

The original version of this page can be found at : <http://www.ransomedheart.com/forum/default.aspx?f=4&m=272201>

Posted By : **New Mighty Warrior** - 5/21/2007 6:01 PM

Hi Men,

I believe that there may be someone here who has dealt with this issue or one similar. I belong to a small church and we have a small ministry that puts on retreats based on WAH. The pastor of our small church preached a disturbing message calling for all of the men in this group to repent. He had a 16 point sermon outlining 8 good points of WAH and 8 weak points. I cant go into deep detail regarding all of it here but here are the basic points:

Good Points:

1. It declares the importance of the Heart
2. It tends to have a resuscitating impact; it feels life giving, inspiring, motivating
3. It emphasizes inner healing and freedom, healing of heart wounds and freedom from deceptive messages that were connected to those heart wounds
4. It calls people toward a relational intimacy with God and each other
5. It values and helps define biblical masculinity and felinity
6. It can help navigate the often powerfully painful relationship with his earthly father, therefore freeing up the man both to deploy his inner resources for Kingdom purposes and to begin developing his relationship with his heavenly Papa.
7. It affirms three good desires in the heart of a man
8. It therefore encourages men to get out of the stands and onto the field, joining with God in His big story adventure, battling with the demonic realm for human breakthrough, and rescuing one's wife through cherishing her heart.

Weak Points

1. God - An unbiblical view of God as a risk taker
2. Sin - Replacing "sin" with heart wounds thereby weakening it's impact
3. The Gospel - WAH has the potential to be a False Gospel
4. Evangelism - Weakness in the evangelistic arena - unbiblical definition of it
5. The Bible - WAH is just a small slice of the huge pie of Christianity the Bible is not WAH and WAH is not the Bible
6. The Christian Life - WAH is just supposed to be a tool in the tool belt not the whole thing we need to walk in the whole council of God
7. Accountability - Accountability is not legalism, what are we afraid of, say how's your heart for Jesus instead of just How's your heart.
8. The Church - WAH promotes a low view of the church

The men in our BOB confronted him and asked him why he did not come to us first. There have been several meetings with Him and the Elders regarding this matter. Several families have left the church over this and the fact that leadership in our church has been lacking in many ways for several years. It's a young church and is going through growing pains. It's truly closer to a family than anything else at this point. Our pastor has stated that he wants to be in control of the ministry and his main beef is that we are not under the authority of a local church. We became our own non-profit recently. He claims that we fired him and the elders from speaking at the events (We asked them not to so we would not be promoting any specific church). We have our own speaking team that was born out of the core group of men in the BOB. We have agreed that most of us are all on the same page regarding almost all of the points except our view of God and our view of the local church. Obviously I could write on for days about what we

all believe but suffice it to say we all have spend considerable time on our faces before the King asking if there be any wicked way within us. We all have gotten that we are all doing good and what He has called us to so and to stick with it despite what our pastor is saying. There have been a lot of accusations on both sides and I'm sure sins have been committed. We are all very weary of dealing with all of this. I spoke with a different pastor of my old church and he told me that he cannot agree with all that we have been accused of and that I could remain a part of the ministry if I went back there. I don't want to just turn tail and run. if WAH has taught me anything it is that there is a battle to fight. I don't want to just leave the field and leave the others that I love behind to remain being shot at. It seems like a stark reality and it is. I'm not looking for an answer as to what I should do, believe me God will answer me and my family when he chooses to. I feel that there is a spirit of religion, I sense a great deal of Pride and a need/lust for control. I met with the pastor and told him about my concerns one on one. He told me that he wants our BOB to stop doing retreats and all other ministry. He believes that through his leadership he can redeem it all. He wants us to come under the authority of the local church and run anything we do through him. Like I said I don't need council on what to do regarding staying or going. I have made my mind up that despite what the circumstances may look like the bigger picture is sometimes hard to see so I'm holding out for God to provide a miracle. I am not allowing this to become a vow in my heart therefore I'm leaving my heart open to the hope that total reconciliation can still take place, although that may seem foolish at the current time.

Here's what I am asking:

1. Please pray for us
2. If you have been confronted with some of these same criticisms please share with me any truths you may have uncovered
3. Ask me any questions that may help you to see what we are going through

This is a difficult thing and I'm willing to face the battle. I refuse to let the Devil get the Glory!!! Jesus told me to lift Him up and he would restore what was lost! I lift you up Lord Jesus, please go before us and fight for us!

New

New Mighty Warrior (Clint Swiney)
Texas Band Of Brothers
<http://www.texasbandofbrothers.org>

Neo, sooner or later you will realize, just as I did, that there is a difference between knowing the path and walking the path...
- Morpheus

Post Edited (New Mighty Warrior) : 5/22/2007 4:30:42 PM GMT

Posted By : **Sailon** - 5/21/2007 6:15 PM

Hey New Guy, welcome.

first of all, the sermon was pretty much right, most of it, the points that is. The accusation came from a man whose feelings were hurt, then the accuser fed that pain and brought division instead of unity. 2 points for the enemy. But dude, your doing the stuff man, your doing what most of are not. You went out and did it, without the need of some church to support you.

You're depending on God and running hard after HIm. I'm loving it.

WAH is just a part of the pie bro. Its giving you additional tools that will serve you well. Its not the gospel, its a great truth we need to hear in these times. Embrace it bro. But don't worship it or immatate what Johns doing. Imatate what God is doing.

Honestly old boy, did you expect this to be easy. Did you expect your church to be there for you 100%. Hell your pretty blessed to have what you did have to be honest. Most of us don't have that honor.

Jesus suffered not from Rome, but from his own people. Brother, your just like Jesus. you've pissed off the church, but thats not original is it. Nope, been done several time through history. Many died in the name of Jesus because the church killed them off. She can be brutal when she don't trust God with all her heart. So be discouraged by the loss, but be greatly encouraged by the mark you are wearing for suffering sharing the truth.

Oh, be humble when you tell your pastor touhhhhh, mmmmm, I can't think of a decent word to say there. Use your imagination and get back to following after God...

Three cheers for the new guy.....

www.sailon.blogspot.com

Who amongst you is willing to tie your hopes to the sail? To enter into the most dangerous chapter of your young and soon to be wasted lives?

Take a deep breathe and smell the adventure

I am what I am

I see Pooh everywhere!!!!

Desert Pirate 2007-Moab

BC 2003

Posted By : **WildMan** - 5/21/2007 6:23 PM

Hey brother... good that you're here... welcome.

You're in my old stomping grounds... I did network engineering all over the metroplex... one of my last large clients was Careflight in the airport right there in Grand Prairie.

On the church thing... if possible, try not to let relationship be broken over ideas. It's so much better if you can agree to disagree for as long as it takes for God to work through. Loving is not so much about being right.

If there is anything I can do to encourage y'all, might be a thing to pray together on the phone.

-vern-

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 Much that once was is lost. For none now live who remember it.

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Posted By : **dunogod** - 5/21/2007 7:08 PM

We've had some similar criticisms of Boot Camp NW here in Portland and Seattle. Even had a guy show up at our last event and keep a list of every "cuss" word we spoke, which session it was used in, and how often. (!! ) Then came at us with the accusation that we weren't really a Christian organization, yada, yada, yada. Here's what God revealed to me...

Remember when John the Baptist was in prison and sent his disciples to ask Jesus if he was really the Messiah...what

was Jesus' response? "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me." (Matt 11)

If you want to know whether something is of God or not, ask yourself what the fruit of it is.

FWIW, we don't operate under the authority of any local church either, and for the same reasons you don't. I personally do not because I firmly believe that every follower of Christ is to come under his authority alone and "...become oaks of righteousness." (Isaiah 61) In everything I've read in the Bible about authority as it relates to the local church, there isn't anything that this man is demanding that is biblical. Sorry. Too often we associate authority with control, when it has the opposite connotation with the Christian context. What I *have* read about local church authority in the Bible points to authority being exerted out of humility and on behalf of those who cannot because of their lack of position in the local community, primarily women, children, and slaves. Those in authority - apostles and evangelists mainly - used their authority in God for the FREEDOM of others.

I'm a bit passionate about this whole misuse and outright abuse of the notion of local church authority...just a bit. 😊

Tony

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I am Maximus Aragorn. This is my creed. Save as many men as I can. Let go of the rest. Hold tight and never let go of the men I am called to. *So that others may live.*

*Post Edited (dunogod) : 5/22/2007 4:31:24 AM GMT*

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Posted By : **TimberWolf** - 5/21/2007 8:58 PM

New Guy,

Here's an article someone else found and posted here. I don't know if it is what you are looking for, but well worth the read.

Farrell

The Image of God in Men: A Response to Rut Etheridge's Critique of Wild at Heart  
Mike Austin, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of Philosophy  
Eastern Kentucky University

#### Introduction

John Eldredge's Wild at Heart claims to help us understand the masculine soul, and an important thesis of the book is that men reflect the image of God in their possession of three core longings found in the hearts of men: we desire a battle to fight, an adventure to live, and a beauty to rescue. In this paper, I will consider and respond to a recent critique of Wild at Heart by Rut Etheridge (<http://www.churchofthegoodshepherd.info/WAHcritique.htm>).

Before I offer my response, I must begin with a confession: Wild at Heart changed my life. The book helped me identify issues and misguided beliefs about myself and about God, and has, I believe, brought me closer to God and helped me more fully realize who I am in Christ. I have read many of Eldredge's other works, and have attended a retreat put on by his organization, Ransomed Heart. It is because of the impact of the book on my life that I decided to consider and respond to Rut Etheridge's critique of John Eldredge's book. If Wild at Heart is unbiblical, I want to know that and avoid having a distorted view of myself and of God. However, after considering Etheridge's critique, I conclude below that he has failed to adequately support his views of Wild at Heart.

#### What's Wrong with Wild at Heart?

Rut Etheridge's criticism of Wild at Heart centers on the claim that the key principles of the book are sorely lacking, and are in fact unbiblical, in four main areas of thought:

1. God's sovereignty and authority
2. The person and work of Jesus Christ
3. The purpose and substance of the gospel
4. The nature and content of God's direct revelation to humanity

Etheridge's concern and thesis is that the theology present in *Wild at Heart* could in fact lead people away from rather than towards the God of the Bible. If this is true, then this is cause for alarm. It is clear that Etheridge wants all followers of Christ to base their understanding of and responses to God on scripture, and has offered this critique to surface a lack of biblical integrity in *Wild at Heart*.

But is this in fact the case, i.e. has Etheridge shown *Wild at Heart* to be unbiblical? In what follows, I will argue that while some of the criticisms offered by Etheridge are valid, most of them are misguided. Most importantly, I argue that Etheridge has failed to adequately support his claim that the theology of *Wild at Heart* will damage people's understanding of God and in fact lead them away from the God who longs to help them.

#### God's Sovereignty and Authority

In *Wild at Heart*, John Eldredge argues that there is a wildness about God that is reflected in men. More specifically, the image of God is reflected in men in three core longings that we possess: men long for a battle to fight, an adventure to live, and a beauty to rescue. God has these longings, and we, as his image-bearers, possess them as well.

Rut Etheridge rightly points out that the biblical teaching on the image of God is complex. But he then says that John Eldredge "...gives us an overly simplistic understanding which is geared toward and probably results from his own love for rugged, romantic individualism." Etheridge also wonders how men from other cultures that do not value these ideals would receive this view of God, and if men who are shy, quiet, and non-violent would be adequate bearers of God's image on Eldredge's view.

In defense of *Wild at Heart*, it must be pointed out that nowhere does Eldredge claim to be giving us a comprehensive account of the image of God. Rather, it seems to me upon multiple readings of the book that Eldredge is focusing in on aspects of God's character and nature that we have neglected and sometimes completely ignored. Given this, that his discussion of the image of God focuses on these three core longings is not problematic, because it is not intended to be comprehensive. More importantly, Eldredge is not advocating a rugged and romantic individualism. A crucial aspect of this and other works by John Eldredge is his belief that individualism is not what God intended for His people. Eldredge urges men to come together in small fellowships of the heart, where deep and genuine intimacy can occur at a level which truly encourages and challenges men to become who Christ intends them to be. An individualistic mindset, then, is a problem in the church that Eldredge is encouraging us to solve, rather than an ideal to be prized. Given this, Christians in foreign cultures where individualism is not prized can accept Eldredge's view of God, because Eldredge himself does not prize individualism. Moreover, nothing in *Wild at Heart* forces us to hold that shy, quiet, and non-violent men are inadequate bearers of the image of God. One need not be outgoing, loud, and violent to possess and live out the three longings Eldredge speaks of in *Wild at Heart*. Having a battle to fight should not be confused with engaging in physical violence. The battle Eldredge is concerned with is the battle for our hearts, for the hearts of those close to us, and the hearts of those throughout the world. Given the biblical view of the heart as the wellspring and central aspect of our lives, fighting for the heart is what Jesus came to do and what He calls His followers to do (any concordance search on the word "heart" is sufficient to establish this).

John Eldredge argues that we have further reason to believe that men possess these longings, citing as evidence the fact that Adam was not created in the garden, but outside of it, in "the outback". In response, Rut Etheridge correctly points out that the garden was made for man, as his ideal dwelling place, and that Eldredge's view implies that God does not understand the heart of man and forces him to live in a domesticated garden, instead of being free to explore the untamed lands. I think this is Etheridge's strongest criticism of *Wild at Heart*. However, it is a minor point, insofar as the other reasons Eldredge offers for his view of the image of God in man are strong, such that the apparent mistake he makes in this present context is not problematic for his overall view. Also, Etheridge goes on to say that our lives in eternity, with God in heaven, would seem to be lacking if we accept Eldredge's view of the heart of man. This is supposed to be the case because in heaven there may be an adventure to live as we worship and experience God, but there is no battle to fight nor is there a beauty to rescue. So, the experience of men in heaven will be lacking because we will not have a battle to fight nor a beauty to rescue. In response, it is important to point out that certainly living with God and ruling over angels will most certainly be an adventure. Being caught up in the life of the Trinity in worship, fellowship, work, and so on will definitely be an adventure. But what of the battle and the beauty? While we may have no battle to fight in heaven, we will have a victory to savor. While we may have no beauty to rescue, we will have a beauty to enjoy. The purpose of these core desires—a battle to fight and a beauty to rescue—is that they will one day be fulfilled. When they are fulfilled, our true, God-given masculinity will also be fulfilled. So, our lives in the future state of heaven will not be missing anything on Eldredge's view of the heart of God and men.

Etheridge's next criticism of *Wild at Heart* centers on the claim that the book endorses, or is at least dangerously close, to the "heresy" of open theism. Etheridge seems bothered by (in Etheridge's words) John Eldredge's "glib denial" that *Wild at Heart* endorses open theism and "the brevity of his disavowal" of the view. A denial, however brief, is still a denial, and so brevity does not equal glibness here. I assume that Eldredge included this denial because he meant it. More substantively, Etheridge is worried about Eldredge's hearty endorsement of a risk-taking God. This is a key component of open theism, but only on certain understandings of what it is to risk. If risk means uncertainty, the possibility of failure, and chance, then there is a difficulty here. However, I take Eldredge to mean something different by the term, namely, that God takes risks in the sense that He allows Himself to be vulnerable to our choices by creating us and entering into a relationship with us. God can know that we will reject Him, sin against Him, and go our own way but still be seen as taking a risk by creating us and allowing us to treat Him in these ways. In this way of interpreting Eldredge's use of the term "risk", risk is to be equated with vulnerability. I take a risk by having children, because I make myself emotionally vulnerable to them. Hence, God can still be omniscient and omnipotent, but take risks, in the above sense of the term.

Etheridge quotes Eldredge as saying that "...God rigged the world in such a way that it only works when we embrace risk as the theme of our lives, which is to say, only when we live by faith." Faith becomes a blind existentialist leap into unpredictable adventure of the future, according to Etheridge, and this is not the biblical faith of "the certainty of things hoped for and the evidence of things unseen" (Hebrews 11).

Yet risk does not mean abandoning ourselves to an uncertain future in some irrational leap, but rather that we abandon ourselves to God and allow Him to guide and direct us, rather than trying to manage or control our circumstances by always playing it safe and never attempting great things for God. This is a correct understanding of the view of faith in Wild at Heart, which is so important to understand because we are given a manageable God today. God becomes something like a vending machine that we can control. Etheridge seems to endorse such a view when he claims that "scripture teaches that God's actions are always in keeping with His character, thus rendering God quite predictable". But is God unpredictable from our perspective? I would argue that He certainly is. Reflect on your own life and do you not see that this is so? Or reflect on the lives of Abraham, Rahab, Peter, Paul, and John. In order to have faith, they had to abandon control of their lives to God, and they certainly could not have predicted all that happened to them. God is predictable insofar as He is good, and powerful, and true. However, our understanding of how these traits of God play out in our everyday existence is limited, rendering unpredictability to much of what God does.

God does risk in another sense, insofar as He does not exercise his sovereign power over everything that occurs. If He did, there would be no sin or evil in the world. However, He does exercise His control over the big picture, over where history is going to end up. This is an important distinction to keep in mind, and preserves the truth that there is no chance for ultimate failure.

If we take what Eldredge says in Wild at Heart as I have argued above, then Eldredge need not be seen as endorsing open theism, but rather Molinism. Note the following passage from Wild at Heart:

"God seems to fly in the face of all caution. Even though he knew what would happen, what heartbreak and devastation would follow upon our disobedience, God chose to have children."

The crucial phrase in this passage is "Even though he knew it would happen". This quote from Wild at Heart does not deny that God knows the future, as open theism holds to be the case. This passage supports my interpretation of Eldredge, and it supports a Molinistic, middle-knowledge view of God. And Molinism is most decidedly within the pale of orthodox Christianity in its understanding of God's omniscience. There is neither open theism nor internal inconsistency in Wild at Heart with respect to these issues, contrary to Etheridge's critique.

#### The Person and Work of Jesus Christ

Etheridge next criticizes Eldredge's view that Jesus is fierce, wild, and romantic to the core, and argues that Wild at Heart contains a misguided view of the person and work of Christ. Etheridge agrees that Christ is presented as fierce in the scriptures, but denies that he is "the marauding renegade that Eldredge wants him to be". Along these lines, Etheridge is very critical of Eldredge's comparison between Christ and William Wallace, from the film Braveheart. It should be pointed out that descriptions of Jesus in the book of Revelation do remind one of scenes from Braveheart (see Revelation 1:12-18; 19:11-21). I take it that the purpose of the comparison between Wallace and Christ is that the Wallace character from Braveheart is widely-known and highlights key aspects of the character of Christ that have been at least underemphasized, and perhaps nearly forgotten by contemporary Christians who focus on "gentle Jesus meek and mild", and forget that He is also the powerful, passionate, and courageous Christ. Rather than Christ's greatness being "...insulted through Eldredge's portrayal of Him as a William Wallace figure," as Etheridge claims, underappreciated aspects of Christ's greatness are brought to light by pointing out the qualities shared by Christ and Braveheart's portrayal of William Wallace—courage, passion, self-sacrifice, and strength. Moreover, I think the comparison is an apt one, because Wallace also provides us an illustration of not only these aspects of Christ's character, but also of the tenderness of His heart. Wallace is not Christ, he is not perfect and has sex outside of marriage in the film, as Etheridge points out. However, the Wallace character can teach us something about Christ, even as the character fails to manifest all of the qualities possessed by Him. This is why Eldredge spends so much time on the comparison, and it is difficult to see how the use Eldredge makes of Braveheart is an affront to Jesus.

Wild at Heart also claims that Jesus is romantic. This is certainly supported by scripture. Jesus is the bridegroom of the Church, and husbands are encouraged to love their wives as Christ loves the Church (Ephesians 5-6). The husband-wife relationship is the paradigm for romance, and it is no accident that the New Testament refers to the Church as the bride of Christ.

A point well-taken that is made by Etheridge has to do with a recounting in Wild at Heart of the confrontation between Jesus and Legion, a group of demons inhabiting a man (Luke 8). I think that here, Etheridge surfaces an important lack of precision in Eldredge's writing, as Wild at Heart could be taken to endorse the view that Jesus is somehow fallible. However, here a little bit of investigation should quell any concerns about the orthodoxy of John Eldredge and his ministry. On the ministry's website (<http://www.ransomedheart.com/>), at the "Statement of Faith" link, it is clear that Eldredge holds, as does Etheridge, that Jesus is, in the words of Rut Etheridge, "the almighty, triumphant Lamb of God", and not a "fallible wild man". The following is taken directly from the site:

We believe in the One True God, The Sovereign, eternal Creator of all that exists, both seen and unseen. God is eternally existent in three persons, yet one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father and in His personal return in power and glory.

With this in mind, Rut Etheridge is correct that there is a lack of precision in the specific verbiage in Wild at Heart. However, he is wrong that this is equivalent to an insult of or an attack on the person of Jesus Christ.

#### The Purpose and Substance of the Gospel

Not only is Etheridge concerned about Eldredge's view of Christ, he also maintains that in Wild at Heart, we have a "humanistic reduction of the gospel", in which "the gospel of salvation from sin is traded in for the gospel of masculine self-realization".

According to Etheridge, the true gospel focuses on spiritual and physical death that exists as a result of sin. Christ is to deliver us from the pains and punishment of sin, and this is the message of the gospel. So far, so good. However, where I believe that Etheridge is mistaken is in his claim that Eldredge focuses on the restoration of our true masculinity and femininity as the fruit of the gospel, and that this is somehow opposed to the biblical view. Etheridge has provided us with a false dilemma, that is, he thinks that the gospel is about sin and death, heaven and hell. However, he has forgotten that the gospel is also about life, and that this eternal kind of life begins now for the follower of Christ and carries on into eternity. I take it that the focus in *Wild at Heart* is on this neglected aspect of the gospel. We in the evangelical wing of the church have focused on sin, death, heaven, and hell, but forgotten that when we come to Christ we are new creations. We are changed at a fundamental level, such that we can now live as God intends us to live. The doubt and fear that fall under "the gospel of masculine self-realization", according to Etheridge, are in fact the fruit of sin and death in our lives that faith in Christ and being changed by him can do away with. These are in fact constitutive of and caused by sin, and as such it is the mission of Christ to eradicate them. There is no attack on the work of Christ here. To the contrary, there is a fuller explanation than the truncated one that we are usually given.

#### The Nature and Content of God's Direct Revelation to Humanity

A final area of concern addressed by Rut Etheridge is Eldredge's belief in what Etheridge calls "extra-biblical revelation". There is a supposed inconsistency in believing that we should not add to the words of scripture and that God speaks directly to us outside of scripture. There is no inconsistency here, as I will show, nor does believing that God has spoken to one "drastically diminish the sacred nature of God's Word and...exalt the mere words and experiences of man to the threshold of Holy scripture", as Etheridge claims.

Etheridge is suspicious of the stories recounted in *Wild at Heart* about God personally addressing people, directly speaking to them about who they are and His plans for them. While we should be cautious in attributing thoughts that occur to us to God, there is certainly biblical precedent for the view that God does speak directly to his followers. Moreover, if we take aspects of the narrative accounts of scripture to be normative for us today, then it follows that not only will God speak to us, we should expect it. Perhaps the problem is that we just aren't paying enough attention, because we believe that God has better things to do. (Space forbids a full treatment of this issue, but I encourage anyone interested in this to consult the book *Hearing God*, by Dallas Willard, which gives an excellent analysis as well as practical helps related to God speaking to us today).

There is no inconsistency between holding that we should not add to the words of scripture and believing that God does speak to us, because we know that the words in the Canon are from God, and we know that when we "hear" God speak to us in other ways, we can be mistaken that it is in fact God, rather than our own thoughts or psyches. The relevant difference is that the Bible is canonical, but our religious experiences are not. However, it does not follow from this that God does not speak to us today. A necessary component of a personal relationship is personal communication. Sometimes this comes to us when we study the scriptures, and the Holy Spirit directs us to a particular application of what we are studying. At other times communication from God may come via nature, art, friends, music, and even a Hollywood movie! I for one cannot make much sense out of a personal relationship with God without personal communication.

#### Conclusion

Before I conclude, I must raise one final point. In footnote 28, Etheridge criticizes Eldredge as follows: "Eldredge compares the thrill of a James Bond movie to the apparently boring nature of Bible study. Perhaps Eldredge has never experienced a good Bible study, but for God's people, what could be more enticing and thrilling than knowing the mind of God and being taught by Him?"

Unfortunately, the problem is that many Bible studies do not lead us to know the mind of God, they instead focus on our cultural biases and traditions. And being taught to live as the Christian subculture tells us to live and as well as a view of Christ that is not true to the Biblical text is not only boring, it is infuriating. For example, I recently visited a church in which the congregation was told that drinking is a sin, and that if we would not drink in the church, why think that it's okay to do so outside of the church? I for one, while eschewing drunkenness (see Ephesians 5), would have no problem enjoying a glass of ale in or outside of the church's four walls. In Deuteronomy 14, God's people are in fact commanded to have a party in honor of God and in thanksgiving to Him:

"Use the silver to buy whatever you like: cattle, sheep, wine or other fermented drink, or anything you wish. Then you and your household will eat there in the presence of the Lord and rejoice (Dt. 14:26)."

When was the last time you looked at this passage in a Bible study? Would it shock you even more to know that in the context of this passage, those who are commanded to buy whatever they like are to do so as a tithe to the Lord? The point is that we can make Bible study boring by not letting the Bible speak to us, and that such Bible studies become forums for learning how to be nice, passive, and docile, rather than a place to learn about God and how to partner with Him in advancing His kingdom.

Lastly, the concern expressed by Etheridge and the church which posted his article is laudable. We should be concerned about the doctrine of popular books, speakers, musicians, and others in the Church. However, this book should not be construed as an "attack" on orthodox Christianity and the true character of God, as Etheridge often does. We in the church must learn to disagree with one another in a manner that is constructive, rather than destructive. And while there are flaws in *Wild at Heart*, this popular book is not dangerous, nor is it leading people into idolatry or blasphemy. Rather, it is leading them to Jesus, the God-man who came not only to save us from death, but to teach us as well how to live our lives as our true selves, from hearts changed by God, being in character and in deed the people He intends us to be.

**Commander Lock:** Not everyone believes what you do Morpheus.  
**Morpheus:** My beliefs do not require them to.

Posted By : **Lucas John** - 5/21/2007 9:55 PM

"Huzzah Huzzah Huzzah!!!"

Strength and Honor New

LJ

"I know....It's all wrong. By rights we shouldnt even be here.....but we are. Its like in the great stories mr. Frodo, the ones that really mattered. Full of darkness and danger they were and sometimes you didnt want to know the end...because how could the end be happy. How could the world go back to the way it was when so much bad had happened?..... But in the end its only a passing thing, this shadow. Even darkness must pass, a new day will come. And when the sun shines it will shine out the clearer. Those are the stories that stayed with you....even if you were too small to understand why. But I think mr. Frodo I do understand. I know now.....Folk in those stories had lots o' chances at turnin back only they didn't. They kep' goin because they were holdin on to somethin....."

What are we holding on to Sam?

That there's some good in this world mr. Frodo.....and its worth FIGHTIN For!

Posted By : **Fletch** - 5/22/2007 1:53 AM

Hey NMW

Welcome. Wow, is this an example of warfare or what? Remember to bring Christ between you and all others when talking with this pastor. As Sailon said what the pastor said is mostly true. Perhaps if you agree with his negative points where appropriate you will disarm him. He will be expecting an argument.

"Agree with thine adversary quickly." A quote I have heard very seldom if ever, but Jesus said it. Look for the common ground then the differences. Remember even pastors are just men with all the wounds and messed up lives the rest of us have which need Gods restoration and freedom.

Keep fighting, but don't attempt this kind of spiritual warfare alone.

Fletch

Boot Camps: October 2003 Frontier Ranch  
 April 2004 Frontier Ranch  
 September 2004 Crooked Creek

Advanced: December 2004, Frontier Ranch  
 October 2005, Frontier Ranch

Moab: March 07

The second Advanced was the first place I felt I fit in and with "safe" friends i.e. allies in a long time.

*Post Edited (Fletch) : 5/22/2007 8:36:10 AM GMT*

Posted By : **dunogod** - 5/22/2007 2:16 AM

Just to be thorough, I did a word study on *authority* in the New Testament. What I found actually confirmed a lot of what I said in my previous post, however, one thing I found that I want to emphasize is Humility. Regardless of the authority one possesses, exercising it in total humility is the point. What really got me was this principle that a person first brought the Gospel - freedom and life - to another before they had any authority over them. And more often then not, Paul makes statements "...in the authority of Jesus Christ."

What I'm left confused about is this idea called "apostolic authority" (2 Cor 13:6). It seems to come from the principle I

stated above, but I'm not quite sure. Anybody want to comment?

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I am Maximus Aragorn. This is my creed. Save as many men as I can. Let go of the rest. Hold tight and never let go of the men I am called to. *So that others may live.*

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Posted By : **Roman Hokie** - 5/22/2007 9:15 AM

Hey, New Mighty Warrior! Welcome, welcome, welcome from someone who's also a bit new to the War Room. Some thoughts, if I may.

Yes, the Ransomed Heart message (of the good heart, the fullness of the gospel (and not just the sin/hell message we usually get) was intended to be a grass roots message. Many in the institutional church are indeed threatened - those with a somewhat distorted view of authority, anyway. I've been leading WAH: BoB as a video series (+ snow days and my BC Trip) for 19 weeks. We've just "finished". Our pastor has some concerns about the material in the book itself, which he's addressed to me and I've ensured him I would introduce his concerns to the group meeting. It doesn't give men the permission to be abusive, in any way, to others, including their wives. That kind of thing.

I'm in a unique position as Elder, Governing Board member, and Men's Ministry Coordinator (just because I lead the men's group, really) and that could put me on both sides of the coin. It hasn't yet; though I expect it will.

You don't mention the timing of the events in your post. I wonder if you became a non-profit before your pastor called you all to repentance or after. That may be a concern to him. Are any of your Band in the elder board? Are you all from the same church? WAH does promote a low view of the church. That's true. And, for the most part, the churches my wife and I have attended HAVE had LIFE and we've had freedom - a lot of it. They've been robust and exciting places without a lot of hierarchy and man-authority involved. Our current church is a bit different (the first denominational one we've been a part of), but since we got here 2 1/2 years ago, I've gotten a lot of freedom to do as the Lord would have me do - within Men's Ministry, our Music Team, and even starting a Young Singles' Ministry.

Your pastor may well feel put out by the no longer including him in your speaking engagements. Are you using the church facility? Are you inviting other pastors? Perhaps inviting your pastor from your church and others to speak would be a benefit - not I'm not sure what that would look like. Perhaps offering them, free admission to a retreat (1 a year?) as a way to support them (they need time off the front lines, too!) and honor them would take the blow off. Figure 50 guys at \$200 a head, that's \$10000. If 1 of the 50 was a pastor (those pastors from your home churches, assuming your band is not all from the same church), that would make your requirement \$10000 from 49 guys. That makes \$204.08 from each of the other 49 guys. (assuming you have 3 pastors involved, they can either all attend the same one, or different ones, but you raise your price by \$5 / head - or whatever you need). It's a small price to pay for the Levites we honor. Don't tell attendees that's what you're doing. You don't owe them that. Just your organization team. And your pastors. Do it for them. They'll appreciate the weekend off and being ministered to.

I think that accountability will result from being in a band of brothers. We need guys to build us up, not tear us down in our struggles. It's a challenge. My "accountability partner" is also the best friend I've got. He knows me, what makes me come alive, and what pissed me off. And he helps me to communicate with those who don't.

WAH isn't about evangelism. There are many ministries that aren't about evangelism. scripture tells us to take care of our own family before caring for others, lest we be like unbelievers. I don't have a passion for evangelism. I do have a passion for strong men and strong families (though I struggle myself!). Perhaps I touch a few men who have (themselves) passion for evangelism. The Alliance (CMA) holds to 4-fold mission building. Pray, give, send, and go. My wife and I fall in the pray, give, send. We see and meet needs locally.

I see some hurt and division, Satan's thrilled with this. Regardless of what God's directing you to do, I'd suggest small meetings (perhaps 2 from the Band and 2 from the elders, or 3 and 3 - don't need the whole teams involved) to work toward restoration. Perhaps, if your pastor is concerned about the material, offering to send him to a Boot Camp (some of the guys here who've RUN THEM may feel differently, and I look to them for counsel on this) whether regional or with the RH speaking team, would be a nice gift to him and allow him to open his heart to it.

I don't know. I'm at a loss. But I am concerned about your pastor's heart here. Sounds like he's TRYING to do something good, but isn't sure. You have the power to be a positive influence. Or you can leave him at the side of the road.

Yes, I'm praying for you and your team, as well as your church leadership. God will be there.

---

Did you know that the husband was commanded to love his wife? Not the other way around!

Go to: [My story](#) for the first chapter of my story.  
Go to: [Boot Camp](#) for what happened to me there.

Bootcamp May 07 - Crooked Creek Ranch

Posted By : **Warrior Poet** - 5/22/2007 9:56 AM

***NMW said...***

*Our pastor has stated that he wants to be in control of the ministry and his main beef is that we are not under the authority of a local church.*

That's funny. Here the church at large has been begging men to take spiritual leadership and when they do suddenly they are not under the leadership of the "local church". The message is we want you to lead as long as you don't step on any toes, do things the way we want you to do them and ask permission before you lead. HELLO!! That's not leadership that's compliance. 🤖

I agree that this is an attack, but an attack on the pastor's heart. He feels threatened, loss of control and this creates anger. The anger is acted out in a passive aggressive manor. Perhaps the men of your BOB need to call him out to repent of his disbelief in the power of the Holy Spirit to direct and guide you guys into true freedom. 😊

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 ~~~~~  
I want to be a man worth killing
 ~~~~~

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With your shield or on it
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Posted By : **New Mighty Warrior** - 5/22/2007 10:21 AM

Ok men, thanks for all the feedback. Let me clarify some things.....

Our BOB consists of 6 men 5 Go to the same Church (The Church in question, but one of them has already committed to leave) and the other member is from a different church. The one who left already was on the "senior shepharding team" at our church before they appointed elders. He asked to not be an elder because of personal concerns and a heavy load he was already bearing. The other 4 men from the same church are all Home Fellowship Leaders under the same church.

We do our retreats at a camp that we lease space at that also uncludes adventure activities for the men. We did file the non-profit status shortly after this all came out into the open (about a month ago). Up till this point we were operating under the church insurance and Non-Profit status (With the complete apparent approval from the Pastor and the Elders)

The pastor of our Church has been to RH Boot Camp and to an RH Advanced Retreat. He is the one who introduced WAH to our church and the one who started our BOB and started us doing retreats. He and the co pastor (Now an elder) both spoke at the first few retreats. Apparently this whole thing started when our pastor was at Advanced and posed a question regarding evangelism to the RH team. He says their response was woefully weak. He then began to tear down the WAH Message publicly with anyone who would listen. Shortly after this the leader of our BOB (The one who has already left the church) began to reorganize things. I became a part of the BOB around this time. I had been a facilitator of squads at the previous retreat where our Pastor spoke. What happened is we started to form a core team and began to develop our own retreat sessions (Up to this time we had been relying on the RH BOB DVD series to do the retreats). This was a difficult time and I remember our leader struggling with going outside of

our BOB to get speakers and ultimately decided that having a pastor speak is not what we wanted from our retreats and privately asked the pastor to step down. I spoke with our pastor around this time and he addressed some concerns he had with the WAH message. He also told me he had excluded himself from the retreats because he was already overwhelmed with his duties as a pastor. This all happened about 14 months ago. We did not exclude the pastors from the subsequent retreats, we invited them, even offered scholarships. but they chose not to go. Our last retreat went through Sunday and this seems to be a contributing factor to the reaction of our Pastor. He says that even though we have said that we don't promote a low view of the local church nor say that we do our actions speak louder than our words since we are choosing to keep the men away from their church families on Sunday. The thing that gets me is that our Pastor is actively trying to Kill the ministry of our BOB but he has not seen the changes that we have made that reflect the concerns that he had addressed to us. He also is adamant to stop us no matter what the cost. (All of the BOB are teetering on the edge of leaving the church, not because of the opposition of the WAH message but the apparent immaturity of the leadership)

The last retreat we did where the Pastor spoke at (about 2 Years Ago) our Pastor went out of line and got really preachy and off subject which he tends to do a lot. This may have contributed to the decision made by our leader. Whatever the case at this point it does not make sense why our Pastor is actively trying to kill our ministry that God has obviously called us to. We all agree with him on most of the points. We actually agree with them all but our Pastor is convinced that we are deceived about our apparent belief regarding the Local Church and our view of God. We keep telling him that we do agree and that we are willing to work it out. We have a meeting this Thursday at 5:00 until whenever (The last one lasted till 2:00AM.) I hear all of your advice and I really appreciate the defensive documents regarding the WAH message. Please pray for reconciliation.

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New Mighty Warrior (Clint Swiney)  
 Texas Band Of Brothers  
<http://www.texasbandofbrothers.org>

Neo, sooner or later you will realize, just as I did, that there is a difference between knowing the path and walking the path...  
 - Morpheus

*Post Edited (New Mighty Warrior) : 5/22/2007 4:26:21 PM GMT*

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Posted By : **rosebudgraincompany** - 5/22/2007 10:49 AM

I know some Christians in the Catholic Church that are fully aware of the false teachings of the Catholic church and when we fellowship together they offer interpretations that try to bring the false teachings into the realm of Orthodoxy. I know some Christians that aren't Catholic that offer interpretations that push these same false teachings into the realm of rank Satanism.

But what is the point? Are you really going to change 1000+ years of beaucratic functioning? Are you really going to get someone saved by convincing them that Mary worship is tantamount to Satanism?

So what do you do when you run into someone who thinks they can understand the functionings of an infinite mind unfettered by time and space? The only way you can argue either side of the "God takes risks" issue is to claim you know a whole lot about living outside of time. What a foolish argument!

So, what is the heart motivation of the pastor? I think you've asked that question and received an unfortunate answer. Keep engaging, keep inviting him into your message.

<<<< Personally, I don't drink, smoke or curse and I don't enjoy it when those around me are doing it. So, please don't think it strange if you receive opposition for that! >>>>

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Posted By : **TimberWolf** - 5/22/2007 1:07 PM

NMW,

I don't know that what I am about to say will be helpful or not, but your last post stirs my anti-church (not to be confused with the true Church) heart. In fact, this is going to be a rant so you can probably, disregard all of it....I'm venting.

I know showing love and compassion to and agreeing with the "pastor" is correct. His points are valid. The problem as addressed by others here is the way in which he has decided to handle it. It shows his wounds and a lack of maturity. The real problem I have is that he and others like him applying their IC views would find someone opposed to them and exhibiting the same qualities unfit for leadership. Which is bullshit. None of us are capable of leading a church or other people unless truly ordained by God. I personally think those men are few and far between...and extremely few of the men actually leading churches are selected by God to do so.

My problem with your "pastor" is not that he does not agree with W@H but that he poses as a leader. I have heard Eldredge address the question, "It sounds, in Wild at Heart, like you are anti-church or seriously dislike the church". His response and I paraphrase, "Don't hear that at all. What I write about the church and the comparison to the matrix, is with a heavy heart, not one of disdain or hatred for the church. Hear sorrow for what the church is not, but was intended to be." That was over 2 years ago, but I think I have the gist of what Eldredge said.

As far as getting a "weak" answer concerning evangelism...**they are not an evangelistic ministry.** At least not in the sense we tend to think of, reaching out to non-believers. And let me say the ministry that I have been called to, is not evangelical in the traditional since either. Why? Because my spiritual gift is **not** evangelism! Yes, we are all called to share our faith. It does not move me greatly to hear of thousands of people receiving Christ in China, Africa, Europe, the Middle East....not because my heart is hard, but simply because it is not a tender spot for me....God didn't wire me that way. So any answer from me concerning evangelism is going to be weak as well, 'cuz it ain't my thing.

Hearing the story of a man finding freedom or fighting for his wife and family, of suffering emotionally or spiritually, can and **does** move me to tears. Hearing stories of "pastors" like yours and Pastor Jeff's and the way in which they handle things, **does** stir my heart and make me want to stand up and fight. My problem is that I want to respond with arguments that would confirm to them that I **am** anti-church. This is not an original thought from me, someone else here said it on another thread, but I agree with it...I am not sure that the church is legitimate or has been since about the 3rd century.

All of that to say....**listen to God.** Not your "pastor", not the rest of the church, maybe not even your BoB and certainly not me. I pray for the best for you and your BoB through this.

Farrell

**Commander Lock: Not everyone believes what you do Morpheus.**  
**Morpheus: My beliefs do not require them to.**

Posted By : **Son of the Right Hand** - 5/22/2007 2:14 PM

*New Mighty Warrior said...*

*He ["pastor"] then began to tear down the WAH Message publicly with anyone who would listen.*

So, Father has called you to bring the RH message along with your Band of Brothers via principally the Texas Band of Brothers to men...essentially Isaiah 61:1-3...heal the heartbroken, freedom to all captives, to comfort all who mourn. And your "pastor" has done what you shared above, right? And you want "reconciliation?"

What part of the message are you going to give up to appease "pastor?"

Your scenario harkens me to Sailon's warnings. It also takes me back into Eldredge's book, *Wild At Heart*, p#151 (emphasis mine):

*The world of posers is shaken by a real man. They'll do whatever it takes to get you back in line -- threaten you, bribe you, seduce you, undermine you. They crucified Jesus. But it didn't work, did it? **You must let your strength show up.** Remember Christ in the Garden, the sheer force of his presence? Many of us have actually been afraid to let our strength show up because the world doesn't have a place for it. Fine. The world's screwed up. **Let people feel the weight of who you are and let them deal with it!***

So, I cannot agree with you in prayer for reconciliation.

**What I do pray for you is that you'd know clearly who Father calls you to be, that His strength in you would become strong and powerful for the pulling down of strongholds, that you'd be bold to allow the full weight of who Father has created and called you up to be would show up, and that you'll allow the world of posers to deal with it.**

**BE STRONG IN HIS MIGHT!**

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*It is never too late to be  
what you could have been.*  
George Elliott

May, 2007 Boot Camp

Posted By : **Warrior Poet** - 5/22/2007 2:28 PM

**Ben said...**

*The world of posers is shaken by a real man. They'll do whatever it takes to get you back in line -- threaten you, bribe you, seduce you, undermine you. They crucified Jesus. But it didn't work, did it? **You must let your strength show up.** Remember Christ in the Garden, the sheer force of his presence? Many of us have actually been afraid to let our strength show up because the world doesn't have a place for it. Fine. The world's screwed up. **Let people feel the weight of who you are and let them deal with it!***

Man I need that so much in this particular moment. Thanks for that.

---

~~~~~  
I want to be a man worth killing
~~~~~

~~~~~  
With your shield or on it
~~~~~

Posted By : **Repairer of Broken Walls** - 5/22/2007 2:32 PM

Never got kicked out of a church because of this reason, but I got fired while overseas for pretty much the same stuff ... in the end, the "reasons" weren't the reason, and can't be reasonably discussed. Love your pastor, and follow Jesus. He alone can set you free. Keep your heart humble before Him, and don't let Satan take YOU out through pride. Then he wins all around ...

When I got kicked out, I spent way too much time trying to make people see it my way ... in the end, we parted ways, and I learned to love my "adversaries" who were, unfortunately, being controlled by the enemy.

One brother in Europe heard that I had been fired, and emailed me to check on me. He said that lots of rumors were going around about what I'd "done" (bottom line: began to walk in freedom), and he just shut them down. He said, "I figured your faith had just gotten a little too 'real' for someone, and they couldn't deal with it".

In the end, I realized that my life was an invitation to freedom ... and some listened, some refused. It wasn't about me, it was about God and what he was doing at the time in this particular church and this particular denomination.

Stay humble. Stay in the Father's love. Stay covered with the blood. Give no ground to the enemy.

You'll do fine.

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**Scott**

**Isaiah 58:12 -- "You will be called, 'Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of streets with dwellings'"**Posted By : **Randy - Idaho** - 5/22/2007 2:33 PM**Timberwolf said...***I am not sure that the church is legitimate or has been since about the 3rd century.*

Who's the heretic that said that?

Ben,

You're awesome. Keep coming back.

---

 Obedience is the natural occurrence of a close relationship. Relationship through obedience?

When Christ ransomed you he not only bought you but he purchased your problems too. They no longer belong to you. - Greg Tucker

**The Matrix is a system, Neo. That system is our enemy. But when you're inside, you look around, what do you see? Businessmen, teachers, lawyers, carpenters. The very minds of the people we are trying to save. But until we do, these people are still a part of that system and that makes them our enemy. You have to understand, most of these people are not ready to be unplugged. And many of them are so injured, so hopelessly dependent on the system, that they will fight to protect it.**

"Beer is living proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy" - Ben Franklin

**It's all about relationship, not rules.**

On the other hand, if I am obviously unwilling to accept any truth that I have not first discovered and declared myself, I show by that very fact that I am interested not in the truth so much as in **"being right."** - Thomas Merton

**"Good people sleep peaceably in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf." - George Orwell**

*"All men dream; but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity. But the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dreams with open eyes to make it possible." -- T.E. Lawrence*

*Post Edited (Randy - Idaho) : 5/22/2007 8:36:26 PM GMT*

Posted By : **TimberWolf** - 5/22/2007 2:44 PM

Ben,

BAM! Outta' the park! Spot on!

Farrell

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**Commander Lock:** Not everyone believes what you do Morpheus.  
**Morpheus:** My beliefs do not require them to.

Posted By : **papaschmitt** - 5/22/2007 4:30 PM

As one who is slowly uncovering a huge dislike for the organized church.... slowly because I am scared to death to get my a\$\$ out of the pew and into others' lives.... let me just say, "RUN LIKE HELL!!!!!!" I cannot begin to express the anger I feel when I read your words! I HATE it when being a Christian is equated with being in some church on Sunday

morning. I really struggle with this because I really do not recall anything in the Bible that tells me that everybody met at 11:00 on Sunday morning, sang a few songs, prayed, another song, scripture reading, communion (only every 5th Sunday for some), passed the plate, etc... It jsut makes me so angry to see what man has turned "church" into!

So - I know you did not come looking for advice - but read your posts and realize the freedom that is being handed to you and take it!

Paul

---

A man is one who finds his strength and lives it,  
 Who loves his wife and shows it,  
 Who would die for his children and they believe it,  
 Who serves his God and no one doubts it.  
 - God's answer to my question, 2004

Teach a man a rule and you help him solve a problem;  
 teach a man to walk with God and you help him solve the rest of his life.  
 -Waking The Dead

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Posted By : **TimberWolf** - 5/22/2007 4:42 PM

Paul,

Glad to see you have decided (almost) to join the He-Man-Institutional-church-Haters Club!

Please, don't anyone misunderstand me. My heart pounds at the idea of belonging to **the** Church, but the IC has been corrupted, diluted.

I know arguments may follow that, if you are not part of the solution you are part of the problem. Sometimes, I don't know if this is one of them, when the foundation is weakened, the only solution is to raze the structure (I mean structure literally) and start fresh.

Farrell

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**Commander Lock:** Not everyone believes what you do Morpheus.  
**Morpheus:** My beliefs do not require them to.

---

Posted By : **Jer 1:9-10** - 5/22/2007 6:37 PM

Well the issue goes before the 3rd century to the 1st century. Read Revelation 2-3. There is a tremendous danger for the affluent church to become compromised. On the other side though, read *Tortured for Christ* by Wurmbrand. The Church is alive and well in the persecuted world. It is growing like crazy in Iran. Somewhere between 40-70% of prisoners in North Korea are Christians. I stand firmly on the belief that it is possible to not only be an individual but have a church in the US that mirrors Acts 2. I am the solo pastor of a denominational church and I refuse to believe that I am disqualified from the life of Acts 2 because I live here. It is harder to live for Christ here than in the persecuted world, according to Wurmbrand. He said he preferred Romanian prison with his fellowship to life in the West. This is my battle. I pray and pray. I tell God to rip away every compromise in my life and I tell my congregation that I pray daily for Him to destroy every area of idolatry in their life. I tell them that disasters in their life are because I pray that God would not let them compromise. I tell them that life in Christ is better than anything this world offers. When the Holy Spirt works this in our little West Virginia Presbyterian Church, something mighty will have happened. I just listened to a church history lecture on Patrick. One man took a country and then the Irish evangelized Europe. This is my fight.

---

Since the days of Pentecost, has the whole church ever put aside every other work and waited upon Him for 10 days, that the Spirit's power might be manifested? We give too much attention to method and machinery and resources, and too little to the source of power.  
 -Hudson Taylor

Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "Now, I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I

appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant."  
-Jeremiah

We're paratroopers Lieutenant. We're supposed to be surrounded.  
-Capt. Winters

Posted By : **gymbo** - 5/22/2007 8:08 PM

Clint.....welcome to the battle. I kind of encountered the same attack delivering the WaH message at our little west Tex church. My attack had come from an older church member who quotes a lot of scripture and shares very little of his heart. He kind of took me out for a couple of sessions by getting me off track and off the WaH message. Truth be told I allowed myself to be intimidated by the old fart and his legalistic attacks. With a lot of help from God (prayer) and advise from the brothers on this forum I took the guy on, and got back on course.

My pastor has been very supportive. He knows first hand what JE has done for me. I would count my pastor as the one brother I would want in my foxhole.

I believe we met at the Texas BoB last Sept or Oct at Sky Ranch.

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; Do everything in love.....God  
Spede.....gymbo

We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools.  
- Martin Luther King, Jr.

Posted By : **The Fox** - 5/22/2007 9:18 PM

Farrell,

I'm sending you a specially anointed, southern baptist enema . . .

Spirituality in a tube . . . 

Posted By : **farranger** - 5/22/2007 11:06 PM

Guys, Clint is a good man with a good heart; I've had the privilege of having he and one of his BOB in my home for a night. Thanks for the input and support. Clint, keep it up bro, do what is right. Kyle

"Warrior Shepherd"  
Have faith, Have Courage, Fight Well

Jesus is the Lion of Judah, and I am His Son.

Boot Camp: Jan 05, April 06, MOAB Gathering Mar 07.

***Be without fear in the face of your enemies. Be brave and upright that God may love thee. Speak the truth always, even if it leads to your death. Safeguard the helpless and do no wrong. That is your oath. Rise a Knight. - Kingdom of Heaven***

Posted By : **farranger** - 5/23/2007 12:38 AM

If men get their hearts back there will be more evangelism and people might want what they've got. I get so sick of "YOU sumbitches are not cookie cutter the way we want you to be, so you suck and you're probulllly goin to hel and if not, then you'll lead others there."

"Warrior Shepherd"  
Have faith, Have Courage, Fight Well

Jesus is the Lion of Judah, and I am His Son.

Boot Camp: Jan 05, April 06, MOAB Gathering Mar 07.

***Be without fear in the face of your enemies. Be brave and upright that God may love thee. Speak the truth always, even if it leads to your death. Safeguard the helpless and do no wrong. That is your oath. Rise a Knight. - Kingdom of Heaven***

Posted By : **New Mighty Warrior** - 5/23/2007 8:48 AM

Regarding Church and church:

I realize that church is a hard subject and that there is some things in this thread that are totally against it. Well I must say that I for one am for the church. When I say church I mean the local church if I say Church I mean the universal Church. Obviously the universal Church is alive and well we all have seen it with our own eyes and hear about it in far away places, this is good. The local church is in my opinion important. My Pastor says that it's the incarnation of Christ on earth, I believe he is mixed up with the universal Church. Never the less local church is an important part of the christian life. It has been for me anyway. I'm not willing to throw it all out because of some disagreements. If anything, I've been called to disagree to either shake something out of me that does not need to be there or help others within the church to see the truth about these things. Either way this is the Battle in it's truest form in the invisible realm. I'm walking into it with humility but willing to fight for what I believe in. I appreciate all that you men have said and I believe we are all on the same page but to be honest if someone who was not in this message read all of this they would be able to use several things as evidence of their point. I dont think we should worship the local church but I do believe that we as Men who have been awakened need to infiltrate it and bring the real life of Jesus back into it! Running away as fast as I can is revealing my cowardess. We all know where cowards go. No offense. We each have our own convictions and I love by Pastor and the elders, just because we are engaged in this does not mean that should I leave them to die nor should I leave the others who will stay behind in the church vulnerable to further attacks should I choose to go. This is one of the hardest things I've ever dealt with. I know it's an attack on the goodness of my heart and the goodness of my brothers and we are fighting, and fighting well.

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[New Mighty Warrior \(Clint Swiney\)](#)  
[Texas Band Of Brothers](#)  
<http://www.texasbandofbrothers.org>

**Neo, sooner or later you will realize, just as I did, that there is a difference between knowing the path and walking the path...  
 - Morpheus**

Posted By : **New Mighty Warrior** - 5/23/2007 10:24 AM

Just a reminder:

We are having a meeting with the Pastor, Elders and the BOB tomorrow (Thursday the 24th) at 5:00PM

We are going to be asked to make a decision, Choose between attending the local church in question or continuing to be a part of the BOB ministry that we have as is exists today. Some have already made that decision. I'm still holding out for healing and restoration.

Many of the issues that are discussed here in these forums are going to also be brought up. I thank each and everyone of you for contributing to this forum, not just this thread. This is an invaluable place for brothers to connect!

Also thank you for your advice and prayer in this thread. We/I need it!

You all have Good hearts! Walk with God! Live Mythically!

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[New Mighty Warrior \(Clint Swiney\)](#)  
[Texas Band Of Brothers](#)  
<http://www.texasbandofbrothers.org>

Neo, sooner or later you will realize, just as I did, that there is a difference between knowing the path and walking the path...  
- Morpheus

Posted By : **Randy - Idaho** - 5/23/2007 10:45 AM

***New Mighty Warrior said...***

*Well I must say that I for one am for the church.*

I love ya man, but I think you're propping up a corpse, and may need to read a lot more of the stuff that brought some of us to this conclusion. I'm glad the local church is working for you and yours, but there are a high percentage of people that it is not working for, and that is because of bad design, and a transition into the post modern age. Asking the local institutional church to do what God had intended within it's human design is like asking a four banger Toyota truck to pull a semi trailer. Did I mention, I love ya man?

Randy

Obedience is the natural occurrence of a close relationship. Relationship through obedience?

When Christ ransomed you he not only bought you but he purchased your problems too. They no longer belong to you. - Greg Tucker

**The Matrix is a system, Neo. That system is our enemy. But when you're inside, you look around, what do you see? Businessmen, teachers, lawyers, carpenters. The very minds of the people we are trying to save. But until we do, these people are still a part of that system and that makes them our enemy. You have to understand, most of these people are not ready to be unplugged. And many of them are so injured, so hopelessly dependent on the system, that they will fight to protect it.**

"Beer is living proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy" - Ben Franklin

**It's all about relationship, not rules.**

On the other hand, if I am obviously unwilling to accept any truth that I have not first discovered and declared myself, I show by that very fact that I am interested not in the truth so much as in **"being right."** - Thomas Merton

**"Good people sleep peaceably in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf." - George Orwell**

"All men dream; but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity. But the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dreams with open eyes to make it possible." -- T.E. Lawrence

Posted By : **COLUMBAN** - 5/23/2007 11:02 AM

My prayer is that you all leave. 🗡️

Manipulation has nothing to do with freedom.

What was it King Leonidas said in *300*:

**Spartan King Leonidas:** Submission? Well that's gonna be a bit of a problem. See, rumor has it that the Athenians have already refused you, and if those philosophers and boy-lovers have found that kind of nerve...

**Theron:** [*Interrupting*] We must be diplomatic.

**Spartan King Leonidas:** ...and of course Spartans have their reputations to consider.

**The God Journey podcast** >>>Click here<<<



Posted By : **Warrior Poet** - 5/23/2007 11:15 AM

I do pray for reconciliation; but that the reconciliation comes from the leadership's repentance and acceptance of you and your brothers unequivocally. There is no room for compromise and if it comes down to it you won't be leaving the church will be leaving you. My prayer is for you and you're brother's ability to stand firm in your faith without any compromise or compliance and that this line in the sand will be met with repentance on the part of your churches leadership. Will pray for you tomorrow.

Chuck

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**I want to be a man worth killing**  
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**With your shield or on it**  
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*The world of posers is shaken by a real man. They'll do whatever it takes to get you back in line -- threaten you, bribe you, seduce you, undermine you. They crucified Jesus. But it didn't work, did it? **You must let your strength show up.** Remember Christ in the Garden, the sheer force of his presence? Many of us have actually been afraid to let our strength show up because the world doesn't have a place for it. Fine. The world's screwed up. **Let people feel the weight of who you are and let them deal with it!***

Posted By : **papaschmitt** - 5/23/2007 11:29 AM

If it comes down to the local church or your BOB ministry, would you even consider staying at the local church? The place that STRIPPED you of your ministry? My prayer is that you see that your ministry IS a local church, for lack of a better definition.

Running is not cowardice, sometimes it is wisdom. We are commanded to flee from immorality. Is that cowardice? My point is that I see your local church as a hindrance to the true gospel and to me that is immoral. Hence: FLEE!

I do hope that reconciliation comes along, but if it doesn't I cannot imagine you sticking around.

Paul

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A man is one who finds his strength and lives it,  
 Who loves his wife and shows it,  
 Who would die for his children and they believe it,  
 Who serves his God and no one doubts it.  
 - God's answer to my question, 2004

Teach a man a rule and you help him solve a problem;  
 teach a man to walk with God and you help him solve the rest of his life.  
 -Waking The Dead

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Posted By : **JBG** - 5/23/2007 11:43 AM

Clint,

I like that you are trying. Trying to be a peacemaker, trying to restore and rebuild. But Jesus couldn't do it, no offense but I can't imagine you will be successful.

But, in my opinion and experience, it will never work. Its been said in here a 100 times before, the message of freedom doesn't work in the institutional church. It is too challenging to them, they can't own and control freedom. They have already shown their colors, which side they are on... I don't see that you even have a choice. I'd suggest that your BOB stand together, leave as a unit.

It will come down to freedom or bondage... and you get to choose.

Jerry

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"Stay in it... Just STAY in it.... You'll change the world"! ----- Morgan Snyder

"First they ignore you, then they mock you, then they fight you, THEN you win"  
 Curt Schilling

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Posted By : **Roman Hokie** - 5/23/2007 12:27 PM

Many of the guys alluded to this, but John states something along these lines in Epic: even the masters of the concentration camps could make their victims do anything... kill their mothers and bury them, eat human excrement... but they could not make their victims love them. God wants our love and does it without controlling us - He could if He wanted to. But, then is it love? Surely, no.

A controlling leader gives not freedom. You must be prepared to walk away from this and into more freedom than you can imagine.

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Did you know that the husband was commanded to love his wife? Not the other way around!

Go to: [My story](#) for the first chapter of my story.  
 Go to: [Boot Camp](#) for what happened to me there.

Bootcamp May 07 - Crooked Creek Ranch

*Post Edited (Roman Hokie) : 5/23/2007 6:38:16 PM GMT*

Posted By : **David AMAGOH** - 5/23/2007 12:32 PM

I agree with Chuck. After God began releasing me personally from spiritual bondages, I spent several years as an elder in a mega church, and led a team of intercessors who were praying and working toward "change" within the matrix there. I was told on a number of occasions, even once by a pastor of another mega church in town, that we were most likely wasting our time. Our intentions were good, but if the leadership of the church was not on board with us, we were, as Randy said, "propping up a dead corpse". They were all correct. Within a year I received permission from God to leave, and today that church is even more set in its ways than ever before.

Listen to the Spirit and do what He says. Don't do anything out of guilt or obligation, only what the Spirit has placed in your heart to do. And be careful. Watch your own heart with all diligence. And I really mean that. You are important to the Kingdom, and I sense the pain you are going through. I sense that you truly love these people and this church. But not all battles are yours to fight.

John

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### John - Birmingham, Alabama Frontier Ranch Oct '04 and '05

Saddle up your horses, we've got a trail to blaze  
To the wild blue yonder of God's amazing grace  
Let's follow our leader into the glorious unknown  
This is life like no other  
This is the GREAT ADVENTURE!!!

Posted By : **New Mighty Warrior** - 5/23/2007 2:03 PM

Ok I get you but hear me out. And I Love you too... Were we not all, at least most of us, called out of a local church? Did God just decide to abandon the local church in favor of WAH? I believe that God is at work here. It may be that we have to leave the church that I'm speaking of. I'm not excluding that as the answer that God has provided and it may be just the thing that God has been doing all along. If this happens I will go to another church and submit to the leadership there. I've already asked another church pastor if I could come there and still be in the BOB actively doing ministry and he has no problem with it. I agree the church has missed it but if we all abandon the church and do not bring this message to them who will? Does God want them to all suffer with their woundedness and legalism? I also have to say that there are a lot of bad churches out there and you may have only experienced them. Both churches I'm referring to are life giving. They are not perfect and I've had my personal conflicts with people in both places but I'm not ready to just leave forever. I'd be glad to be part of a house church (As I believe, if I'm not incorrect, JE is a part of one). Even then I'd expect to have issues and problems. Half of the new testament is written to churches to correct issues that people have with other people. Most of these churches were house churches or small growing fellowships.

I expect that the BOB will all choose to leave as a unit. That's my feeling on it right now. Unless total reconciliation comes about (The kind Warrior Poet - Chuck eluded to) I plan on packing it in myself. I am walking in the message of WAH the best I know how and I have been for 5 years now. I feel like I'm being asked to give it all up in favor of the local church. I am not willing to do that nor are my brothers (I dont think). Regardless, WAH changed my life, my BOB has changed my life, I would not be who I am today without it and I'll never be the same. I feel like I'm fighting a losing battle, but it's a battle worth fighting. I will stand form on what I believe God has done in me and my BOB. My only shread of hope is that God will change the hearts of the Pastor and Elders and allow them to see the unseen. That's a big hope but nevertheless I hope it.

**Randy - Idaho said...**

**New Mighty Warrior said...**  
*Well I must say that I for one am for the church.*

*I love ya man, but I think you're propping up a corpse, and may need to read a lot more of the stuff that brought some of us to this conclusion. I'm glad the local church is working for you and yours, but there are a high percentage of people that it is not working for, and that is because of bad design, and a transition into the post modern age. Asking the local institutional church to do what God had intended within it's human design is like asking a four banger Toyota truck to pull a semi trailer. Did I mention, I love ya man?*

Randy

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- Morpheus

Post Edited (New Mighty Warrior) : 5/23/2007 8:26:33 PM GMT

Posted By : **maximus** - 5/23/2007 2:11 PM

Have refrained from jumping into this one...I am learning to be more selective about my own battles...I have received some criticism for keeping the local church at arms length, and not working to "change from within." To often in my years of church involvement, that phrase means compromising our strength. The great thing about the walk with the King is that it removes the guilt we have so often felt by attempting to stand in our strength.

I will add this: the usual meaning of "reconciliation" involves you giving away your strength and wallowing in your false guilt in a public fashion. The first time we make a stand, and rightfully turn the attempt to kill our hearts back, it is really tough. There is opposition from former friends and brothers, there is years of guilt brought on by the habit of bowing to false kings. For me it was part of my initiation from the Father. Discomforting, but necessary.

Stand. Pray. Walk with the King.

Posted By : **Randy - Idaho** - 5/23/2007 3:20 PM

**NMW said...**  
*Did God just decide to abandon the local church in favor of WAH?*

It's not just WAH. It's Donald Miller, Brian McClaren, and many others leading a charge for change.

**NMW said...**  
*It may be that we have to leave the church that I'm speaking of.*

If you can't even think of leaving all organized church for home church or another unorganized gathering of Christians, I think the church has turned into an idol for you. Just my opinion. When I left all organized church it was like leaving a cult. How on earth could I not go to church (IC)!!!!

**NMW said...**  
*I agree the church has missed it but if we all abandon the church and do not bring this message to them who will? Does God want them to all suffer with their woundedness and legalism?*

Here's where calling comes in. I dare say that most in the War Room are still going to an IC with this very thing in

mind. If I get to move from my small town and can find a church that won't absolutely squash the message I have, I believe God will call me back to do just this, but I will stay above the situation or my heart will die.

I believe the best case scenario is the IC being dismantled and real communities of Christians rising from the ashes, but that's not likely. I believe the IC is part of God's plan in the end times.

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Obedience is the natural occurrence of a close relationship. Relationship through obedience?

When Christ ransomed you he not only bought you but he purchased your problems too. They no longer belong to you. - Greg Tucker

**The Matrix is a system, Neo. That system is our enemy. But when you're inside, you look around, what do you see? Businessmen, teachers, lawyers, carpenters. The very minds of the people we are trying to save. But until we do, these people are still a part of that system and that makes them our enemy. You have to understand, most of these people are not ready to be unplugged. And many of them are so injured, so hopelessly dependent on the system, that they will fight to protect it.**

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**It's all about relationship, not rules.**

On the other hand, if I am obviously unwilling to accept any truth that I have not first discovered and declared myself, I show by that very fact that I am interested not in the truth so much as in "**being right.**" - Thomas Merton

**"Good people sleep peaceably in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf." - George Orwell**

"All men dream; but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity. But the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dreams with open eyes to make it possible." -- T.E. Lawrence

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Posted By : **Randy - Idaho** - 5/23/2007 3:24 PM

Also, I have heard from many guys that trying to conduct a BoB out of a church is very difficult and most of them end up doing it on their own. I would love to hear from those guys about their experiences.

Randy

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Posted By : **Warrior Poet** - 5/23/2007 3:32 PM

And those of us who have left the church run the risk of our status as "unchurched" becoming our new idol... speaking for myself.

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**I want to be a man worth killing**  
 -----

**With your shield or on it**  
 -----

*The world of posers is shaken by a real man. They'll do whatever it takes to get you back in line -- threaten you, bribe you, seduce you, undermine you. They crucified Jesus. But it didn't work, did it? **You must let your strength show up.** Remember Christ in the Garden, the sheer force of his presence? Many of us have actually been afraid to let our strength show up because the world doesn't have a place for it. Fine. The world's screwed up. **Let people feel the weight of who you are and let them deal with it!***

Posted By : **Randy - Idaho** - 5/23/2007 3:43 PM

Chuck,  
Point taken. I am constantly fighting off idols!

Randy

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Post Edited (Randy - Idaho) : 5/23/2007 9:47:29 PM GMT

Posted By : **The Fox** - 5/23/2007 4:23 PM

***New Mighty Warrior said...***  
*I'm still holding out for healing and restoration.*

Clint,

FYI, I happen to sit on the same side of the desk as your pastor friend . . . one of the things to remember is that restoration, reconciliation, and healing are all RELATIONALLY tied . . . not institutional . . .

Your prayers for restoration and healing will be experienced in your relationship with this man . . . not with the church . . .

Pat

Posted By : **New Mighty Warrior** - 5/23/2007 4:24 PM

***Randy - Idaho said...***

*If you can't even think of leaving all organized church for home church or another unorganized gathering of Christians, I think the church has turned into an idol for you. Just my opinion.*

**Acts 4:32 All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had.**

When I think of Church, this is what I think of. I've never found it, Never seen it, everyone is greedy and rarely does anyone share what is theirs. Yet this is what I hope for and what I seek in church. If that is an idol so be it.

Part of my Testimony,

I did leave Church because it was not what I'd learned it was, I was a young christian and full of pride so I took off and fell into a deeply sinful life. God called me back to Church in 1999. The local church I attended was the life I needed at the time. Since then I've found the fellowship of my BOB. The church has a place, unfortunately it produces legalistic religious idealists that ruin it for all of us. I'm really working through all of this right now but I do know that the church is not an idol for me. Jesus is and always will be the flame in my heart and the object of my worship. Brother, Randy I'd appreciate it if the accusations that I'm getting did not come from here. I'm already dealing with a ton of them and one of them I've thrown back at my Pastor is that He is setting the church up as an idol so I guess I'm trying to say; Even though the interpretations of what has been said here may be eschewed I am really on the right track, Jesus has confirmed that to me many many times.

Proverbs 4:25-27

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- Morpheus

Posted By : **TimberWolf** - 5/23/2007 4:49 PM

Clint,

I hear your heart felt words and if God is telling that He wants you in that church or this church, **then** be there. Show up with your strength, not as a bully but as a defender and protector of what is right and true. Let the church feel the weight of who you are in Christ.

But be careful about labeling those who follow God away from the safety and protection of the IC cowards. My life would have been much less complicated and I would be much less attacked if I had stayed where I was. **That** my brother, **would** have been cowardice.

"Did God abandon the local church for WAH?" No, **she** forgot whose Bride she was long before WAH came along and left her Bridegroom.

If your mission/battle is to stay and fight for your church and God has told you that...then fight on and fight well (where have I heard that before?). If God called me to your side to fight with you, then I'll be there till He calls me away or I die, no matter what your fighting for.

The bottom line....listen to God, not your "pastor", not your BoB, not Eldredge and not any of us, **just God!**

Farrell

**Commander Lock:** Not everyone believes what you do Morpheus.

**Morpheus:** My beliefs do not require them to.

Posted By : **Roman Hokie** - 5/23/2007 5:02 PM

Excellent post, Farrell. I write that not because it came from Farrell (and he's a cool dude), but because I believe, ultimately, it came from the Spirit.

There are many Catholic believers who attend the Catholic church merely because they see a plentiful harvest. Had some friends of ours years ago who left our little life-filled church to return to their prior church (the one they attended before accepting Christ as their Saviour) to minister to folks there and to demonstrate LIFE to their peers.

I'm not sure I could have done that. Being in a place that doesn't handle my heart well.

Did you know that the husband was commanded to love his wife? Not the other way around!

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Go to: [Boot Camp](#) for what happened to me there.

Bootcamp May 07 - Crooked Creek Ranch

Posted By : **New Mighty Warrior** - 5/23/2007 5:03 PM

Thanks for all the kind words Farrell.

I must had a really good heart to heart with my wife. We decided that our choice is not between WAH and the church but rather a choice between wether to stay under the ledearship as it's been displayed to us. As of now the choice is clear. We are going to be praying and telling our Home Group about rhe situation tonight. I'll tell you this, As much as I've said about this it's very clear to me that any church that tries to kill a ministry that God is all over is not any place for me. Unless the leadership repents of this I'm out of there. I can only pray and listen to God as to where to go from there.

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Posted By : **TimberWolf** - 5/23/2007 6:01 PM

Clint,

I just wanted to make sure you understand that I am not attempting to drag others out of the church kicking and screaming....I let go when they start kicking and screaming. 😊

**I was a young christian and full of pride so I took off and fell into a deeply sinful life**

Give me some clarification please, Clint. It sounds like you associate your leaving the church with falling back into sin. While I agree there is a strong argument to made for Christians, especially young ones, to be in fellowship, I don't think the case can be made that being **in** church causes one to sin less. Nor can the converse be argued, being out of church causes one to sin more.

Farrell

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**Morpheus:** My beliefs do not require them to.

Posted By : **Randy - Idaho** - 5/23/2007 8:37 PM

***NMW said...***

*Acts 4:32 All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had.*

*When I think of Church, this is what I think of. I've never found it, Never seen it, everyone is greedy and*

*rarely does anyone share what is theirs. Yet this is what I hope for and what I seek in church. If that is an idol so be it.*

Clint,

That's it! We got down to the vision level. That is not an idol, that is a vision. Far out. I have had a very similar vision for years. I shared it with my former pastor years ago before he started the Calvary Chapel in my town, and I have reiterated it many times since. He still doesn't get the connection between that vision and me leaving that church for gathering with my cyber BoB.

Please don't be pissed. I know I push too hard sometimes, so I apologize if I ruffled feathers. You writing that vision makes it worth it to me. Thanks.

Randy

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[On the other hand, if I am obviously unwilling to accept any truth that I have not first discovered and declared myself, I show by that very fact that I am interested not in the truth so much as in "\*\*being right.\*\*"](#) - Thomas Merton

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Posted By : **New Mighty Warrior** - 5/23/2007 9:05 PM

**TimberWolf said...**

*Clint,*

*I just wanted to make sure you understand that I am not attempting to drag others out of the church kicking and screaminng....I let go when they start kicking and screaming. 😊*

***Give me some clarification please, Clint.** It sounds like you associate your leaving the church with falling back into sin. While I agree there is a strong argument to made for Christians, especially young ones, to be in fellowship, I don't think the case can be made that being **in** church causes one to sin less. Nor can the converse be argued, being out of church causes one to sin more.*

*Farrell*

Ok to Clairfy... Falling into sin can be caused by any number of things. Leaving the church could be considered sin if the right circumstances existed. I fell into sin due to some very bad choices. I quit going to church because of the things I saw there that did not line up with what I'd been taught the church was supposed to be. (I had just graduated a program called Teen Challenge where I spent a year studing the Bible for 40 hours a week) I give a brief overview of my

story in my profile. Sin is sin, no matter where it's committed.

James 1:13-15 NIV

13When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. 15Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

So there you go Evil desires within us are the cause of sin. My belief currently is that if I left my church abruptly I would be doing it partly because of a need for revenge. I have identified that desire and decided against a knee jerk reaction (which is what caused all of this in the first place when the Sermon that was preached) I believe we need fellowship and where two or more are gathered together there He is with them. I dont have all the answers about the church and the Church. I'm doing my best to understand it. Someday I'll know fully.

Clint

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---

Posted By : **papaschmitty** - 5/23/2007 11:06 PM

Clint

This is all very cool. As scary as the place you are in may seem, it smells like LIFE to me. You are ALIVE and your senses are tuned into what is going on around you. That is worth more than any book, or seminar, or weekend can ever bring

I am praying for you, brother. And my prayer is that you will find the path of Life in all of this.

(BTW - This thread has said a lot to me. Thanks guys for your words.)

Paul

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A man is one who finds his strength and lives it,  
Who loves his wife and shows it,  
Who would die for his children and they believe it,  
Who serves his God and no one doubts it.  
- God's answer to my question, 2004

Teach a man a rule and you help him solve a problem;  
teach a man to walk with God and you help him solve the rest of his life.  
-Waking The Dead

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Posted By : **Fletch** - 5/23/2007 11:27 PM

This thread leads me to add two thoughts/questions.

Why do we have such high expectations of the institutional church? Perhaps our expectations are unrealistic and not possible to meet. I used to put churches and pastors on an unrealistic pedestal. For some reason they fell off and fell hard.

Maybe a way (if you are lead to stay) to make a difference is just to make friends with one other man. Then as that relationship grows and he learns of how WAH and others have healed your broken heart and set you free you make friends with another man. It wouldn't take long for this group of friends to become close and actually be a Band of

Brothers. No formal organization. No permission needed. No threat to "leaders." Just close friends doing life together. That would have to be noticed and admired by other men who may just ask to find out what you have that they don't. After all a BOB is just a group of close friends doing life together. The one you form may or may not be the last one you are in. It may break off as life changes happen to each and more real Bands of Brothers are formed.

Having unrealistic expectations of others especially "leaders" is one way satan has taken me out many times. This lead to God telling me that just because someone has been church leadership many years doesn't even mean he is a Christian. And if he is I shouldn't expect that God has helped them learn what He has helped me learn. That is big for me since I tend to assume that once I learn something that of course God taught you before me. God showed me this is one of those Doh! moments for me. He teaches us all different things at different times in our lives. We are all individuals and He treats us as such.

Fletch

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Boot Camps: October 2003 Frontier Ranch  
April 2004 Frontier Ranch  
September 2004 Crooked Creek

Advanced: December 2004, Frontier Ranch  
October 2005, Frontier Ranch

Moab: March 07

The second Advanced was the first place I felt I fit in and with "safe" friends i.e. allies in a long time.

*Post Edited (Fletch) : 5/24/2007 5:35:06 AM GMT*

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Posted By : **Fletch** - 5/24/2007 12:29 AM

The book "Blue Like Jazz" has a great no GREAT chapter titled Going to Church Without Getting Angry. Great stuff.

Fletch

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Posted By : **wtd2bwah** - 5/24/2007 7:17 AM

I've done more observing in this thread than participating, but one thing that in the general discussion (not the specific case in TX that started the general part of the discussion -- necessarily) is missing.

We talk of churches that support BoB and the freedom message, and having to leave or being missionaries into it, etc. There is a third option, and maybe a spectrum of options. What of church planting, planting churches with the core of this message baked in?

I haven't shared it much, but I have given thoughts to this in the back of my mind for several years. I spoke in another thread (or maybe it was way earlier in this one) about a "manifesto" I mean to write, that is really a discussion starting point on this topic. Really not so much CP, but rather -- what would a church that didn't bind itself to the Constantine traditions (traditions introduced into the church by its acceptance by Constantine) though they might still use them if proved worthwhile in today's culture, that balanced itself on the gospel impact of forgiveness, community, healing and equipping the saints, where whatever leadership structure was more about serving the purposes of community and equipping the saints that authority, what would such a church look like? What would its assemblies look like? its structures, its leadership, its way of discipling, etc. In all actuality, each case would be as individual as the mix of personalities in it rather than carbon copies of each other ("cookie cutter" built churches would undermine the "equipping" IMO).

I've got to sit and write it. I've got the pieces in my head, but I've got to tie them.

**Be Bold,**

Mark

Boot Camps: May '04, January '05, October '06

Advanced: October '05

Calling Intensive: December '06

"Certainty of death? Little chance of success? What are we waiting for?! - Gimli, LOTR, The Return of The King

"Be without fear in the face of your enemies. Speak the truth, always, even if it leads to your death. Safeguard the helpless and do no wrong. That is your oath..."

There is still more. Character transformation is more than the elimination of sin. Character transformation is more than beginning to express the fruit of the Spirit. God is about reclaiming the divine potential he has planted within each individual. In its essence, the word character means a unique shape or mark ... Each person has been uniquely marked or shaped by God. Our theology of character transformation needs to extend beyond the reestablishment of virtues to the reclamation of the potential of every person.

Erwin McManus in **An Unstoppable Force**

Posted By : **Roman Hokie** - 5/24/2007 8:05 AM

Excellent post, Mark. Sounds like God's training you or beginning to call you out. Most excellent!

God put in me at Boot Camp this concept of planting a church based on the message of the new and transformed heart. I'm on my 2nd listen to "The Good Heart" from RH Conversations. Right now, though, I'm in training as an elder & board member (all the business crap that goes on, despite the fact that our church leadership (the rest of them) doesn't see itself as a business...). Stuff I can certainly tuck away in my mind and heart for later.

(sidebar: did I miss what the decision was on Colorado???)

I'm feeling a strong desire to (whether working with the teams on "Farrell's Ranch" or something else) be in a community of freedom-loving like-hearted folks. Sure, this may well start with a home church (I've got about 1.5 years commitment made to be an elder here) setting. This may well not happen for several years. But I'm finding the same thing in the protestant church (not all of them that we've belonged to!) I attend now as in the Catholic church I attended growing up. I'm feeling stifled. Snuffed out. Fall in line... I need to get a personal update out here... on a different thread.

Did you know that the husband was commanded to love his wife? Not the other way around!

Go to: [My story](#) for the first chapter of my story.

Go to: [Boot Camp](#) for what happened to me there.

Bootcamp May 07 - Crooked Creek Ranch

Posted By : **maximus** - 5/24/2007 9:25 AM

I am part of a BOB working in an IC setting. We are blessed to have full pastoral support, so that has been good. It has been tough sledding when it comes to operating within the administrative matrix of the church. We have had a number of difficult discussions on how to operate under the leadership of the appropriate committee, and we as a BOB are not in full agreement. My opinion is not shared, but I would cast my vote to move outside the church matrix. It is important to reiterate that our pastors have given full support. I still find myself incredibly impatient working through the issues surrounding how we should fit in with other aspects of men's ministry here. It is an uphill fight that too often degenerates into "finding a place for WAH" within the array of ministries.

I wandered the vast wasteland of men's and athletes outreaches for years, ranging from the legalists at my home fundamentalist Baptist church to the reformed PCA to the all over the map FCA guys. Skipped Promise Keepers, I was too much of a cynic by then. The only true authenticity I have found has been here, and among my mentors prior to WAH.

In the pulpit, we hear much of the WAH message. I am fully engaged in worship and study each Sunday I attend. My

prayer is that you would all be so blessed. Working in the silly committee driven world of ministry drives me nuts, and is a constant reminder that we have ceded too much leadership to Posers In Suits With Impressive Suffixes.

Posted By : **TimberWolf** - 5/24/2007 10:02 AM

***Fletch said...***

*Having unrealistic expectations of others especially "leaders" is one way satan has taken me out many times. This lead to God telling me that just because someone has been church leadership many years doesn't even mean he is a Christian. And if he is I shouldn't expect that God has helped them learn what He has helped me learn. That is big for me since I tend to assume that once I learn something that of course God taught you before me. God showed me this is one of those Doh! moments for me. He teaches us all different things at different times in our lives. We are all individuals and He treats us as such.*

Fletch,

Thanks, I needed to hear that.

Farrell

**Commander Lock:** Not everyone believes what you do Morpheus.  
**Morpheus:** My beliefs do not require them to.

Posted By : **papaschmitty** - 5/24/2007 10:44 AM

Amen Fletch - I agree with Farrell. Great post!

A man is one who finds his strength and lives it,  
 Who loves his wife and shows it,  
 Who would die for his children and they believe it,  
 Who serves his God and no one doubts it.  
 - God's answer to my question, 2004

Teach a man a rule and you help him solve a problem;  
 teach a man to walk with God and you help him solve the rest of his life.  
 -Waking The Dead

Posted By : **Son of the Right Hand** - 5/24/2007 8:59 PM

How are you doing New Mighty Warrior?



*It is never too late to be  
 what you could have been.*  
 George Elliott

May, 2007 Boot Camp

Posted By : **Tom Cowgill** - 5/24/2007 9:38 PM

Brother New Mighty Warrior,

This is my first post here in the War Room. I just enjoyed the adventure of the WAH Boot Camp in Crooked Creek and I am still very much alive and in the battle for my own heart and those of my loved ones! The Lord's hand is upon me and my life and I am doing all that I can to follow Him.

When I read your post here the other day I found it so full and complex that I took some time to think about what I read. My perception is that your pastor is coming from a place of fear and from that place he wants control. I don't know all the details of your history together, or anything about his wounds and history, so I can't speak from deep knowledge. I hear fear and control. I am not suprized at this as I believe that the Wild At Heart message stands and challenges some of what I have come to know as contemporary mainstream Christian thinking and living. I think that is a large part of what the WAH message is about--that we have been missing the boat about what the Gospel says to us and we get caught up in our own arguments about theological accuracy, doctrine, etc. And in this missing the boat we often lose the freedom and healing God offers. And we often miss who and how God intended us to be. My sense is that the WAH message can be threatening to those who want to maintain the status quo and those who simply don't want to take the time and make the investment to look at their own wounds and need for healing from God. I even find myself thinking that God, Himself, might rather enjoy the fact that John E. has stirred things up a bit at a time in the Church when things often seem stale and predictable. After all, Christ was quite radical in His day! He is still radical today! The message of the Gospel is not a tame and ordinary one. So why should God's message be homogenized and pasturized into mediocrity?!

I honor you and your brothers for standing together and working to bring this message to others. I pray for you that God will continue to work His will and plans for you and your team. I also pray that God will work His Grace into and through the relationships there at your church. May you all experience the healing and restoration we all need so desperately!

Blessings of God's Peace and Abundance!

Tom Cowgill

Posted By : **OdieWon** - Today 10:56 AM

**Warrior Poet said...**

**Ben said...**

*The world of posers is shaken by a real man. They'll do whatever it takes to get you back in line -- threaten you, bribe you, seduce you, undermine you. They crucified Jesus. But it didn't work, did it? **You must let your strength show up.** Remember Christ in the Garden, the sheer force of his presence? Many of us have actually been afraid to let our strength show up because the world doesn't have a place for it. Fine. The world's screwed up. **Let people feel the weight of who you are and let them deal with it!***

*Man I need that so much in this perticular moment. Thanks for that.*

Me TOO. Can't even begin to tell you what reminding me of these words does for my heart right now.

New Warrior, my suggestion is this:

1. - You ARE NOT UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF A LOCAL CHURCH, YOU ARE A KNIGHT OF THE CROWN. YOU SERVE THE KING, AND THE KING ONLY. SERVING OTHERS IS FINE, AS IT SERVES THE KING. Forgive the shouting, but this is a hot button for me. I do also serve others, and our church. But only as it in my calling to do. I do not claim to be under the authority of very many people in this life. My KING, my wife to whom I lovingly submit to as God's very word instructs (at least I try, not always successful), my brother in law, whom although is younger than I, I respect greatly, and admire professionally, and have committed to work for until the King says otherwise. At times I submit to the requests of my church, and others in my life, BUT ONLY as it pertains to helping me do and pursue TRUTH. PERIOD.

2. - Since WAH I have learned that my place is not in the palace, but in the battle (at least for now). On that subject I would urge you to maintain your BOB (knowing that some will come and go, and some will be replaced with new, and some can never be replaced. God's plan often times includes seasons, that change, bringing new life and new adventures along the way) - outside of a church authority. It is exactly, the desire for "mainstreamness" and fear of being too extreme in any one direction, that has created the politically correct, castrated, "singalong in the

sky" paralyzing BS that we're fighting in the churches right now. To be honest, I come, and I go as I please, as I feel directed, and will not be subjugated, nor roped into a bunch of busy work that has no *LIFE* in it simply because that's what a lot of the sheep want.

3. - Further on #2 - There are a lot of different ways to do church. It has been difficult for me, to accept that most of the churches that are still "alive" are still feeding milk all day every day. The only place in the church for people who desire MEAT, is with the legalistic intellectual types. It's a catch 22. The people in Sunday morning service are for the most part (statistically speaking) only partially, or nearly ready to digest these concepts of FREEDOM AND LIFE, of the heart. The intellectuals are so bound up in their own legalistic interpretation, that they don't believe you. They believe that the only way to relate with God, is by hours upon hours of bible study. Anyone, who has had God SHOW UP like he did for me at Boot Camp knows this is complete HOGWASH.

4. - Purpose, then, if not to create a church? It is still about the relationship. The people who think that WAH isn't strong on evangelism have a misunderstanding. See for years and years, the church has been shoveling evangelism down our throats. While feeding us milk. They think that by having classes on witnessing, that we're somehow going to become Billy Graham. Or by spiritual gift classes. **Here's the catch; when Jesus began to actually get a hold on my HEART, THAT'S when I began to really share Him with other people. It was a couple years before I'd even heard of JE and WAH. After BC, I had connected with God like never before, it was a direct CONDUIT type communication. And things will never be the same. My witness is stronger than ever. Sure I witnessed to others before. But WAH, was just what the title of the event said it was. BOOT CAMP. Whether or not we were evangelizing before, we are MUCH better prepared for it after boot camp. We are on the road to having a healed, whole heart. And being in the battle, we are becoming more and more courageous. When the King calls me, I intend to be ready. Regardless of what the rest of the church is doing.**

**Strength and Honor my brother.**

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Otis R. Bogue II  
OdieWon, Jedi Master  
The GateKeeper

"Never holster an unloaded weapon, it's just poor form" Col. Jeff Cooper

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Posted By : **New Mighty Warrior** - Today 12:25 PM

Update:

I read through the thread once again and mostly read the new posts. I hear where you all are coming from and I understand the different perspectives you all have. Here's mine...

The church I attend, while it may not seem so due to the recent events, really is trying their best to be an ACTS 2 type of church. Our pastor is a very passionate person and unlike many pastors does not maintain a "Professional Distance" with the lay people. He is and always will be in my BOB. He is an irreplaceable part of it! Needless to say he is a good friend despite all of this. My heart is in turmoil right now over all of this. I understand the battle and all of the WAH views on how to fight well. I see a danger in doing whatever I want, whenever I want and being subject to nobody but Jesus. This all sounds well and good but I learned long ago:

## Romans 13

### Submission to the Authorities

1Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.  
2Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. 3For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. 4For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an

agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. 5Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. 6This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. 7Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

Paul is not talking about God's authority here he's talking about Man! These are strong and clear words. Because I believe the Bible over all other messages I cannot just throw this out, and yes I've analyzed it over and over for 15 years of my Christian life it means literally what it says!

That being said; I had the meeting on the 24th with the elders and left very, very confused. God is not the author of confusion. They apologized and fully admitted to handling this whole thing wrong, they asked for forgiveness and said that it will not happen again. I feel called to forgive as the Lord commanded: Colossians 3:13, Matthew 18:21-22. I do not want to open myself to being hurt over and over in the midst of forgiveness, although that is exactly what Jesus did for us and how he has forgiven us.

This where it gets confusing: I asked if I could be a part of the Ministry of our BOB as it exists today and still be a part of the church. They said that we could but they could not give their blessing, and they would not prohibit it. I do not feel in my conscience, at this time, I could do something that my pastor will not give his blessing on.

Ben quoted JE and said "The world of posers is shaken by a real man." and indeed it is. What pastor would go to the lengths to admit his mistakes openly without fear of his reputation being tarnished. He has been questioned and under the microscope of the whole church since all this happened. Mind you I'm not defending him just presenting facts.

We as the BOB have stuck with this together minus the leader of the group who is the catalyst. This creates a huge monkey wrench, Why would the leader of the BOB not be there when the chips are down. Did we not learn that "We will all have a better chance of survival if we work together"? Yet those who stuck around are the ones I see as not posing, sticking with a difficult situation and not running away from the battle no matter how hard it gets.

All of this has left me in turmoil like I said, I'm confused and frustrated. The theological accusations that have been made are true but are hard, deep matters that most believers would have very different beliefs regarding. I do not want to get into them here because it would be better to start a whole new thread for it.

I sit here writing this and thinking of what to say and am at a loss. I am faced with a difficult decision, an impossible situation and the weight of who I am is hard to muster right now, I'm weary. I am waiting to see what the others in the BOB do and will most likely have to discover their reasons for it before I can make my decision. I know the importance of being a leader and all that goes with it. Honestly, I don't want to take the lead on this one. Both sides seem to be right, Both sides also have things wrong. We are caught in the middle and it sucks!!!

Listen I know some of you will read this and analyze it and try to give a great solution. Guys, we really need your prayers right now. We are all on shaky ground, loose the church or loose the ministry? I know most of you would easily say loose the church but there is a lot at stake here, friends, wives relationships, kids friends, following God's Perfect will etc...

I'm letting the weight of who I am hang out there and they are dealing with it, so are all of them and we are crushing under the weight of who all of us are. Jesus please save us from this!

On the other hand walking through the fire has been great for my family and my relationship with my wife. We pray and talk together way more now. It's opened many questions up that

have me searching the scriptures like I have not done in many years. It's gotten me to come here and post this series of messages that has sparked many feelings and inspired many to rally around it. I hope we can all learn from this. I do not believe leaving the church to rot is a good idea, nor do I believe propping up a dead corpse is either. Jesus told us to go out there and raise the dead. How about that? I don't want to lose the ministry that we have formed and I believe God is in. God is at work here, I'm waiting on Him to show the greater good and listening intently for His voice. John 10:1-18

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[New Mighty Warrior \(Clint Swiney\)](#)  
[Texas Band Of Brothers](#)  
<http://www.texasbandofbrothers.org>

Boot Camp - April 2006  
Horizon Quest - January 2007  
Man Alive! Retreats - Facilitator, Four Streams Organizer, Speaker

[Proverbs 24:23-27 \(Message\)](#)

Keep vigilant watch over your heart; that's where life starts.  
Don't talk out of both sides of your mouth; avoid careless banter, white lies, and gossip.  
Keep your eyes straight ahead; ignore all sideshow distractions.  
Watch your step, and the road will stretch out smooth before you.  
Look neither right nor left; leave evil in the dust.

Neo, sooner or later you will realize, just as I did, that there is a difference between knowing the path and walking the path...  
- Morpheus

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Posted By : **OdieWon** - Today 5:34 PM

"This where it gets confusing: I asked if I could be a part of the Ministry of our BOB as it exists today and still be a part of the church. They said that we could but they could not give their blessing, and they would not prohibit it. I do not feel in my conscience, at this time, I could do something that my pastor will not give his blessing on."

My friend, even the very best men, on occasion choose not to give their blessing to God's *will*. It is good to seek unity, and relationship within the church. It is HIS bride. And it IS our duty to make the bride, fit for the Bridegroom.

But whether or not your group of men, move onward as a group, is not for your church to decide.

You are in stormy seas my friend, I hope your journey takes a turn for the better. You are right in your resolve though, listen for the Father's voice.

My only stipulation is, be sure it's His voice, because it sounds to me like the servants of the enemy are embedded in this situation.

---

Otis R. Bogue II

OdieWon, Jedi Master  
The GateKeeper

"Never holster an unloaded weapon, it's just poor form" Col. Jeff Cooper

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