

A Book for Men?

Thirteen years ago, I joined a half-dozen puzzled Christian publishing executives at a large oaken table 15 stories above Dallas. "A book for *men*?" as one exclaimed, knitting his brow, confused.

Indeed, *Healing the Masculine Soul* remains a book for men, something unheard of in those days--five years before *Promise Keepers*, *New Man* magazine, and the flood of men's books to follow.

Today, as PK downsizes and Christian publishers drop most men's books, millions of men who discovered masculine fellowship at the stadium events ask "Where do we go from here?" 100,000 copies later and still in print, *Masculine Soul*--which has never been advertised--perseveres as one answer.

As the godly principles have been proclaimed among a largely pagan, unprincipled society, men are now ready to get real with God and each other and confess we can't measure up to the principles. It's time at last for us to cast our unbearable shame upon Jesus, and let Him do what He came to do--namely, draw us back into fellowship with the Father so we can recognize and fulfill our destiny in His Kingdom (John 14:1-16). It's time, that is, to grow from Old Covenant law and obedience into New Covenant sonship and trust (Romans 8:14-16). This, I believe is the true rite of passage from boyhood to manhood--both terrifying and promising--which Jesus empowers (Gal. 4:1-7).

In fact, the current Sep/Oct issue of *New Man* magazine features my article outlining this overview of what God's been doing among men in the past decade. A larger version is available on my website (www.abbafather.com).

These are exciting times to be men and sons of the Father. I would hope this excitement would be shared by women as well, who have much at stake in our healing.

These past 13 years have been a wild ride for me. My second and third books (*Sons of the Father* and *Fight like a Man*) went out of print, and for several years we struggled financially. I don't know if it's kosher to thank God for credit cards, but I confess that prayer was in my heart if not on my lips. As I began to doubt my calling, many brothers came alongside to encourage me to hang in there. I asked the Lord to use the ordeal to surface wounds and chinks in my armor; through the humbling (is there any other way?) I learned, among many other things, that it's easier to preach trust than to practice it! As numerous book publishers rejected my manuscripts, conferences declined, and debt increased, I released my ministry--conference speaking, books and all--to the Lord and curbed my urge to "hustle" for speaking engagements, counseling clients, or a new publisher.

About a year and a half ago, the Lord began opening the door again, and widely. I've been to England 5 times now, Australia this past March (and back again next March), Hong Kong in Nov. Oldline denominational churches--Episcopal, United Church of Christ, Presbyterian, Methodist--have called for retreats, as have Evangelicals (Nazarene, Church of God Anderson IN). Men of all backgrounds are waking up to our need for the Father, and it's been exciting to be part of His ministry among us. Just this past week, "out of the blue," the founding editor of a large Christian publisher called and asked to see my out-of-print books. Financially, our nose is above

the waterline at last. My wife and son are healthy, our family praising God for the increased trust He's stirred within us.