WILD at HEART
Discovering the Secret of a Man’s Soul
A Band of Brothers Small Group Video Series
Participant’s Guide
WILD at HEART
A Band of Brothers

PARTICIPANT’S GUIDE

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Since 1798

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INTRODUCTION

I came so they can have real and eternal life,
more and better life than they ever dreamed of.
—John 10:10 MSG

My gender seems to need little encouragement. It comes naturally, like our innate love of maps. In 1260 Marco Polo headed off to find China, and in 1967, when I was seven, I tried to dig a hole straight through from our backyard with my friend Danny Wilson. We gave up at about eight feet, but it made a great fort. Hannibal crossed his famous Alps, and there comes a day in a boy's life when he first crosses the street and enters the company of the great explorers. Scott and Amundsen raced for the South Pole, Peary and Cook vied for the North, and when last summer I gave my boys some loose change and permission to ride their bikes down to the store to buy a soda, you'd have thought I'd given them a charter to go find the equator. Magellan sailed due west, around the tip of South America—despite warnings that he and his crew would drop off the end of the earth—and Huck Finn headed off down the Mississippi, ignoring similar threats. John Wesley Powell followed the Colorado into the Grand Canyon, even though—no, because—no one had done it before and everyone was saying it couldn't be done . . .

Whatever else those explorers were after, they were also searching for themselves. Deep in a man's heart are some fundamental questions that simply cannot be answered at the kitchen table. Who am I? What am I made of? What am I destined for? It is fear that keeps a man at home where things are neat and orderly and under his control. But the answers to
his deepest questions are not to be found on television or in
the refrigerator. Out there on the burning desert sands, lost
in a trackless waste, Moses received his life’s mission and pur-
pose. He was called out, called up into something much big-
ger than he ever imagined, much more serious than CEO or
“prince of Egypt.” Under foreign stars, in the dead of night,
Jacob received a new name, his real name. No longer was he a
shrewd business negotiator, but now he was one who wrestles
with God. The wilderness trial of Christ was, at its core, a test
of his identity. “If you are who you think you are . . .” If a man
is ever to find out who he is and what he’s here for, he has got
to take that journey for himself.
He has got to get his heart back.1

A life few men know and every man yearns for is available! It’s a
life in which your masculine heart is central, a life so rich and free,
so dangerous and yet so exhilarating in its impact, that if you knew
now what you could have, you would sell everything to find it. But
you know all of this from the echoes in your heart, the hints in your
deepest desires, the Voice that has been calling you for a long time,
and that’s why you’re holding this Participant’s Guide and viewing this
DVD series.

HOW THIS STUDY WORKS

Through this eight-session DVD series, Wild at Heart, you’ll en-
counter God in a life-changing way. The design of the Participant’s
Guide is to facilitate conversation between a small group of men and
to provide some direction and questions for going deeper on each
topic as an individual between your meeting times.
Before you start, consider the following:
• Start by surrendering yourself to God and his purposes for you
in this journey. Yield your mind, volition, heart, spirit, soul, and
Introducing

masculinity to God, and simply invite him to do whatever he'd like.

• Commit yourself to the pace God would have you go through the material. Determine to be responsive to his prodding—maybe take a little more time on a particular section or question, or take a walk or break and allow him to speak to you in a more natural context. A simple way of putting all this is, walk with God.

• It would be cruel to your heart to skip the times of reading, reflection, and prayer that will make the dreams that motivated you to participate in this study a reality. Don't fall into a "just get through the material" stride that ends up limiting God and profiting your heart little.

• This series is presented in eight DVD sessions, each about 35 minutes in length. Each session corresponds with topics and material found in the book *Wild at Heart*. The series is designed to be used one session at a time, with small groups of men meeting together for an hour and a half each week to view the DVD and discuss the topic. (By the end of the eight weeks most groups will want to continue with other resources we have available.)

• Each week you should gather at a set time to watch the DVD session together (35 minutes). Read through the “Key Thoughts” (5 minutes) and discuss the group questions, which focus on the DVD material (50 minutes). End your time with prayer. (The “Going Deeper” section is designed for personal reflection.)

• Each member of the group should commit to coming to the weekly gatherings prepared for discussion—have an open spirit, a vulnerable heart, and a thoughtful mind. To foster a spirit of intimacy in your group, limit your group size to no more than eight people.

So, welcome to the journey. It's going to require honesty and a willingness to look at your life from a new perspective. But as you invite God in, you'll find the adventure exciting, the battle challenging, and the beauty of Christ breathtaking. Each week, before you
start your study, spend some time in prayer with him, listening to his voice guide you along the way.

**PRAYER**

Christ, I come thirsty and hungry for more of you. I yield myself completely and totally to you. I give you my expectations for this study. I surrender my heart, mind, spirit, and soul to you, inviting you to touch, deliver, speak, heal, counsel, teach, and train me in whatever areas and ways you choose.

Protect me from the ploys of the evil one. I stand in your authority against all distraction, impatience, diminishment, self-contempt, against every lie, deception, and temptation to turn to any other god for comfort. Fill me with your life that I might more fully live in your Larger Story and with you rescue the hearts and souls of many. Amen.
PART 1

THE HEART OF A MAN

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them.

—Genesis 1:26–27

Most of us know the oil level of our cars or the state of our investments better than we do the vitality or desires of our heart. And it’s completely understandable; there are many things set against you, many distractions and demands upon your life. But these distractions come at a cost: as we tend to our daily demands, we ignore our masculine heart.

In the first session of our series, Bart, Morgan, Craig, and Gary joined me for a day of horseback riding up in the Colorado Rockies and talking about the heart of a man.
KEY THOUGHTS

This session corresponds with chapters 1 and 2 from *Wild at Heart*. The major points of these chapters are summarized here.

- God made the masculine heart and sets it within every man he creates.
- There is, therefore, something deep and true and universal to the masculine heart. And it’s been lost—or better, driven into hiding.
- You cannot get your masculine heart back through duty and obligation. You must pursue it with your deepest desires. What makes you come alive?
- Somewhere down in your heart are three core desires: a battle to fight, an adventure to live, and a beauty to rescue.
- God, too, has each of these longings lodged deep in his heart: the yearning for a battle to fight is deep in the heart of God. He, too, longs for adventure and risk—far more than we do. And he has a beauty to rescue, whom he pursues with amazing passion.

DISCUSS

After watching the DVD segment, it should be clear that the men in this group have varying levels of comfort when it comes to riding horses. Some of us had a lot of experience on horseback. A few of us were very anxious about the day.
With whom did you identify most when it comes to riding horses? Why?

As you listened in on the conversation these men were having about the true nature of the masculine heart, what struck you as the most important, the most relevant point they made?

God made the masculine heart, set it within every man, and thereby offers him an invitation: Come, and live out what I meant you to be.¹
The major theme of this book is the core desires of a man’s soul—a battle to fight, an adventure to live, a beauty to rescue. Can you identify these in your life? Where or how?

Craig talked about his boyhood neighborhood and how he and his friends loved to play army. His little platoon defended the neighborhood with popguns and tangerine grenades.

What adventures or games did you play and love when you were a boy?

In the same way God called Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted and took Elijah into the wilderness to find his true destiny, he calls a man out of his comfort zone to discover who he is. It is in the wilderness that God shows us we have what it takes to live the very life for which God created us. Unless we step out into that adventure God has for us, we will never learn it anywhere else. It cannot be learned on the sofa.
What comfort zone is God calling you out of?

What adventure is he leading you into?

Is it a tame, controllable adventure or a wild and unpredictable one?
Walter Bruggerman describes God as “wild, unfettered, dangerous, and free.” Is that how you would describe the God you’ve been told about?

You remember that wild man Samson? He’s got a pretty impressive masculine résumé: killed a lion with his bare hands, pummeled and stripped thirty Philistines when they used his wife against him, and finally, after they burned her to death, he killed a thousand men with the jawbone of a donkey. Not a guy to mess with. But did you notice? All those events happened when “the Spirit of the LORD came upon him” (Judges 15:14, emphasis added). Now, let me make one thing clear: I am not advocating a sort of “macho man” image. I’m not suggesting we all head off to the gym and then to the beach to kick sand in the faces of wimpy Pharisees. I am attempting to rescue us from a very, very mistaken image we have of God—especially of Jesus—and therefore of men as his image-bearers. Dorothy Sayers wrote that the church has “very efficiently pared the claws of the Lion of Judah,” making him “a fitting household pet for pale curates and pious old ladies.” Is that the God you find in the Bible?²
“Desire” is central in mapping out your masculine journey. Don’t ask what the world needs; ask what makes you come alive: that’s what the world needs!

分红 Consider what makes you come alive. With that in mind, finish this sentence: “For the rest of my life, I want to ____________.”

分红 What, beginning this week, would that look like?

**PRAYER**

Turn to the Lord in prayer, giving him the desires that have lain in your heart for years or asking him to reveal the desires that you can’t seem to put your finger on. Trust him to show you the way to start your journey.

分红 O Lord, open wide the eyes of my soul that I might see the true yearnings of my heart. Uncover my desire for adventure, battle, and beauty. Begin to dismantle all the messages that have challenged and assaulted your design of me. May your invitation to life as a man be forever before me. I accept the invitation to live from my deep heart. Father, use the words of this book and the meditations of my heart to guide, shape, and direct me in this journey that I might be the man you designed me to be. I ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.
Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek the LORD:
Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn.

—Isaiah 51:1

GOING DEEPER

If you truly want to embrace the untamed journey Christ has planned for you, you won't be satisfied thinking about this just once a week. This section is designed for you to study the topic further on your own after your group meets. So make some time throughout the week (on your lunch break, instead of watching TV at night, or in the early morning) to read through these questions and consider what God is saying to you here.

It can be very awkward for men to share their hearts. It's slow going and uncomfortable—territory we're not used to traversing. But the alternatives are to hide in isolation or live as an impostor, and who wants that?

How did the group conversation and interaction go when you met? Did you find yourself reluctant to share your thoughts? Did you temper them, or do you regret saying too much?
PART 1

What did God say to you as you were meeting with the men? Did he impress anything on you during that time?

What do you hope to achieve in this group? Do you have a goal in mind? Are you willing to let God change that goal, if that is his will?

The masculine heart needs a place where nothing is prefabricated, modular, nonfat, zip-locked, franchised, on-line, and microwavable. Where there are no deadlines, cell phones, or committee meetings. Where there is room for the soul. Where, finally, the geography around us corresponds to the geography of our heart.
There is the life we were meant for and the men we were created to be ... and then there is the life we have and the men we find ourselves to be. They are often worlds apart.

❖ How is the man you find yourself to be different from the man you were created to be?

❖ At this stage of your life, what is your great battle? Is it on the surface (making more money, getting the kids to behave, reducing the hassles of life?), or is it deeper? Are you willing to share it with the men in your group?

❖ Where is your great adventure? What real risk have you been swept up into? (Is anything in your life more compelling than watching sports, following stocks, or viewing the adventures of others on TV?)
And who is the beauty you are fighting for? (Is there a woman in your life who stirs you to leap through a ring of fire to win her?)

Dr. Tremper Longman III, the coauthor of Bold Love, wrote, “Virtually every book of the Bible—Old and New Testaments—and almost every page tells us about God’s warring activity.”

Have you ever considered the Bible to be an account of a great battle that God himself is fighting?

How does this help you interpret all that’s going on around you in your life today?
PRAYER

Go back to God and talk with him about where your heart is on all you've discussed and thought about this week. End your time here praying, in your own words, the prayer on page 15.

NEXT WEEK

Next week your group will discuss the second DVD segment, "The Poser and the Question." In order to be prepared to share your thoughts with your group, read chapter 3 from Wild at Heart this week prior to your group meeting.