technique of emptying one's mind as a way of supposedly gaining intimacy with God.

In addition, Manning teaches a new extra-biblical doctrine called the "false self" versus the authentic self, which he apparently adapted, in part, from Basil Pennington's book *True Self/False Self: Unmasking the Spirit Within*. Manning also quotes favorably from Carl Jung to promote his theories about intimacy with God.

John Eldredge devotes a considerable amount of time discussing this "false self" and "true self." It rises, says Eldredge, out the

"wound" each of us receives from our father or from life's tribulations. According to Eldredge, each man is wounded and has created for himself a "false self" that is a pose directly related to the kind of wound he received. His goal is to help men become free of this false self and discover the so-called true self.

The pagan magazine *Gnosis* details the theological journey of Keating and Pennington as they developed their new techniques for prayer. The goal of this process, says *Gnosis*:

"... is to dismantle the 'false self,' the needy, driven, unrecognized motivations behind untransformed human behavior. They suggest the false self as a modern equivalent for the traditional concept of original sin. The 'true self' is buried beneath the accretions and defenses. A huge amount of healing has to take place before our deep and authentic quest for union with God is realized. This, in essence, constitutes the spiritual journey ...."<sup>28</sup>

Of course, one can't locate these concepts of the "wound" or "false self" in the Bible because they come directly from the writings of Jungians, Trappist Monks, Protestant mystics, and Zen Buddhism.

Manning's writings evidence a clear commitment to mystical ecumenicalism and a willingness to adopt any religious technique that appears to lead the person into so-called intimacy with God.

How do the Scriptures view these claims? In Romans, Paul describes men as they really are: Sinners who need the help of the Holy Spirit not to sin. In Romans Chapter 8:5-9, we read:

*For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity with God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. (KJV)*

It is unbiblical to claim we're simply all victims of someone else's "wounding" us so that we all develop a "false self." We are not simply the product of someone else's sinful behaviors against us. If this were true, then no one could be held responsible for one's own actions, yet God does hold us

responsible. We all sin, and we are all accountable before God for our behaviors and attitudes. Jesus didn't die for our mythical "false self." He died for our self-perpetrated sins while we were "wild at heart."

At the beginning of Chapter Five of *Wild at Heart*, Eldredge quotes from musician Bruce Cockburn. At the beginning of Chapter Seven, he quotes Wendell Berry, a philosopher and leftist environmentalist.

Bruce Cockburn is associated with the radical environmental group Greenpeace and the Unitarian Service

Committee. On his web site, he criticizes conservative Christians in the United States and describes himself as someone on the "commie-anarchist Christian end of the spectrum." In another interview, he says he has been influenced as much by Allen Ginsberg and William Burroughs "as by any Christian writers. The things

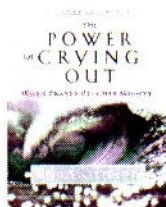
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*It is unbiblical to claim we're simply all victims of someone else's "wounding" us so that we all develop a "false self." We are not simply the product of someone else's sinful behaviors against us.*





# FOR CRYING OUT LOUD!



## Looking at Bill Gothard's Book *The Power of Crying Out: When Prayer Becomes Mighty*

**W**e<sup>1</sup> remember sitting in our little church singing the old hymn *Power in the Blood*. Our pastor led the congregation with great vigor. "There is power, power, wonder-working power in the blood of the lamb." This old hymn recites the truth that all power ultimately is found in the very character of God. When Pilate threatened Him with crucifixion Jesus responded, "*You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above*" (John 19:11).

Enemies of Christ seek power in this world. Friends of Christ seek the power that comes from the heavenly city above. Jesus taught His disciples to pray "*Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven*" (Matt. 6:9-10). While the will to change lies in the individual, the will we seek is from the heavenly Father. Jesus instructed His disciples that the "... *Father knows what you need before you ask him*" (Matt. 6:8).

In his short book *The Power of Crying Out: When Prayer Becomes Mighty*,<sup>2</sup> Bill Gothard attempts to show prayers expressed by crying out loud are the most effective. Gothard writes,

"For most of my life, I assumed that crying out was simply synonymous with prayer. I've come to be amazed, however, to see the specific purposes and potential for crying out – and how this is emphasized time and again in Scripture. God hears our prayers, and the Bible's testimony reveals that, in a special way, He particularly hears us when our requests are voiced *aloud*."<sup>3</sup> [emphasis in original]

Jesus condemned those who make a public spectacle of their prayers and those who speak many words in hope they will be heard (Matt. 6:5-7). The power of prayer is determined by the intent of the person not the method of expression. Jesus calls us to examine our prayer *before* it is spoken. In contrast, Gothard tells us to cry out and then examine our prayers.

"As we call aloud our prayers, we can more easily recognize our heart's condition before God. Hearing our own spoken words, we quickly detect any lack of fervency or humility

or reverence. Listening to ourselves, we're forced to examine our hearts."<sup>4</sup>

Does God really respond more favorably when our prayers are voiced aloud with great fervency? The answer is unequivocally, "No." Curiously, Gothard points this out by examining Hannah's prayer for a child from 1 Samuel.

"Obviously, God isn't hard-of-hearing. He can hear the faintest silent cry of the heart. Even if it's only a passing thought. Even if it's only a groan without words ... Sometimes a person prays with his tears, even when words are missing ... Though Hannah's physical voice was silent, God heard her fervent, poured-out prayer in that place and granted her a son."<sup>5</sup>

## What Exactly Is The Point Of This Book?

Gothard makes a great point and then ignores his own wisdom. Can God hear the silent cry of the heart or not? Either He can or He cannot, but it is not both.

God answers prayers that are in accordance with His will. Move your mind to the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:39-46). The cry of our Savior could not have been more fervent. Jesus literally was sweating blood. He was about to face the excruciating pain delivered by the cross. His human nature desired to be delivered from the pain He was about to face. Nevertheless, His human will yielded to that of the Father.

Christ's prayer in Gethsemane is a model for the believer. Ultimately, prayer is not a tool to change our circumstances or the mind of God. Effective prayer is aligning *our* will with the will of God.

The *Power of Crying Out* paints quite a different picture of the purpose and mechanics of prayer. Gothard clearly makes a distinction between normal prayer and crying out to God in a loud voice. The distinction Gothard makes is that there are some situations that favorable answers to prayer come only after the prayer is voiced aloud. As he says it, "I saw that the Bible makes a distinction between 'prayer' and 'crying out to God'."<sup>6</sup>

## Does It Work?

Throughout the book, there are anecdotal stories supporting Gothard's belief there is special power in crying aloud in prayer. Stories of cancer being cured,<sup>7</sup> criminals lowering their gun,<sup>8</sup> engines stalling,<sup>9</sup> financial success,<sup>10</sup> freedom from lust,<sup>11</sup> and more permeate the book. As he



concludes the story of Anna, who was cured of cancer, Gothard summarizes,

"What had we done? We had cried out to God. We lifted our voices together, seeking His mercy, His power, and His healing. Moreover, He heard and answered with a true medical miracle. (Just ask her doctor.) Did it matter that we *cried out* to God, calling on Him with *loud voices*? That is what this little book is all about."<sup>12</sup> [emphasis in original]

Sonja<sup>13</sup> was in her twenties, a mother of two young boys, and the wife of a pilot. An evening in September 1988 changed her life forever. Her husband and youngest son were killed in an airplane accident. Numerous times, she cried out to God and asked Him to bring them back. However, no amount of fervent prayer would bring them back to life. God could have done so – He has the power to do so – but He did not. It is in these difficult circumstances that our trust and faith must be put into the good character of God and not in a prayer formula.

God is not sitting in Heaven waiting to see what and how people will pray. He already knows our prayers – they are a part of His eternal knowledge and sovereign plan for this world. We are called to bring to our Father requests and petitions (Phil. 4:6). However, to think if one cries aloud God will answer the prayer favorably for them is unbiblical. God certainly answers *all* our prayers. The answer, however, is often not what we desire.

Success stories long have been effective marketing tools. Companies that sell cosmetics, dieting methods, and exercise equipment parade the beautiful, slim and fit to promote their product. The wise consumer understands, as the fine print usually states, results may vary. Gothard also asserted his own 'fine print.' In the "Points to Ponder" section he writes,

"Have you ever cried out to God in a crisis, but nothing happened? Did your cry reflect total humility? Did you acknowledge your complete weakness? Was there unconditional surrender to God's will on every matter? Are there still areas in your life where you have not fully surrendered to Him?"<sup>14</sup>

If this is the criteria for answered prayer, then God will never answer the prayer of a Christian. What Christian can honestly say they are completely humble, completely acknowledge their weaknesses, and have unconditional surrender in every part of their life? The Apostle John tells us, "*If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us*" (1 Jn. 1:8). It is for this reason we lean on the wisdom of God and not our own understanding.

In an attempt to give an answer to the one whose cry is not acted upon by God, Gothard writes Chapter 11 – "When God Delays His Answer." The title says it all. Implied in the title and explicit in the chapter is the idea that if God has not answered your cry – just wait, He will. "I've been amazed at how just one cry will bring immediate results. But, we should not always expect this to be the case. Sometimes we need to *keep* crying night and day."<sup>15</sup> [emphasis in original]

Gothard continues in this chapter with a story of how God provided real estate to his ministry ALERT.<sup>16</sup> The wife of the founder of ALERT "began to cry out to the Lord with the prayer of Jabez,<sup>17</sup> asking for expanded facilities."<sup>18</sup> Gothard relates that they cried out several times after it looked like they would not get the land. Finally, they received the land.

Gothard concludes,

"God's Word tells us of 'His own elect who *cry out day and night* to Him,' and how God will respond to them 'speedily' as He patiently hears them. His timely response will always come according to what *He* wisely determines is the

best schedule, in reward to our faith."<sup>19</sup> [emphasis in original]

The Scripture Gothard is referring to is Luke 18:7-8. In context, Jesus is talking to His disciples about the coming of the Kingdom of God. In Luke 18:1, Jesus begins a parable of a godless judge. A widow who wanted justice against her adversary constantly petitioned the judge. The judge gave her justice so she would not badger him any longer. Jesus responds, "*And the Lord said, 'Hear what the unrighteous judge said; now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?'*" (Luke 18:7-8)."

This passage does not teach that we are to cry out for things in this world until we get them. Jesus is explaining the cry of the believer for justice will be answered. The Kingdom of God will come, and His judgment will be speedy. Gothard's application of this passage to the provision of expanded facilities is completely without warrant and a classic example of pretexting.<sup>20</sup>

## God, Do You Hear Me?

It should be noted that we are not against the idea of crying aloud to God. In some cases, it is a natural outflow of the heart. Our criticism concerns Gothard's claim there is a qualitative difference between silent prayer and prayer spoken aloud.<sup>21</sup> In the words of Gothard,

"God hears our prayers, and the Bible's testimony reveals that, in a special way, He particularly hears us when our requests are voiced *aloud*."<sup>22</sup> [emphasis in original]

It is the heart of the prayer God hears. Words—whether spoken silently or aloud—are an outpouring of the heart. Words spoken aloud do not guarantee a pure and humble heart. The heart full of envy, pride, and jealousy can also speak aloud. Gothard gives many examples where the Bible records crying aloud to God. The mistake he makes is taking what is descriptive in Scripture and making it prescriptive for everyday life. God is looking for a *heart* that cries out, not a *voice* that cries out.

There is nothing we can do to grab God's ear for a special hearing. Job attempted to get such a hearing with God. He lamented chapter after chapter in hope God might hear his case. Job pleaded that God might explain his suffering. The Lord responded out of the storm, "*Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me*" (Job 38:3).

Just as Job could not move God to a response, neither can we. God hears the cry of the heart, but He is not moved by our passion. Our prayers do not have power within themselves. They cannot change the mind of God nor deliver an answer of our choosing. The power of prayer is found in the One to whom we pray to not in the prayer itself.

Gothard is correct to stress the notion of fervency in prayer. God certainly hears the sincere prayer. Gothard makes two incorrect deductions, however. First, Gothard equates crying aloud with fervency. Second, he believes the fervent prayer is always answered in the affirmative. Gothard makes these two deductions when he writes,

"Much of our prayer lacks the kind of fervency God requires for effective results. But when a person sincerely cries out to God as his only hope for deliverance, provision, or protection, we can be quite certain the cry will be fervent."<sup>23</sup>

If Gothard were to use the phrase "cries out" to mean a cry of the *heart* and not necessarily a cry of the *voice*, his above quote would be accurate. However, in the context of the book, it is clear Gothard

(Continued on next page)



### **"Crying" (Continued from page 9)**

is referring to the cry of the voice – a cry spoken out loud.

God longs to hear our heart cry to Him. That said; the cry for good health, abundant wealth, or a carefree life should not be the central focus of prayer. Let us not forget Jesus was hated (Jn. 15:24), spat on (Matt. 26:67), and without a place to call home (Lk. 9:57). Everyday we should expect trouble in this world (Matt. 6:34). Our prayer should be that we might be delivered *through* the trouble of this world. The cry of the heart should be centered on the very person and nature of God. It is to that end we now turn.

### **The God of Prayer**

To whom we pray has a direct effect on how we pray. God has many attributes and, for the sake of brevity, we will examine a few of God's qualities that will direct or, if wrongly understood, misdirect our prayer. God is omniscient, omnipotent, immutable, and impassible. An improper view of God will change not only your prayers but also your Christian walk. AW Tozer explains:

"A right conception of God is basic not only to systematic theology but to practical Christian living as well. It is to worship what the foundation is to the temple; where it is inadequate or out of plumb, the whole structure must eventually collapse. I believe there is scarcely an error in doctrine or a failure in applying Christian ethics that cannot be traced finally to imperfect and ignoble thoughts about God."<sup>24</sup>

Simply put, if we want to pray with the will of God, then we need to know to whom we are praying.

God is all-knowing, or we might say, He is *omniscient*. How God knows what He knows is one of the most misunderstood qualities of His nature. Any time God is understood from a finite, human position, a heretical understanding of God will follow. To think God thinks as we think is bad thinking. Humans are temporal in nature, and God is eternal. Humans "feel" the passing of time as the seconds tick off the clock or the months are changed on a calendar. Temporal beings (us) understand the past, present, and future. God is in the eternal now. Eternity is not a long, long, long, time. Eternity is infinite existence. What does infinite mean? Infinity plus one or infinity minus one are meaningless statements. God is not really old. He is eternal. What is infinite cannot be added to or taken away from. A really old god could be added to or subtracted from. Time cannot be removed from or added to the existence of God.

The quality of omniscience means that God does not learn anything. This does not mean He is the ultimate dunce. Everything God knows, which is everything that can be known, He has always known. Our prayers do not surprise Him. Many Christians are praying about how to upgrade their car while members of His Church are martyred. We often pray for steak and wine while many people would be thankful for water and rice. Good and bad, God knows our prayer before we lift it up to Him. This is the nakedness we have before an all-knowing and all-holy God (Gen. 3:10).

God has no limit to His power. He is *omnipotent*. This means God can do anything that is possible to do. This does not mean God can do what is impossible to do. God cannot lie, and God cannot make a circle that is square. God has the power to save all people, and Christ did die for this purpose. However, God cannot save all free people because, if they are truly free, some will and do reject the grace of God. Adam, who lived in a perfect creation and in God's grace, still made the choice to be his own god and did what was right in his own eyes. To choose to love is the act of a

free soul, and we are made in the image of God.

The unlimited power of God is not a temporal insurance policy to make sure Christians do not suffer temporal sickness and pain. His power guarantees His word is true, and His will shall be done. A Christian who would want God to use His power in a way contrary to His will is either not a Christian or is greatly confused. This is the antithesis of Christ message (Rom. 8:13). This is 180 degrees from what a Christian should desire. The Christian has died to one's own will and desires the will of God. Lift up your prayers and God will hear them. We are the children of God. Jesus our God and Savior explains, "*My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will*" (Matt. 26:29). Pray as your heart is led, but remember the Christian ultimately desires the will of God and not our will to be done. This is the Christian life. This is the sanctification of the children of God.

God does not change. He is *immutable*. This is the great assurance of the Christian faith. The Word of God will not change. Truth is true because God is the immutable foundation of truth. The Word of God is not right because God said it. Rather, God has spoken His Word because it is right. God cannot make hate a good thing and love a bad thing. The Word of God and all His qualities flow from His very essence.

Do we pray to God in order to change His mind? No! Our prayers are not to move Him but to move us. All our prayers are not going to be within God's will. Seek His will and desire your heart to be in union with His will. "*Delight yourself in the LORD and He will give you the desires of your heart*" (Psalms 37:4). This does not mean we get what we want. We pray so we will desire what God desires. If this is the case, then we will get the desires of our heart, because they are the desires of the heart of God.

**"... a must read for all thinking believers  
who wish to protect their churches."**

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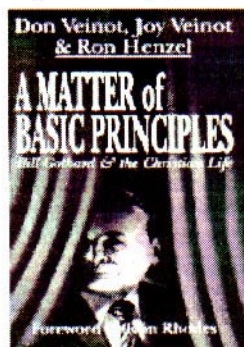
## **A MATTER of BASIC PRINCIPLES**

*Bill Gothard & the Christian Life*

Don Veinot, Joy Veinot and Ron Henzel

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Creatures do not move the passions of the Creator. He is *impassible*. *"Can a man be of benefit to God? Can even a wise man benefit Him? What pleasure would it give the Almighty if you were righteous? What would He gain if your ways were blameless?"* (Job 22:2-3)? What would imperfect people have that God would need? There is nothing we can do to move God. What is the point of prayer if God cannot be moved? God moves, but He is not moved by us. Are our prayers effective? The answer is, "Yes." How can God be impassible, and our prayer be used by God? The answer is found in His omniscient nature.

We experience life in a sequence, Monday, Tuesday, etc. God does not know as we know. God knows what He knows eternally. He knows our prayer in His eternal present. God knew our prayers before we were created. God honors the prayer we lift up to Him.

For example, an adult child unexpectedly dies and the mother does not know if that child was saved. A mother's prayer will be heard and used by God. The prayer will not change the eternal destination after the child has passed. However, God can use our future prayers in the present. Before the child died, God was using the mother's prayers she would later lift up. Does this mean that all children who have a mother praying for their salvation will be saved? The answer is, "No." But, God will use those prayers to minister to the child. *"Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom"* (Psalm 145:3).

We are always to pray Thy will be done. Do we really want the imperfect to move the perfect One? God's impassive nature insures His perfection and the greatest good. God hears all our prayers, and prayers that are outside His will are answered, as they should be, with a "NO."

## God's People In Prayer

Prayer is our fellowship with the Bridegroom. The Church is the bride of Christ. What is a marriage without communication? We pray to God, and He speaks to us through His Word. The heart of a Christian should desire the will of her Groom. Pray to Him and also listen to Him. God will not answer a prayer in a way that is contrary to His Word. You can bank on it.

"God told me it was okay to have this affair and I am going to get a divorce!" Be wary of the "God-told-me" Christian. *God does not answer prayer that is in conflict with His Word.* Be careful to whom you listen. Prayer is not an opportunity to inform God of His will. The unknowing do not explain to God "how it is." The unknowing seek the omniscient One to ask "how should it be?"

It is curious how there are a few Christians who allegedly have the direct line to God concerning the lives of all other Christians. For some curious reason, God fails to tell everyone else but them. What exactly is the difference between a false prophet and the Christian who says, "God told me?" None. If a person wants to have the right to use the phrase "God told me," then we should expect to see a miracle or two to prove their validity as a prophet of God.

Prayer is not some mystic thing, where we try to find the right combination of word and phrase that will make God snap to attention and expand our ministry or whatever else. People in the occult<sup>25</sup> use prayer, word phrases, and mysticism to gain power for them. This is not the way of the Christian. Stop looking for some way to control God through prayer. Are we to pray to God to gain power for ourselves? No, and a thousand times no, we don't want the power of prayer to be with people who still struggle with the flesh. The power of prayer lies in the omnipotent One—exactly

where it should be.

Christians often cannot agree on the color of the carpet for the church and whether Christ died for all people or only for the elect. We are limited in wisdom and, frankly, do not know what is best for us. How many of us, as teenagers, thought we had found the perfect spouse? How many of us are married to that person? How many Christians are not even married to their first spouse? We change our minds all the time. Do we really want to trust our limited and changing wisdom over the wisdom of the immutable God? No. Trust God. He knows what is best for us.

Our passions are moved by everything around us. The culture in which we live affects our thoughts to a degree at which most would be surprised. It is perplexing to think people around the world would defend the power and government of a man such as Saddam Hussein. We would like to think it is Christian values that guide our disdain for Hussein and other men like him. We hope our passion for his removal from power is pure. We hope our reasons as a nation are pure. However, we can be sure there are some people who hate Arabs and are moved to war for the wrong reasons. The Arab world is moved by a hatred for Israel, and this is the reason for their support for Hussein. Hussein knew very well that the hatred for Israel was the one possibility to unite the Arab world. Our passions are a dangerous thing when they are not guided by Truth. Christians who understand the infinite difference between the impassable God and their passing fancy do not want the power of prayer to be in passable hands. Trust your prayer to the God whom you can be sure is moved only by His passion for the Truth, and trust not in your own understanding (Prov. 3:5). *"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will"* (Rom. 8:26-27).

## Final Thoughts

Stop looking for a mechanistic method for prayer. This is a view of prayer similar to what we find in an occultic system of reality:  $a + b = c$ . The Prayer of Jabez + our praying it = expanded ministry,  $b + d = q$ , need in our life + crying aloud = positive answer. It is the idea that if I know the right ingredients to prayer, then I can insure the answer to prayer. The Christian idea of prayer is one of *relationship* with God. Prayer is seeking to commune and communicate with our heavenly Father with whom we have a relationship. *God hears our prayers whether audible or inaudible.*

Where are the easy answers? Is there an easy answer to pain and suffering? Clearly human free will is one reason for some pain and suffering, but the reason "I" have cancer rather than to be cancer free is not so easily explained. One thing is clear. Our suffering is our greatest opportunity to preach the Gospel. To praise God in the midst of trial is where the rubber of salvation hits the road of our life. To use an old phrase, it separates the men from the boys or the women from the girls. How hard is it to praise God when our stocks are up and our body is strong? This was Satan's cry to God against Job. Satan thought Job would curse God if his wealth was removed and his life threatened. *Job is a shining example of faith through suffering.*

There is no silver bullet prayer or 1, 2, 3 steps to the perfect prayer life to guarantee our prayers will be answered as we wish.



Stop for a moment and ask yourself why Jesus never explained this secret of prayer when He specifically addressed the nature of prayer to the disciples (Matt. 6). Ask yourself why Peter, Paul, James, John, nor any of the church fathers such as Aquinas, Augustine, or Wesley ever taught this secret to prayer. What is true is that all our prayers are heard and are answered—"Yes," "No," or even "Wait."

We may or may not be Garth Brooks fans, but we can agree with his improperly titled song, *Unanswered Prayer*. I (Randal Ming) must admit that had many of my teenage prayers been answered "Yes" (concerning dating, for instance), I would not be married to my wife Amy. I thought I knew who the right person was and, thankfully, God knew better. Yes, God heard my prayers and, yes, they were answered. God often answers, "No."

For anyone to assume, in arrogance or ignorance, to have the wisdom and omniscience of God in their prayers is to underestimate the wisdom and knowledge of God. Don't be confused, many earnest prayers are not answered positively. *The denial of God to answer "Yes" to a prayer does not mean that prayer was not raised in earnest*. As Christians we love the will of God more than our own will (Matt. 16: 24-25).

Oh that prayer was as simple as baking a cake! Prayer develops in the life of a believer just as any other gift from God develops, through growth. James explains the true nature of growth, "*Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything*" (James 1:2-4). *Has anyone prayed that God might increase the trials of life?* The thought of praying for affliction so that growth might occur is a frightening prospect, indeed. God might honor that prayer positively.

Books such as *The Power of Crying Out* plague the American church. This mode of thinking has infected the Christian life and church. *Self-help is the antithesis of the Gospel*. Paul continually reminds the Roman church that they were saved by faith. Faith is a noun and not a verb. Our faith is in what God has already done—His Cross, and the promise of what He is still going to do—separate the good from the evil. Self-help is falling back into a different gospel. Self-help is a desire for knowledge to control life. If faith is a verb, an action, then it is not faith at all. Christian faith is a noun; faith is no better than the God our faith is in, what He has done, what He does, and what He will do. We pray in faith. Amen.

Randal Ming and Randall Birtell are the Scranton, KS Branch Directors of MCOI. They also are completing their Master's Degree in Apologetics at Southern Evangelical Seminary in Charlotte, NC.

#### ENDNOTES:

<sup>1</sup> Randall Birtell and Randal Ming grew up together in the Evangelical Covenant Church in Scranton, KS.

<sup>2</sup> Bill Gothard, *Power of Crying Out: When Prayer Becomes Mighty*, (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 2002)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 47-48

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 10-11.

<sup>13</sup> Sonja is the sister of Randall Birtell.

<sup>14</sup> Gothard, 73.

<sup>15</sup> Gothard, 79.

<sup>16</sup> Air Land Emergency Resource Team

<sup>17</sup> For a review of *The Prayer of Jabez*, see Vol. 8, No. 1, Winter 2002 edition of the *Midwest Christian Outreach Journal*.

<sup>18</sup> Gothard, 79.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>20</sup> Pretexting is reading one's own ideas into Scripture rather than allowing Scripture to define our ideas.

<sup>21</sup> Interestingly, Neil Anderson in his book *Bondage Breaker*, exhorts the Christian to *not* speak their prayers aloud because Satan can then hear them and use those prayers against the believer. We do not believe this to be true. But, what is evident with both of these books is the spiritual "no-mans land" in which the Christian is left. This illustrates the need for the believer to test the writings of all authors against Scripture.

<sup>22</sup> Gothard, 19.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>24</sup> A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 1961), 2.

<sup>25</sup> Bill Gothard is not in any way associated with the occult. We are simply pointing out the nature of occultic prayer.

## Upcoming Events

**June 29**

**"Strange Doctrines"**

**6:30 PM at  
Parkview Community Church  
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(630) 469-4306**

**July 13**

**"Strange Doctrines"**

**6:30 PM at  
Parkview Community Church  
764 St. Charles Rd  
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137  
(630) 469-4306**

**July 16**

**"A Matter of Basic Principles:  
Bill Gothard and the Christian Life"  
Book Signing**

**10:00 AM at  
CBA International Trade Show  
Orange County Convention Center  
Orlando, FL  
Booth #710**



# What is *THIS* doing in an Apologetics Journal?!

by Mike J. Knowles

**D**oes any of this sound familiar? Living day to day, minute to minute, wondering if it will ever get any better, wondering if the hurt and despair will ever stop.

Not wanting to get out of bed in the morning (afternoon?) because of not wanting to face another day of loneliness and depression.

"If anyone really cared, they would be able to see my pain, and they would do something to try to help."

("If God really loved me, he wouldn't let me go through this!")

Maybe having thoughts of committing sui ...

I don't understand! The Christian life shouldn't be like this, should it? Didn't Jesus promise He would give us life "*more abundantly*" (John 10:10)? Didn't God assure us, "*Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you*" (Hebrews 13:5)?

If this is abundant life, Jesus, take it back!

If you are really with me, God, how can you just watch and do nothing?

**What is an article like *this* doing in an apologetics journal??!**

Well, sad to say, this is reality for a lot of people. These are questions many of us have asked (and are asking), and they are legitimate questions. They come from the deepest regions of the heart as our pain and suffering try to find expression in a "Christian" context that often makes us feel like we shouldn't have such feelings and concerns ...

*"All you need to do, brother, is claim the victory, and don't let the devil get a foothold."*

*"Remember: it's always darkest before the dawn."*

*"In all things God is working for the good of those who love him ..."*

Excuse me while I take all of these "pat" answers, roll them up into a big ball, and chuck them out the window! When we are in pain, the last thing we need (and the least useful) are pat answers!

So is there an answer? As someone who has gone through the same things I have just talked about, I would like to suggest an idea that I still even now am exploring: Read the Bible!

Hang on ... wait a minute! Don't turn the page! Please keep reading and hear me out! When I was in Bible college, I thought that by studying the Bible and gaining more knowledge about it, my relationship with Jesus would grow and mature. Instead, I discovered the truth in the statement, "Bible college is the easiest place to backslide." The Bible became a book to learn, and Christ became the person I was learning about. When my life began to fall apart in (what was supposed to be) my final year, I came very close

to dropping out and turning my back on God and anything called "Christian." To me, there was no longer any reality to it, and it seemed to make no difference in the hurt I was suffering. Getting involved in apologetics has similar landmines. Working on making a defense of the faith can cause a narrow focus on fine tuning arguments about the Bible, the historicity of Jesus Christ, the Christian worldview, but can also cause one to lose touch with the reality of the person of Christ. Even worship can become so enamored with the time and the style that the person of Christ becomes only incidental to the ritual itself.

I would suggest that one of the main reasons why, when things go bad we seem to find little comfort or security in our relationship with Christ, is because we don't see Him as a real person with Whom we can identify. Instead, we turn to our friends, our counselor, or our pastor for answers and sympathy.

I'm not saying there is anything wrong with helping each other when we are hurting—after all, it's one of the greatest and most needed things we can do. After all, the body of Christ is given in order that He can use it to grow us up as we all use our gifts (Ro. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:12-31 & 14:1-5). Nevertheless, during those times of hurt and despair, why don't we turn to Christ in the same way we turn to those we can see and touch?

To tell you the truth, for the longest time I found it easier to worship Christ as Lord than to talk to Him as a friend. Sure, Jesus was God-in-the-flesh, but He was also a human being, a Jew in Galilee with a name and a family and friends, a person who was, in a way, just like everyone else. He went to school, grew up with brothers and sisters, and worked for a living. He experienced physical and emotional pain, and fought temptation just like you and me. He was also ridiculed and rejected by His peers, His elders, His family, and finally, even His closest friends. This is the Jesus Who not only lived 2000 years ago, but Whom is also with each one of us every day.

How do we discover (or, rediscover) this Jesus? We put all of our learned and/or imagined ideas about Who He is to the test and read about Him afresh and anew. We get our Bible, and take an hour or so here or there in the midst of our hectic schedules (perhaps instead of watching the movie-of-the-week), read one of the Gospels from beginning to end (try Mark or Luke), and immerse ourselves in the story.

By realizing this Jesus in the story is a real person, we get acquainted or reacquainted with the "real" Jesus Who ...

... when He heard about the death of his relative John, dealt with His grief and emotions by going off by Himself for a while,

*(Continued on bottom of page 15)*



## "Wild" (Continued from page 7)

I've always related to about other people's spiritual experience is the mystical side, because they're talking about that direct contact [with God]." Poet Ginsberg was a pedophile and supporter of the North American Man-Boy Love Association. One can only wonder how Ginsberg's writings have influenced Cockburn in a positive manner, and why John Eldredge felt compelled to quote him.

Eldredge also quotes Wendell Berry, an environmentalist who blames Christians for the alleged cultural and economic exploitation of non-Western societies. In his essay, "Christianity and the Survival of Creation," Berry says:

"I want to begin with a problem: namely, that the culpability of Christianity in the destruction of the natural world, and the uselessness of Christianity in any effort to correct that destruction, are now established clichés of the conservation movement....the indictment of Christianity by the anti-Christian conservationists, is in many respects, just."<sup>29</sup>

Berry later talks about his fondness for Buddhism:

"Buddhism, for example, is certainly a religion that could guide us toward a right respect for the natural world, our fellow humans, and our fellow creatures. I have a considerable debt myself to Buddhism and Buddhists."<sup>30</sup>

Some may argue that we cannot assume "guilt by association," and that is certainly true. Others may point out that just because Eldredge quotes from someone doesn't necessarily show that he agrees with them. That is also true. The problem is the worldview Eldredge promotes is, as we have shown, fully in keeping with the worldview the previously mentioned persons hold to and promote. The techniques he has utilized to promote it are to use "Christianese" and to label as suspect any who might use Scripture as the standard.

## Anti-Biblical Themes Throughout

John Eldredge has built his "wild at heart" theme on the works of Jungians like Robert Bly, Sam Keen, and others. As such, it is to be expected that he reaches unbiblical conclusions. His advice, however, is increasingly popular and he has become one of America's best-selling authors of "Christian" men's books.

We find out that God is limited in knowledge, somewhat along the lines that Gwen Shamblin or Gregory Boyd teaches:

"He [God] prefers the adventure, danger, risk, the element of surprise."<sup>31</sup>

"God is a person who takes immense risks."<sup>32</sup>

We could continue, but the view of God Eldredge lays out is of one who is pretty powerful, knows quite a bit, and is constantly caught off guard as a result of the risks he takes. In fact, as Eldredge writes about the sin in the Garden of Eden, he sets up a very different scenario from what we find in Scripture. All this time we thought rebelling against God's command not to eat the fruit was the problem, but alas, we were wrong. After quoting Genesis 2:16-17, he writes:

"Okay, most of us have heard about that. But notice what God *doesn't* tell Adam.

"There is no warning or instruction over what is about to occur: the Temptation of Eve. This is just staggering. Notably

missing from the dialogue between Adam and God is something like this: 'Adam, one more thing. A week from Tuesday, about four in the afternoon, you and Eve are going to be down in the orchard and something dangerous is going to happen. Adam, are you listening? The eternal destiny of the human race hangs on this moment. Now here's what I want you to do ...' he doesn't tell him. He doesn't even mention it so far as we know. Good grief – *why not?*! Because God *believes* in Adam. This is what he is designed to do – to come through in a pinch."<sup>33</sup>

It is far more likely that it isn't in the text because it isn't true other than in the mind of John Eldredge. He then tells us that when the serpent tempted Eve, Adam did:

"Nothing. Absolutely nothing. He says not a word, doesn't lift a finger. He won't risk, he won't fight, and he won't rescue Eve. Our first father—the first real man—gave in to paralysis. He denied his very nature and went passive. And every man after him repeats the sin of Adam, every day."<sup>34</sup>

This is certainly a creative new definition for original sin and the sin nature. Rather than being rebellion against God, it is not being ready to fight.

We must really concur with Byron Borger, in his essay on *Wild at Heart*, when he says this book "is so laden with wrong-headed biases that the book is unsound."<sup>35</sup>

What does the *Bible* say about sound doctrine? The Apostle Paul certainly has a different view of doctrine than does John Eldredge. In 1 Timothy 1:3-4, Paul urges Timothy to "*command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies.*"

In 1 Timothy 4:16, Paul commands Timothy: "*Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them,*

*because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.*"

In 2 Timothy 4:2-6, Paul warns Timothy he must preach the Word faithfully and warns that a time is coming when men will seek out myths *instead of sound doctrine*. He writes: "*For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.*"

The Apostle Paul placed a *high value* on doctrine, and his comments to Timothy about myths easily could have been about John Eldredge as one who provides a message that "*itching ears want to hear.*"

Eldredge also mocks the Christian man who tries to be "nice" and blames Christianity as a whole for doing "terrible things to men." These "terrible things" apparently include teaching men to be good and nice.<sup>36</sup>

No, Christian men aren't called to be nice, claims Eldredge. They're called to be wild, dangerous, and to have a desperate desire for a "battle to fight, an adventure to live, and a beauty to rescue."<sup>37</sup>

The Bible, however, has a far different description of what a Christian man should be. Both men and women are to exhibit the

*John Eldredge has built his "wild at heart" theme on the works of Jungians like Robert Bly, Sam Keen, and others. As such, it is to be expected that he reaches unbiblical conclusions.*



fruit of the Holy Spirit, which include: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23).

This doesn't sound like "wildness." It sounds more like being "nice" and "good"—two traits Eldredge seems to reject. These traits were displayed by Alfred in *Legends of the Fall*. What Tristan displayed were the works of the flesh as described in Galatians 5:19-21: "The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like..."

Drawing upon Jungian concepts of the "false self" and the "true self," Eldredge claims men must reject this "false self" and discover the "true self" which is free of the "wounds" inflicted upon him by his father or other influences in his life.

Borger notes that Eldredge also introduces a new concept about salvation and being "born again" by the Spirit of God into a new life in Christ. He writes:

"Eldredge seems to think that the blood of Christ shed on the Cross was shed for the sins of the false self (which is no longer a metaphor, but an ontological reality alongside the soul, in there somewhere. I guess.) ... he develops a theology not of 'the devil made me do it' but 'my poser/girlie-man/false self made me do it.' Interestingly for a conservative evangelical, he unapologetically states, 'your heart is good.'"<sup>38</sup>

Borger continues:

"Mr. Eldredge says, 'The real you is on the side of God against the false self.' This odd psychobabble, apparently presuming a neo-Jungian, Blyian view of the self, leads Eldredge to confuse what classic theology calls our 'two natures.' He insists that our hearts are pure. ('We are never told to kill the true man within us, never get rid of these deep desires for battle and adventure and beauty.') I am left breathless and confused: I have no idea what to make of all of this."<sup>39</sup>

Borger then asks a compelling question:

"Doesn't the publishing house [Thomas Nelson] have a theologian on retainer to check for this sort of shoddiness? (Well, on second thought, maybe they don't. This is the same publishing house that brought us Gwen Shamblin and Benny Hinn, fudging on silly little notions like the Trinity)"<sup>40</sup>

## The Bad Fruit Is Coming


It is rather ironic that John Eldredge's late, co-author Brent Curtis (*The Sacred Romance*) fell off a cliff several years ago while mountain climbing, Curtis was being "wild at heart" and left a wife and two boys.

While it may still be too early to assess the eventual damage to families from *Wild at Heart*, it is likely this book will bring forth bitter fruit. Men who buy into the "wild at heart" theme will become irresponsible, reckless, and selfish. They will choose adventure over responsibility; childishness over maturity; and "wildness" over the Christian traits of self-control, selflessness, and holiness. They will model their lives after Tristan instead of Alfred—after the fruit of the flesh rather than the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Byron Borger has said it well:

"I think Eldredge has spent too much time fooling around pursuing his hobbies, searching for his manly soul. Fly fishing has given the man a bit too much time to think, and it seems that he thinks mostly about his own sorry self (and the sorry state of his bourgeois buddies.)"<sup>41</sup>

The Jungian and occultic premises upon which *Wild at Heart* is based cannot produce anything other than bad fruit.

The fleshly fruit from *Wild at Heart* is not yet fully ripened, but when it does, Christian counseling offices will be dealing with a whole new phenomenon: the "wild man" who has decided to reject his personal responsibilities to seek adolescent adventures. *Wild at Heart*, in essence, is a call for Christian men to become irresponsible pagans. We are not called to become men like Tristan or Maximus the Roman Gladiator, but we are called to become like Jesus Christ. 


## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Real Men Don't Hug Unless...: <http://members.iinet.net.au/~normlin/realmen.htm>
- <sup>2</sup> <http://allanturner.com/realmen.html>
- <sup>3</sup> Thomas R. Smith, "Praising the Soul in Women and Men: Robert Bly and the Men's Movement," MENWEB, 2002, <http://www.menweb.org/mcknight.htm>
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> Erica Simmons, "New Age Patriarchs," *New Internationalist*, Issue 227, January 1992; <http://www.newint.org/issue227/patriarchs.htm>
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> "Wildmen," *Xy*, Spring, 1991; <http://www.xyonline.net/Wildmen.shtml>
- <sup>9</sup> Elliott Miller, "The Jung Cult: Origins of a Charismatic Movement" by Richard Noll; Christian Research Institute: <http://www.equipt.org/free/DP215.htm>
- <sup>10</sup> Byron Borger, "John Eldredge's *Wild at Heart*: A Critique," Coalition for Christian Outreach, June 2002; [http://www.ccojubilee.org/minexolder/minex2002/june2002/Borger\\_June02.html](http://www.ccojubilee.org/minexolder/minex2002/june2002/Borger_June02.html)
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>12</sup> Patrick Kampert, "Evangelical men keep promises in new ways," *Chicago Tribune*, Perspective, Sunday, February 16, 2003, Section 2, p. 3.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>14</sup> John Eldredge, *Wild at Heart* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001), x.
- <sup>15</sup> Jeremiah 17:9, KJV
- <sup>16</sup> The Penguin Classics series provides a very readable and humorous translation by J.M. Cohen; Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *The Adventures of Don Quixote* (New York: Penguin Books, 1980).
- <sup>17</sup> Cf. Clifford Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).
- <sup>18</sup> "Manifest destiny" was a phrase coined by John L. O'Sullivan in 1845 when he declared it was "the fulfillment of [America's] manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence." This, in turn, was used by many politicians to justify territorial acquisitions beginning with the Mexican-American war through the end of the nineteenth century.
- <sup>19</sup> Cf. Henry R. Harrington, "Charles Kingsley's Fallen Athlete," *Victorian Studies*, 21, No. 1 (Autumn, 1977) 73-86.
- <sup>20</sup> Harris, Styron, "The 'Muscular Novel': Medium of a Victorian Ideal," *Tennessee Philological Bulletin* 27 (1990): 6-13.
- <sup>21</sup> For a discussion of this in Kingsley's thinking see David Rosen's "The Volcano and the Cathedral: Muscular Christianity and the Origins of Primal Manliness," in Donald E. Hall, ed., *Muscular Christianity: Embodying the Victorian Age*, (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1994): 17-44.
- <sup>22</sup> Eldredge, *Ibid.*, 12.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid., 24.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid., 27.
- <sup>25</sup> Scott London, "Renewing Our Sense of Wonder: An Interview with Sam Keen," <http://www.scottlondon.com/interviews/keen.html>.
- <sup>26</sup> Sam Keen, "Ideas in Process: How Shall We Respond to our Enemy?" <http://www.samkeen.com/fontsize2bwonderingsbfontp/>
- <sup>27</sup> John Caddock, "The New Monk of Mystic Protestantism," *Spiritual Counterfeits Project Journal*, Spring, 1998
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>29</sup> Wendell Berry, "Christianity and the Survival of Creation," *Crosscurrents*, <http://www.crosscurrents.org/berry.htm>
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>31</sup> Eldredge, *Ibid.*, 30.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid., 50.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid., 51.
- <sup>34</sup> Borger, *Ibid.*
- <sup>35</sup> Eldredge, *Ibid.*, 7.
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid., 9.
- <sup>37</sup> Borger, *Ibid.*
- <sup>38</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid.

## "What is THIS?" (Continued from page 10)

that it's okay to sometimes want to be alone with our pain for a while) (Matthew 14:1-23).

... rather than being the Spock-like, King-James-speaking Messiah portrayed in the movies (calm, cool, and collected), He instead was frustrated by stubbornness, infuriated by self-righteousness, and thrilled by simple faith. He wasn't afraid to cry in front of people (John 11:35-36; Luke 19:41), and didn't hide His fears or hesitate to ask for help (Matthew 26:38). In fact, He appears to be more emotional and spontaneous than the average person, not less!

This is the same Jesus Who is with us through our hurting, and is waiting and willing to listen to us and help us, if we'll only just ask him ... one friend to another. 

Mike Knowles is the newest addition to the MCOI team and is the editor of the Young Defenders Boot Camp web site which should be up and going in the next few months.





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- Galatians 4:16 -

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