



## ▶ Safety Within the Church?

In most churches the outreach towards men is focused intentionally, or unintentionally, on specific generations of men. How can we hope to restore the Church to a reproductive body if we are only reaching the older, more mature men of the church? I asked Rick

Ellsmore, Building Brothers Director of Communications, to share the unique focus and barriers that effect his generation and to show us how we might begin to remove the barriers and invite men of all ages to enter the Process of becoming Spiritual Fathers. – Dan Schaffer

by Rick Ellsmore

*Have you seen this man walking the hallways of your Church? Twenty-something, married to a lovely woman, child on the way — he seems to have it all together and be on his way to success in balancing both godliness and the “American dream” of happiness and comfort. Those that look into the window of his life see a “good Evangelical” who has his “Bible speak” down pat.*

*I was this man ten-years-ago! Behind the closed doors of my heart, I was living a life loneliness and fear. This fear that could not, would not, allow anybody (including my wife) to see the wounded and scared man who was hiding right beneath the surface. I had lived my entire life within the Church without experiencing a safe masculine environment where I could open up my heart and have godly men mentor me. Out of this struggle I have often pondered these questions—How many men sit in our churches with this same hidden fear? How many young men are dying inside for a safe authentic place where they can be honest about their struggles and learn what it means to become a man of God?*

*What did God use to get my attention and the attention of many other men I know? God began a messy “heart-journey” where I hit “bottom” and discovered I was selfishly living out “Rick’s story” but not “God’s story” of restoration in my life. He took a paper-thin trust and slowly built a foundation that I could learn to live my life upon. How did God do this? He used five godly authentic men to be “life preservers” in the midst of the raging storms of life around me. They invited me into their lives—willing to trust me with their hearts as they exposed their woundedness and the playing out of “God’s story” in them. The current younger generations of men hunger for this level of authenticity to draw them deeper into becoming disciples of Christ. We must be willing to strive to “build” this place of safety if we are ever to draw them to Christ and a deeper healing. Are you willing to go there?*

God has quenched this “hunger” in me for authenticity over these past years with solid male relationships. Out of this “quenching” He has allowed me to connect with the young men in what I call the “18-30 window” —men who aren’t finding the relationship they desire with God in the Church, so they are leaving in droves. One of these men is Nathan, a man that I’ve walked with for the last year. I have seen him grow in amazing ways as God uses me, and our time together, to draw his heart out from the clouds of darkness he has lived under.

I recently met with Nathan at our normal hangout—a corner McDonald’s booth. As we talked, one issue became crystal clear—the strong desire for an authentic community to engage Christ and other Christians. He said, “I want to be somewhere where I’m connected with a group of people who are willing to wrestle with life issues and our relationship with Jesus.” He went on to say he needs to have older men open up their lives and show him, not just tell him, what it means to be a father and godly man. We came to the conclusion that like Christianity, “Spiritual Fatherhood” is caught not taught!

My call as a man has become crystal clear to me—to *build men, young and old, into Spiritual Fathers (1 Cor. 4:15). How am I doing this?* By being willing to step away from the “programmatic” approach to reaching these men that I’ve experienced for most of my life and move towards developing authentic relationships within a safe masculine environment, where ministry is lived out *life upon life*. I have found this taking place since I’ve moved from “doing” ministry to “being” ministry in the lives of these men—“showing up” and allowing the Spirit of God to work through me!

The opportunities to “father” these men are staggering. *Are you willing to move beyond your comfort zone and fear to help these men find their spiritual destiny within an authentic safe masculine place? And, to serve as a “gateway” for them to to become Spiritual Fathers who are being used to engage and restore? Now that is a messy Spiritual Mission I can get jazzed about!*



### **United Methodist Men / Wesleyan Building Brothers**

In July, we hosted our first Leadership Training for United Methodist Men. The United Methodist denomination is going to be a major “beach-head” for us as a ministry. We will serve

United Methodists, and this will open other doorways into other denominations in America. Larry Malone, Men’s Ministry Director for United Methodist Men recently said, “We want

to help men become spiritual fathers, as they come to know

God personally and intimately. Our new partnership will be called Wesleyan Building Brothers, a one-year, small-group curriculum that will help move men towards a full pursuit of God, and spiritual reproduction. God is clearly on the move within this denomination and we feel privileged to play a part in this movement!

#### **Partnership Opportunities:**

- Wesleyan Building Brothers Leadership Training/ November 7-9 in Nashville, TN
- Building Brothers Phase I-IV Trainings in 2007
- Wesleyan Building Brothers Leadership Trainings in 2007



# BUILDING BROTHERS™

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## Ministry Update

### Germany/Hungary

August 24-September 5, Dan will be traveling to further our partnership with CMT (Christ-like Man Training). The focus of these two weeks will be to have a "modified" Leadership Training in Southern and Northern Germany with a venture into Hungary as well. Our hearts continue to be aligned with our brothers in these two countries.

### Building Brothers Phase Trainings

- In September, Dan'l and Ken will be presenting Phase IV Training at Outside the Walls Ministries in Denver.
- In September, Dan'l will be teaching Phase IV Training at Faith Bible Chapel in Page, Arizona.
- In September, Dan'l will be presenting Phase I Training in New Mexico.

### German Leadership Training

April of 2007, we will have 50 German Leaders traveling here to Colorado to experience Leadership Training. Pray for this amazing opportunity as we hammer down deep into their lives and equip them to take this life-changing experience back to Germany and beyond!

### Building Brothers Prayer & Praise

Continue to uplift the ministry and each team member with the financial needs we face. Also, pray for spiritual protection as we move into exciting new initiatives.

### Church of God (7th Day)

We continue to experience tremendous spiritual momentum within this denomination. We have seen Pastors and their men being Transformed within every community we are in. Please continue to pray for this important partnership and "beach-head".

#### Current Ministry:

#### • Spanish-Speaking Men

Building Brothers Phase I has been translated into Spanish to be distributed within this denomination. Pray for our Spanish brothers who will move forward into the Process over this next year. Also, pray for the translation of Phases II-IV.

#### • Marion & Eugene, Oregon

September 9-10, Ken will be teaching Building Brothers Phase IV and Phase I Training.

#### • Kansas City, Missouri

In October, Ken will be presenting Phase III Training in two Church of God (7th Day) congregations: Kansas City, Missouri and Topeka, Kansas.

#### Opening Areas:

#### • Toronto, Canada

This will be a great opportunity for Building Brothers to teach for the first time in Canada.

#### • England

Growing interest from the churches in this country!

#### • Southern California

#### • New York & Pennsylvania

#### • Las Vegas, Nevada

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